POST-WAR NIGERIAN HISTORY

For Schools & Colleges

BOOK ONE

REV. FR. NATHANIEL I. NDIOKWERE

POST-WAR NIGERIAN HISTORY FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

BOOK ONE

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere does not believe in attachment to academic and religious titles. He is a Catholic priest, born and raised in Nigeria. Educated in Nigeria, Rome, London, Germany and USA, he holds doctorate degrees in Theology, Rome and Higher Diploma in Education from the University of London. His key areas of studies in education include, Curriculum Planning, Psychology of Education, Comparative Education and Education in Developing Countries. Back from studies in Europe Fr. N. I. Ndiokwere volunteered to help out as a teacher and seminary formator in the diocesan seminaries of Owerri and Orlu (Okpala, Osina and Umuowa) for 20 years. He lectured at the Catholic Institute of West Africa (CIWA), Port Harcourt, Nigeria for 8 years. Later he founded St Joseph's Secondary school Mgbidi, Orlu. For 28 years of his active priestly apostolate he combined the functions of school manager or administrator, a classroom teacher, parish priest and building contractor. For three and half years, as 'donum fidei' (Missionary Priest) Fr. Nathaniel Ndiokwere volunteered and worked as pastor in two dioceses of the United States. Presently he is spending a sabbatical leave in California, USA, engaged in writing and research. My short CV and list of the author's other publications are in the ***'acknowledgements'pages of this book.***

ABOUT THE BOOK

Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges
The writer is not a historian by profession. But he has taken a bold step to write an account of related events in the Post-War

Nigeria. Since the end of the civil war, also known as Nigeria-Biafra War, Nigerian historians have not produced any known History book that has attempted to cover the Nigerian story from 1914 to the present day. It is however not an easy task. The present publication in two volumes **(Book One & Book Two)** has Nigerian students as its primary audience. Not every narrative or opinion in the book may be perfect or acceptable to everyone; but the book in all honesty is recommended to every Nigerian, at home and in the Diaspora. Our non-Nigerian friends – White, Black and Brown - will learn a lot about Nigeria as presented in the **"Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges"**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I will like to express my appreciation to my Bishop Most Rev. Dr. Augustine T. Ukwuoma for granting me the opportunity that has enabled me to dabble into this difficult work, ***"Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges"***. I am very grateful to Most Rev. Bishop Armando Ochoa, Bishop of Fresno, California and Msgr Craig Harrison (Pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Bakersfield) for accommodation and enabling environment that made it possible for me to undertake this work. Many of my friends and past students – priests and laypersons – have contributed immensely to the success of this work, mostly by proof-reading the different chapters and making suggestions. I can never stop singing the praises of my students and ***'Alora Sons and Daughters'***. I must in a special way mention the following names: ***Rev. Fathers*** Silas Ugonna Mbonu, Stanislaus Ekwugha, Thaddeus Osuala, Bonaventure Obisike and Jude Thaddeus Eze; **Messrs** Brendan Nwaozor, Chrisrtian Obioma Igwenyere, Mercel Igboji Uchenna, Eugene Obi, Raymond Briggs, Damian Anokwuru, Dominic Ogazi, Peter Okoroji (Barrister), Izuchukwu Akwazie (Barrister), Chinelo Maurine Akwazie (Miss) and Joel Torczon, (my noble Polish-American editor of many books and journals). Without the moral and financial support from my most unassuming benefactor, ***Archbishop Brian Udaigwe, Papal Nuncio to Togo and Benin*** and some Ex-Alumni of Bonus Pastor Seminary Osina, St Mary's Umuowa and SPCS Okpala I would not have been able to publish this work. I must not fail to acknowledge financial assistance I have received from the following at various time I

have been in need: Remigius Obirieze, Chidozie Ukachukwu, Fr. Ugonna Silas Mbonu, Christian Omenuko, Sir Herbert Akwaja, Simeon Ukagba, Izuchukwu Akwazie, Chinedu Akukwe, Emeka Virgilus Akukwe and my great American friend Richard Duarte. I thank them for their love and compassion.

Surely many friends helped out in the proof-reading of the entire volume of the book (Book One & Book Two). Sometimes the so-called **'auto-correct' computer software** can mess up one's efforts at presenting a decent work devoid of careless grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. ***'Auto-correct'*** is a software function that automatically makes or suggests corrections for mistakes in spelling or grammar made while typing. Sometimes it may be useful for you to disable 'auto-correct, so you can see your mistakes and find your weak points. It is not easy either way! Throughout this work, for example, the 'auto-correct thing' refused to recognize '***Igbos' as a plural noun!*** I simply ignored its suggestions. I take sole responsibility for the weaknesses readers and critics may discover in this work. One of my intentions for undertaking the work was to provoke reactions from readers and 'experts'. I don't expect everyone to accept my views. Hopefully Nigerian students will gain a lot by purchasing **both volumes** of the book and making sure to read them from cover to cover, not just to pass class or school examinations in History, but for the historical records or contents of the books. I will love to read comments and reviews of the books. To God be all honor and glory!

Rev. Fr. Nathaniel Ndiokwere's published works - (full titles, dates, & reprints)

1. ***Prophecy & Revolution*** (London, 1981, 1991, 2011)
2. ***Search for Security*** (Nigeria 1993)
3. ***African Church Today and Tomorrow, Prospects and Challenges***, (Nigeria 1994)
4. ***African Church Today and Tomorrow (Inculturation in Practice)***, (Nigeria, 1994)
5. ***Search for Greener Pastures - Igbo and African Experience*** (USA, 1998),
6. ***The Third Millennium Church***, (USA, 1998)
7. ***At the Crossroads - Dilemma of the Man of God***, (USA, 2000).
8. ***Gateway to Success in English Language (Grammar),*** (Nigeria 2002, 2006)

9. ***Leaders and Followers – The Problem of Leadership in a Troubled Nation,*** (Nigeria, 2003)
10. ***Gateway to Success in English Language (Test of Orals),*** (Nigeria 2006, 2007
11. ***Only in Nigeria, Dilemma of a Troubled Nation***, (Nigeria 2007) & (Revised Edition, 2009) vol. 2 – ***"Only in Nigeria….Elsewhere in America"*** (Owerri, Nigeria 2013.)
12. ***Comprehensive Latin Course for Schools and Colleges***, (Nigeria 2011); Reprinted 2015.
13. ***Rochas Revolution, Leadership by Example*** – 2012; (Nigerian Edition) (Owerri, Nigeria; (USA Edition – Trafford publishers, 2012).
14. ***Our Only Hope, Chidi in Search of Greener Pastures*** (High School Novel/Drama) (Nigeria 2013 , liu house of excellence ventures, Owerri.)
15. ***With Prophetic Courage*** (Festschrift in honor of Monsignor Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere), @ 40th priestly anniversary celebration, edited by Rev. Frs. Chibuike Ukeh & Finnian Nwaozor.
16. ***Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges (Book One & Book Two)*** *(Owerri, Nigeria 2019)*

Articles & Other Publications

Since 1980 Fr. Ndiokwere has been a regular contributor to popular radio productions and programs. Fr. Ndiokwere is a regular newspaper columnist (Only in Nigeria") in the Leader and Forum Newspapers of the Archdiocese of Owerri and diocese of Orlu, Nigeria respectively.

DEDICATION

The work is dedicated to all patriotic and honest Nigerians, who wish to see Nigeria's political, economic and religious problems resolved in the most peaceful manner. In a special way the book is dedicated to all Biafrans and Igbos at home and in the Diaspora who spend time and resources to see that self-determination is achieved by all peaceful means**. *Sales from this book will be channeled to charitable ventures, like in my other publications***. They will be spent on youth education in Nigeria, especially in the educational needs of **"Alora grand-sons and daughters"** Visit our website at aloradunque.org.

Rev. Fr. Nathaniel I. Ndiokwere (January 5, 2019)

COMPLIMENTARY NOTES - "WHAT THEY SAY"
"VERBATIM": "FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH".

(1) "***One Nigeria where everyone is treated with equal dignity and respect"***

As a lay Catholic who has some familiarity with the events in Nigeria's recent history and the contributions by the country's priests in serving their own people as well as those in other nations, Monsignor Nathaniel Ndiokwere enabled me to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the rich potential Nigeria has to offer if only given the opportunity to realize it through a determined effort to overcome their differences and becoming as one Nigeria where everyone is treated with equal dignity and respect**. *(Joel Torczon)***

(2) Now I can read many details about Nigeria and much more

I like History and this is the type of history book we have been looking for. There is nothing one does not find is this book about Nigeria and Biafra. I was a toddler during the civil war and my parents told me that I would have died of Kwashiorkor. May the Lord bless the Missionaries who gave us food and helped to keep most of us alive today! Now I can read many details about Nigeria and much more. Dr Fr. Ndiokwere is a great man. He has published many books but this in the greatest' God bless you Father***! (Chika Nnadozie Nwobodo– University student)***

(3) Written for the umpteenth time…

Any nation devoid of history is a lost generation. History defines identity. An identity is an existential quality. An entity without an identity is non-entity. History co-relates the three co-ordinates of time- past, present and future for the existential reality of the essence of life. The 'Past' is the 'Present-made-old.' The 'Present' is the 'Past-in-the-making' while the 'Future' is the 'Present-to-come'. Couched in these assertive words of truth, Monsignor N.I. Ndiokwere's most recent literary masterpiece, ***and 'Post-war Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges'*** has dawned at the twilights of time, hope and resolution of the Nigerian socio-political, economic and historical malaise. Corruption is the bane of Nigerian's leadership struggle, inefficiency and ineffectiveness. There is no

gainsaying that corruption is embedded into the political and mental DNA of both the leadership and the followership structure of Nigeria. This book, written in the inimitable ***'Ndiokwereish'*** style, genre, finesse, grandeur and literary expertise, is a panacea to our current political quagmire. It is an answer to the question of 'why, how, what and when of corruption in Nigeria? It is a strategic roadmap to the solution of corruption in Nigeria. It is not only for schools and colleges but for the Nigerian governmental, political, economic and religious institutions. I recommend it for all and sundry. However, for unrepentant critics and skeptics: if you want to hide something from Nigerians, write a book and the answer to a bad book is to write your own. This book is simply ***Unputdownable! (Rev. Fr. Silas Ugonna Mbonu)***

(4) This book challenges the Nigerian who watches and does nothing

The genuine path of Nigeria history yet eludes many Nigerians on whose narrative is not only of exactitude but of resolving concerns to general acceptance, which of note, must feature the Nigerian-Biafra-War. Here yet, comes one which erases doubts of any free minded reader ***- Post-war Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges***. Even when many Nigerians are shrouded from true happenings of the prewar, postwar still stares and pulls by weight. This book not only shares but challenges the Nigerian who watches and does nothing to redeem the human face from vested-interest leader-imposters. Conscience as driver, When you are done reading, will propel you to ask families and friends if they too have read the book, not just for schools and colleges alone. (***Igboji, Marcellinus Uchenna (University Student)***

(5) For Every Nigeria, at home or in the Diaspora

That's the type of book we need now. And it comes from my role model, my mentor Rev. Dr. Monsignor N. I. Ndiokwere. After my creator Chukwu Okike-Abiama, God of mercy and my parents; he is the third most influential person in my life. Father I have been following your write ups about the present age in Nigeria and Biafra. Now you have put all down for young generation of our time to read and preserve. Honestly I am in the same position with you, because I have always trusted your judgment and all your thoughts have always yielded positive results in life. I think it is high time we the Igbos should be bold

and stand on our feet and demand for justice and equity in Nigeria, and if Nigeria is not ready to give us that **"to your tents oh Israel!"** Thank you my father, teacher and mentor. This book ***"Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges"*** is not just for students. Every Nigeria, politician, man of God, at home and in the Diaspora must purchase and read this contribution to the way forward in Nigeria.. May the Lord grant you good health and strength to continue educating humanity***?*** ***(Mark Anthony Amanfo)***

(6) ***The greatest man and priest of our time***!
Msgr Ndiokwere, thank you for all your writings, especially the latest "History Book. . I have been chairman of many award committees but yet to see any one that will merit those awards but one man - You and only You! The greatest man and priest of our time! I am sorry to say that all the things I learnt in the university are what you had already taught me in the minor seminary. The university collected the fees for the job you did. You did not forget your boy in Bonus Pastor Seminary Osina those days. I am presently a Radio/TV presenter and also a writer and will be ready to promote the book, present it to Nigerians. ***(Greg Dike Okey)***

(7) As a builder, for him, no material is a waste.
Msgr Nathaniel Ndiokwere is a first class genius. He is a character molder, a personality bricklayer and builder. As a builder, for him, no material is a waste. He can pick the pieces of needless bricks and the junks and throwaway woods and blocks in a humble person and join them together to build the person into a skyscraper. Even careless words and the muted words falling off the breath of sleeping dreamers, if Msgr Ndiokwere hears them by mistake, he writes a world class book out of them and includes the dreamer name as a contributor to his ingenuity. These rare qualities in him have saved many who otherwise would have wasted themselves as miscreants, but with minor contact with Nathaniel Ndiokwere, they are groomed into people of timber and caliber. ***(Fr. Jude T. Ebere Eze)***

(8) He has produced another book!
Father, none amongst us that passed through your diamond but tender hands can forget the lessons and teachings that reformed

our lives. You have produced another book among so many already! We are always the best in our individual's chosen endeavors all around the world. We can't thank you enough for our wonderful foundation and discipline you instilled in us which has been the fulcrum of our base in life! ***(Frank Uche)***

(9) Our today's Solomon!

You can't be forgotten my dear Alora. The only one who is perfect in all subjects! Our today's Solomon, even wiser than that of the old. As far as this world is concerned, after God, you are! My Mentor! You did awake the sleeping giants in us. We won't forget you forever. We shall keep your flag flying. You deserve to be rewarded. You started well, we met you well and you will end well. You are already a saint. We cherish your education. ***(Chinedu Michael***)

(10) A leader, a builder, a fabricator, a molder…

The Socrates of our time and the Aristotle of all times ! Alora , your works are legend to mankind and productive. A genius comes along once in generation. He was a quintessential formator with a dangerous eye for details. This man you see is the father of all mentors. This man you see is discipline simplified. This man you see is ***a leader, a builder, a fabricator, a molder, a recycler, in fact, a perfect refurbisher.*** I am most fortunate to have been part of the tools he arranged. Today, I have a lot to give you Msgr Ndiokwere. First, your efforts on me have brought blessings to people around me. I want also to give you a gift of assurance that I will never demolish the structure you erected in me. ***(Uche John)***

(11)I am very privileged to be among so many

I am enthused by this new publication (***Post-war Nigerian History Book)*** from a quintessential teacher, a molder and a bridge builder. This is a man whose knowledge and wisdom transcend human comprehension. A versatile being and an enigma of our time!!! Words and phrases are not enough to describe this rare breed. I am very privileged to be among those who drank from his overflowing cup of knowledge, and I am very happy that I am greatly molded by his unparalleled tutelage. I lack words to express my feelings for this address really threw me off balance but did deposit a lot of treasure of knowledge in me. I shall for life be grateful to this human icon of goodies. ***(Ugochukwu Eugene)***

(12) Always synonymous with knowledge

I am very glad to have benefited from your reservoir of knowledge. You are always synonymous with knowledge. You taught us almost all we know, even how to eat and sleep. I personally remember those formative years with fondness. You are the greatest teacher of all time and have used every little opportunity to educate and pass knowledge as you have done here today. Words can never be enough. God bless and keep you. ***(Prince Okey Mmaduekwe)***

(13) Authored several books

Indeed, Goodness necessarily diffuses. Ever since I knew you, your life has been consistently that of ceaseless attempt and struggle to empty yourself for the betterment of humanity. No wonder you have ***authored several books to complement all time lectures and teachings.*** As if those were not enough you still reach us via the social media inculcating discipline, public manners and leadership. At a time you ought to be in retirement you even appear more active and productive than the youths. I think you are an enigma and a rare super legend. ***(Dr. Ukachukwu C. Joseph)***

(14) Expose the truth!

How I wish all the Christian leaders will continue to expose and speak the truth at all times without fear of favor. Well done my Father. May your oil never dry as you remained a strong voice against evil in a geographical expression that gave birth to fake marriage called Nigeria by the British government ***(Ozumba Charles Chidozie)***

(15) Intelligent and wisdom packed articles

Fr. I must confess that you have earned lots of respects from me from a distance, although I don't know you in person, I have always followed your intelligent and wisdom packed articles online, I must confess you are a great man indeed. I have great love for wisdom and education, which is the more reason why I craved much to having you as a spiritual Father, mentor, and role model and mostly as a son. Thank you for all your articles that have impacted a lot of knowledge and wisdom to me. Your latest book “Post-War Nigeria History for schools and colleges”, only

judging from the title and contents, there is no doubt it is a bundle of knowledge. God bless you. ***(Chidi Ikeji Charles)***

(16) Another "Prophecy and Revolution"

I threw in my support for IPOB at a time I encountered Alora. A disciplinarian in a blond, screwed and shrew with revolutionary bent. His works carry his spirits within; a non conformist in an unjust system; a radical with special calling he is! His ***Prophecy and Revolution, Search for Security and Search for Greener Pastures*** give us direction to his innermost engine. Alora, my custodian, trainer and father comes hard on derailing establishments. I am encouraged by his stance. His latest book ***"Post-war Nigerian History"*** is an encyclopedic record of Nigeria-Biafra event, as well as the most modern and comprehensive History of Nigeria. ***(Chuks Ezechukwu i.***

(17) Contains Biafran Project!

Padre you are a rare breed of intellectual colossus and proclivities. An academic per excellence, a scholar of unrivaled erudition, a role model and a priest in the order of Melchizedek, your records in this Biafra project has traversed the length and breadth of just being a man of God. I ceaselessly remain grateful that my path crossed with you as a visitor to your timeline on Face book. I have keenly been following your updates daily and they are worth my time. May your ink never get dry. Now your latest book is a compendium of all the facts I admire. Thank you and God bless you! ***(Ernest Chima)***

(18) Even most difficult times and life threatening circumstances

Thank you so much Fr Rector. You laid the solid foundations which are firmly holding huge towers that scattered all over the universe. Alora means different things to different people. An oppressor's nightmare who will resist injustice, oppression and subjugation within and without, ***and support just causes even in the most difficult times and life threatening circumstances.*** For more than 40 years, you have been working assiduously in the Lord's vineyard, not for self aggrandizement, but for the service of God and humanity. You have solid academic credentials from the top-notch universities in Europe and America. Your credentials are as towering as your physical appearance! Even as you are aging graciously, you have not allowed biological denudations to slow you down. You have

always been there as long as issues that affect the wellbeing of mankind are discussed. You are the pacesetter, you are the pathfinder, you the great initiator, a plenipotentiary and an uncommon administrator, a teacher extraordinaire, and compendium of knowledge and a monster of erudition. I can't thank you enough Fr for guiding and guarding my childhood. It is not a regret at all to know you!! ***(Chidi Dike)***

(19) Prophecies are real

Monsignor Dr. Ndiokwere, i cannot thank you enough. I cannot stop reading your powerful message over and over again. There is enormous power in writing. This is one of them. I will save it in my archives for futuristic references. Prophecies are real. It's just obvious. Nigeria chose catastrophic visitations upon them over serving justice to their legitimate people. I weep for myself, for I know that I am not exempted from this catastrophic impending doom. How fast ever, first thing first, my total reconciliation with my creator. Amen. Any other thing comes second! ***(Anichebe U. Charles)***

(20) Insightful reactions to issues

Monsignor Ndiokwere, in you I see intelligence and wisdom personified. Your reactions to issues are always insightful. Honestly, it has always been a wonderful pleasure to drink from your well of wisdom and insights. Your fresh perspective on issues and the style of delivery deserve commendation. Indeed, you are one of those pastors who must continue to win my admiration and confidence especially the manner you always analyze sensitive and controversial issues despite who is involved. The truth must not be compromised irrespective of whose ox is gored. Thank you my brother from a different womb, you are a mentor! ***(Oguegbu Ostende Udoka)***

(21) Uncountable success stories

It's always my honor to be part of your every moment. You have written not with inks or on sheets of paper but on souls and flesh of mortals. Centuries may not be able to erase the indelible marks you have made in sands of time and on our lives. Alora you have carefully through the years of rigorous and enduring labor laid the foundations and pillars of uncountable success stories and leaders of the now and tomorrow. Congratulations my iconic idol. More grace Dee Monsignor. (Christian Obiefule)

(20)Let your voices be heard!
This is therefore a clarion and very urgent call on all priests & men of god to sit-up pray for fresh anointing. They should wake up from their slumber to save the people of God. ***Speak out. Let your voices be heard***. Don't continue to keep mute. I thank the almighty God for his gift of Monsignor Ndiokwere to mankind; a lone voice in the whole wilderness. I won't say he is simply wonderful; rather, God has continued to show his wonderful nature through N. I. Ndiokwere. We need fearless and dedicated servants of God of HIS caliber to pull down the strong holds of the enemy in our state and nation. This is the last straw that will definitely break the camel's back. ***(Oluigbo Chibuzo)***

REVIEW BY BRENDAN NWAOZOR

POST WAR NIGERIAN HISTORY FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES (BOOK ONE & BOOK TWO)

Author: Very Rev. Dr. Monsignor
Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere

Pagination: Book One and Book Two (about 360 pages each – Chapters 1-28)

Reviewer:*Brendan .I. Nwaozor, Retired*
Chief Information Officer, Ministry Of Information, Owerri, Nigeria.

POST WAR NIGERIAN HISTORY FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES is the latest of the series of books written by an intellectual giant in the literary world and a Priest of the Catholic Church, diocese of Orlu, Nigeria, Very Rev Dr. Monsignor Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere. Post-War Nigerian History for schools and Colleges is in two booklets – Book one and Book two. For emphasis sake, every student and undergraduate must own the two books (one and two) to enable a free flow of the knowledge imparted by the author so as to be in full grip of Nigerian Past and present stories. Acquiring only one of the books cannot proffer the benefits encapsulated in the two books. In fact book two is the off-shoot of book one. Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges kick-started with the history of the amalgamation of Nigeria down to Independence of October 1 1960. The Author Msgr N.I. Ndiokwere enumerated the Odyssey

of the Igbos, the brains behind the first coups, the counter coups of 1966 and the subsequent massacres of the Igbos especially in the Northern Nigeria, Middle belt and Western Nigeria in 1966. Monsignor Ndiokwere elucidated how the Nigeria – Biafra war started in 1967; how it was fought in different battle sectors; why the brokered peace at Aburi was truncated; who and who played which roles as well as how the Nigeria-Biafra war ended with an illusive "No victor No Vanquished" Declaration by the major war actor General Yakubu Gowon – the then Head of State, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Part two of the books, stressed the Dictatorial and Democratic Governance in Nigerian Politics. The Author exposed the nepotism, bribery and corruption which are endemic in the political landscape and among the leadership. Then he ended up with an advice for the restructuring of Nigeria state to elude a possible second Biafran revolution.

Part three, the last of the books, the author brought to fore the hidden Fulani Empire expansionism agenda of Islamizing the Nigeria Nation-State, courtesy of the frequent incursion and massacres of Nigerians especially Christians by Boko Haram Islamists and Herdsmen especially at the Northern and Middle Belt of Nigeria. Very Rev. Dr. Monsignor Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere manifested his status and background as a clergy of sound intellectual excellence and unparalleled homilist by juxtaposing his description of succession to Nigerian leadership by successive coup – plotters with quotations from the Bible of how God disowned some Israelites leaders of old. For instance "he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and followed the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin, he did not depart from them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Then another succeeded him" (2 Kings Chapter 13).

By inference, all the successive coups were executed because of God's anger against the devilish reign of the incumbent military or civilian government in power at a particular time. Vividly since 1980, Very Rev. Monsignor Dr. Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere has been a prolific writer of popular Radio commentaries and programs. As a guru in Journalistic realm, Monsignor Ndiokwere is a columnist ***(Only in Nigeria)*** with popular Newspapers like "The Leader and "The Forum" Newspapers

I strongly recommend ***the book*** to all Secondary School Students, as well as our undergraduates of Universities and Post-

graduates too. They will benefit equally from this book for references and additional knowledge while writing the degree projects and dissertations. Most unborn students and undergraduates before Nigeria Biafra war will enjoy the first-hand information and literary expositions of what transpired at the Nigeria Biafra war including the major actors, some of whom are dead today. Indeed, in the words of Francis Bacon, an Irish writer, "Some books are to be tested, Others are to be chewed, and Some few are to be swallowed and digested." ***Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges:*** falls within the class of books to be "swallowed and digested". The compilation is an intellectual harvest, an inevitable asset and a trust worthy companion. To the Author Very Rev. Dr. Monsignor Nathaniel Ikechukwu Ndiokwere, I say bravo! You can beat your chest and exclaim like ***Hilare Bello*** an Italian writer, thus "When I am dead, I hope it may be said "He was a workaholic but his books were read" I rest my pen, I am done.

INTRODUCTION

POST-WAR NIGERIAN HISTORY FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Many Nigerians - adults, parents, students and ordinary citizens have wished to see a comprehensive "Post Nigeria-Biafra War History Book" for the younger generation of Nigerian youths and students in our Primary, Secondary Schools and Colleges. A good majority of them were born after the tragic events and crises. Certainly many who were toddlers during the war only survived through the mercy of God and know little or nothing about the Biafra war. Since the end of the civil war in 1970 a lot of changes have taken place in government and society, and these changes affect the lives and future of all Nigerians daily. The period of military dictatorship does not differ much from the present modern era of the so-called democratic dispensation or 'governance', copied from the western nations. In primary school, we learned that it was **Abraham Lincoln - the 16th president of the United States of America (March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865)**, who gave the world the simplest and the most concise definition of democracy; namely **"government of the people, by the people, and for the people".**

In Nigeria, even primary school pupils and some smart market women were made to commit the definition of 'democracy to memory'. In Igbo language it is known as "Ochichi Onye Kwo Uche Ya" (a system of government in which every citizen has freedom of self expression). You say, write, express your opinion and no one should intimidate you or put you in jail without trial and conviction. Igbo people of Nigeria strongly believe in freedom of speech and do not 'adore' kings and queens, emperors, caliphs and emirs. They value freedom and hate slavery. One is in a free world and should not live in fear of harassment from government agents. Both the rulers and the followers are subjected to the same laws and guidelines. No one, including the president or head of state is above the law. There are no **'sacred cows'!** 'Sacred cow' is an idiom, a figure of speech for something or someone considered immune from question or criticism, especially unreasonably so.

So far Nigeria has not experienced any political or economic stability since the so-called amalgamation, and the

situation has in fact deteriorated since independence. Critics and some writers trace the problems to 'lack of democracy'. In other words, the political leaders are breaking the laws and not practicing what they are preaching. There is total break-down in law and order. Politics is different from religion, where it is assumed that religious institutions do not practice democracy. Powers are vested on one man or on few leaders. The opposite is **'dictatorship** – government by a dictator, who has absolute authority in any sphere! Right from ancient times, we were told that the people, citizens of particular nations abhorred 'dictatorship' and had fought for freedom. In other words the people cherished democratic principles or systems. In Nigeria, various efforts have been made by representatives of various ethnic groups to resolve key problems facing the nation, most of which triggered the political crisis that brought about the collapse of the first republic and the intervention of the military. The soldiers who took over power by force operated an undemocratic system of government or dictatorship for many years before finally handing over power to a democratically elected civilian government. The mismanagement of the crisis which brought the military into the political arena they were quite unfamiliar with led to the Biafra secession from Nigeria. Further mess up of agreements reached by both sides towards a permanent resolution of Nigeria's political problem led to the civil war.

October 1, 2020 Nigeria will clock 60 years after Independence and exactly 106 years after the Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates by the British colonial masters, yet Nigeria's political problems, major parts arising from the Amalgamation of 1914, Independence of 1960, the Military intervention of 1966, and the Nigeria-Biafra crisis (1966-1970), are nowhere near to any resolution. There is rather great escalation of the crisis! What has happened during these past years? What are the causes and effects of the actions of government leaders, 'dictators' and 'democrats? What is to be done to resolve the political problems of Nigeria? Many honestly believe that if the political problems are resolved, there is little doubt that the economic problems would lessen or considerably disappear! Peace would reign and development and progress would be the order of the day. Such goals are truly realizable.

Comprehensive Recorded Accounts of Events

Arguments have been raging among few interested Nigerians or scholars concerning the existence of History studies in Nigeria Schools' curriculum. Did the Nigerian government 'officially ban' the study of History as a subject in our schools? Some dismiss the argument about a 'ban' while others strongly insist that government or its representatives or so-called 'stakeholders', for whatever reasons 'suppressed' history studies in Nigerian schools and colleges. We will discover the truth.

I am inclined to believe that Nigerian political leaders purposely suppressed history studies in the Post-Civil-War Nigeria. It seems that **"History"** has 'unofficially' been replaced with such subjects like '**Islamic and Arabic studies'**, "**Governmen**t", "**Civic Studies**", and "**Social Studies**". What are the contents or topics found in the books which serve students taking any of these subjects in public exams? Outside private publications by some authors on '**Biafra Event'** and the aftermath of the civil war, some articles, write-ups, commentaries on some political, social and religious events during these past 60 years of independence, there are not many comprehensive 'History Textbooks' produced by any Nigerian or a group of Nigerians 'recording' Nigerian History for students in schools and colleges.

No one will be surprised that such a 'document' or 'book' may not yet be available because of so many reasons. The stability of the post-war Nigerian state cannot yet be assured. The **North-South dichotomy**, the conflicts brought about by the unification of the North and the South persist. There is no agreement on the Constitution that will steer Nigeria towards true democracy as it is practiced in the western world. Unfortunately, most African nations copy from the west and still strongly lean on the superpowers for support and guidance. The system of government practiced by Islamic nations has continued to intrude and dominate Nigeria's political process. There may be no assurance that a **"Nigerian History Book'** that emerges will be acceptable to all Nigerians of all ethnic groups, in a yet-politically divided Nigeria. We may perhaps talk about ***'History Books'***. Whose version of the accounts of Nigerian political history will be acceptable to all Nigerians and endorsed by the Ministry of Education? What of the Nigerian States where **Sharia** system of governance dictates the students' way of life? What will be taught in **Koranic**

schools; Nigerian History or **Islamic studies?** How will a Nigerian History Book define **"Citizenship", Patriotism,** or '**Democracy'**, for example?

We see many problems on the way. In fact the old history books, which most Nigerian students had used before independence and Nigerian civil war have become 'obsolete' and need to be reviewed, updated and 'restructured'. Most of the old history books bore marks of colonialism, slavery, 'masters' voice', taking closer look at their **contents.** Nigerian students of history knew much more about Britain, America and their allies, and little about their country, events, and in fact about Nigerian history as a whole. There was a lot of information about British rule, Prime Ministers and American Presidents, the Atlantic Slave Trade and such stuff. It is time African and Nigerian historians started work on contributing to the development of the black world. History books containing authentic stories and events that touch Africans must be produced by African authors. Most of these important events, especially the sad, shameful and scandalous ones had been hidden from citizens of the world. They have not been recorded in history books for well-known reasons.

The Historian as a Liberationist Campaigner

It is time that African historians stopped the colonialist copycat mentality. Someone who has few ideas of their own and does or says exactly the same as someone else, especially the white author acts sheepishly. They are always clustering together as if they are ashamed to be alone. When we are **sheepish**, we are like a sheep — embarrassed and not confident. We are not proud of our own contributions, no matter how imperfect. The word **sheepish** is properly and miserably described by the **Igbo aphorism *"Mmadu Ime Isi Ka Ihe Akoro Ya!***' *(Do you in reality resemble the ugly creature, the monster, which your enemy perhaps as joke or fun, says you are or look like?* This is an exact description of how someone looks or acts. If you wear a **sheepish** grin, you're embarrassed. An enemy is making mockery of you. It may not be true. Behold! You demonstrate now, in action and in word that you are the ugly creature! Are you really 'a big fool, an idiot, a bastard, an ignoramus, a monkey or a witch?' What a catastrophe! You have to reject it and prove to your wicked enemy that he was only making fun of himself. This is the exact situation in which most African nations find

themselves today! We illustrate with the American President Donald Trump's 'Shithole saga'.

"Mmadu ime isi ka ihe akoro ya" - "Shithole" Saga

Africa needs liberation from colonial mentality and must seek for true independence, freedom and democracy. African patriots like Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, Martin Luther King (Jr,), Nelson Mandela, Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, most recently Patrick Lumumba and many more have fought for African independency and freedom. The 'fruits' of their labor are recorded in history. They preached freedom from colonialism and slavery and fought for development, 'good-bye' to perpetual poverty, employment opportunities for millions of hardworking African youths, a stop to mass exodus of African youths to the unknown world in search for greener pastures while an abundance of God-given resources are everywhere in Africa, disappearance of massive corruption and stealing of nations' wealth by African leaders. Some suffered setbacks. Others died in the process. Enemies of Africa will never support independent and developed Africa. In all this, African historians and writers have a major role to play, irrespective of the risks involved in telling the bitter truth.

Haiti and African nations as 'Shithole Countries'

President Donald Trump reported statement that he referred to Haiti and African nations as "shithole countries" during a meeting with a bipartisan group of senators at the White House went viral in most news media all over the world. Trump's comments were first reported by The Washington Post, which said the nations referred to by Trump also included El Salvador. The U.N. human rights office said the comments, if confirmed, were "shocking and shameful" and "racist," while Haiti's foreign minister summoned the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Robin Diallo for clarification.

Trump's comments on immigrants from 'shithole' countries stirred outrage. Neither Trump nor the White House issued a statement that denied the remarks. However, reports confirmed that the nasty and shameful and humiliating remarks by the American president came as senators huddled in the Oval Office with the president to discuss a path forward on an immigration deal. Trump questioned why the United States

would want people from nations such as Haiti and some other African nations while he was being briefed on changes to the visa lottery system. According to the aide, when the group came to discussing immigration from Africa, Trump asked why America would want immigrants from "all these shithole countries" and that the U.S. should have more people coming in from places like Norway. A source familiar with the meeting told NBC News the president was particularly frustrated during discussions about the visa lottery system — a program Trump has railed against repeatedly in recent months. Another White House source explained the language Trump used as his way of trying to emphasize his support for a merit-based immigration system. Trump would want nothing to do with ***shithole countries*** and affirmed: “It is my duty to protect the lives and safety of all Americans. We must build a Great Wall, think Merit and end Lottery & Chain. USA!"

African governments and Trump

Trump remarks, no doubt sent damaging message and some African governments reacted. **Botswana's** government said Trump had been "reprehensible and racist," and said it has summoned the U.S. ambassador to clarify whether the nation is regarded as, to use Trump's word, a "shithole" country. **U.N. human rights office spokesman** Robert Colville told reporters that the remarks could "potentially damage and disrupt the lives of many people." The "shocking and shameful" remark "legitimizes the targeting of people based on who they are," he said, adding: "I'm sorry, but there's no other word one can use but racist." **Haiti Ambassador to the U.S.** Paul G. Altidor called Trump's comments “regrettable” and based on “clichés and stereotypes rather than actual fact.” The ambassador underscored the indelicate timing of the comment, pointing out that Friday is the eighth anniversary of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, which is estimated to have killed well over 200,000 people. Altidor said that since the reports of Trump's remarks, he had been “bombarded by emails from the American public apologizing” and said he knew Trump's comments were “not the views of the American public.” **The African Union** said it was "alarmed" by Trump's statement. "Given the historical reality of how many Africans arrived in the United States as slaves, this statement flies in the face of all accepted behavior and practice," spokeswoman Ebba Kalondo said, adding that it was

"particularly surprising as the United States of America remains a global example of how migration gave birth to a nation built on strong values of diversity and opportunity." In **Lagos, Nigeria**, IT worker Mayowa Okuwade said: "I think every African country should just learn from this and probably just stay in their country and work with their resources. I am very much sure things will get better."

According to the New York Times, Trump also targeted **Nigerian immigrants** during that meeting, complaining that once they came to the United States they would ***never "go back to their huts."*** Although it was claimed that The White House vigorously denied the claims in the story at the time, but see where Africans and **Nigerians** in particular have their "heads resemble what their enemy claims they look like or what they really are!" And finally when the Nigerian head of state **President Muhammadu Buhari** visited Trump and was asked by a white American journalist during a press conference to tell the world his reaction to the Shithole saga. Trump was standing by. Hear PMB*: "Since I was not there when he said it and cannot deny or confirm it, I think the best thing is to keep my mouth shut!"* As well many other African heads of state kept their mouths shut. They accept the disgraceful designation for the countries they lead **"Shithole countries".** Hope you know dear, that **Shithole** is a very ***vulgar slang*** meaning **an extremely dirty, shabby, or otherwise unpleasant place!** Where do we go from here?

Trump and some fellow ignorant Americans don't believe that immigrants from the so-called ***'third-world countries'***, including ***Nigerians*** are equally American citizens. And there are millions of them, born and raised in the United States! Trump may not know that, corrupt leadership and poor management notwithstanding, many major cities in Nigeria compare favorably with New York, Washington DC and California and other American cities. There are **skyscrapers** in many Southern Nigerian cities and villages. There are fewer beggars and **practically no 'homeless'** people in Southern Nigeria. The United States of America has beggars and homeless citizens in abundance, and they are found everywhere, in big and small cities!

History Review Commission

By the way, is there anything like **"History Commission"** or **"History Review Commission"** in the Post-Independence or Post-War Nigeria? Would such bodies, if Nigeria's education ministry cared to set up one be able to arrive at certain procedures on how to choose and edit contents or subject matter? How can certain 'truths' be known about causes of Nigeria's political problems? Why did Chukwuma Nzeogwu and fellow coup plotters intervene in the 1966 military coup? Why was the June 1993 election annulled by Ibrahim Babangida government? Why was Murtala Muhammad assassinated? Why did Nigeria join the Organization of Islamic Conference? Why should cattle owners demand 'colonies' in Nigeria? What are the "truths" behind these events? What would historians put down as facts, so that people would learn from history and not allow ugly events to repeats themselves?

Perhaps scholars, who believe that a more adequate and comprehensive "History Book" may emerge, only after the Restructuring Agenda of the Nigerian nation had been completed, will be proved correct, most sincere and honest compatriots. Perhaps a completely different approach may show up if in place of Restructuring, Nigerian political, traditional and religious leaders decide to break up the nation called Nigeria, as they see that the final hour has arrived when each region of the nation should go their separate ways! We may not easily forget this often quoted biblical verses and scenario!

"When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king, "What share do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, O David." (1 King: 12.16ff)

Hope you are following, dear reader? Surely you will not be disappointed. You will find in this book a lot about "**Comprehensive Post-War Nigeria History"** and much more! For better organization, we have decided to divide our material into two parts or 'books' - ***"Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges" (Book 1) & Book 2.*** Do not fail to get the two copies and as well call the attention of your friends to the books.

CHAPTER 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

> **Those who do not read history are doomed to repeat it. Those who fail to learn from the mistakes of their predecessors are destined to repeat them. Those who do not know history's mistakes are doomed to repeat them.** (*George Santayana, a Philosopher, essayist, poet and novelist)*
>
> **"Study the past if you would define the future"** *(Confucius, The Chinese Classics: Vol. The Life and Teachings of Confucius (Analects, Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean [1869)*

"Confucius, a Chinese prince of philosophers, is the wisest and most subtle and penetrating intellect that the world had ever seen. He was a statesman, a bard, an historian and an antiquary rolled into one. His sagacity put the most illustrious of ancient and modern philosophers to shame. He was the greatest and noblest representative of the greatest, happiest, and most highly civilized people on the face of the earth". Wow! This is a tiny portion of an 'eulogy' by Lionel Giles, Assistant in the Department of Oriental Books and manuscripts of the British museum, in the introductory chapter of his book ***"Wisdom of the East – The Sayings of Confucius"***

Confucius (or Kongzi) was a Chinese philosopher who lived in the 6th century BCE and who thoughts, expressed in the philosophy of Confucianism, have influenced Chinese culture right up to the present day. Historians and students of history will therefore continue to learn and gain from this Chinese sage. One of his admirers, Roger Brad, has the following to say, lending the expected support to the contributions of the philosopher, Confucius

"If one wants to **run,** they must learn how to **walk**. If one wants to **teach,** they must **learn.** If one wants to define the **future,** they must study the **past.** This quote by Confucius is very simple to understand, it is literal and straightforward. **Without the past, there is no future**. Have you ever wondered what would happen in the future? In order to do so, you must study

how mankind developed into what it is now today. How would a person make movies and films without the inspiration of others' work? It is extremely difficult for some people to think of something original. They need to figure out how movies and films work, how the plot progresses, how characters develop, and how the theme is set. Without the main aspects of making a movie, it would most likely not be interesting to many people. Having a movie without a conflict could be cumbersome for many people. Innovators who want to change the world need to have the basic knowledge of what they are tweaking or upgrading. They must know how it works and operates, and if it would really be better if the changes are made. Gourmet chefs must study how to correctly prepare food, they must know how to keep food clean and safe to eat. **People who would want to define the future (effect) must study the past (cause).** To put this quote in the simplest terms… without studying the general knowledge of math, how does 1+1=2?"

Importance of History as a subject in school curriculum can never be ignored by any government and people. In Nigeria, for example, it is not necessary to lump together, under "Social Studies" courses like History, Geography, and Arabic studies, Cultural or Civic Studies. These other 'courses' by their aims, objectives and contents naturally are concerned with different groups of knowledge, though related to each other. History as a subject must be given the attention it deserves, and should appear in the Nigerian school curriculum as it has been from ancient times. As special arm or branch of studies, history as a subject has important knowledge to impart to the students. Before the Nigerian civil war Elementary or Primary school education prepared pupils for college, also known as secondary school. For students who made good grades, two-year Higher School and university-graduate studies were further options. West African Examinations Council (WAEC) was responsible for conducting the final year College examinations in the English speaking countries of West Africa; namely, **Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Liberia.** The highest number of subjects taken by students in the WAEC examinations was eight (8). Only very bright students were permitted to take nine (9) subjects. The subjects included the following: **English Language, Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, English Literature, History, Geography, Christian Religious Knowledge**

(CRK), and Health Science. Since foreign missionaries were managers of most of the schools, little or no place was allotted to the major or minor Nigerian languages, **Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Efik etc**. In some Mission Schools 'Technical subjects (courses) were offered; namely; **Technical Drawing, Wood Work, and Metal Work**.

In most Mission Schools **Latin** was a school subject, but was later in 1964 replaced with **French** which was widely spoken in most African countries colonized by the French. **"Civic Studies"** as a subject was done in Senior Primary School (Primary 4-6). Proliferation of school subjects started after the Nigerian civil war, when subjects like **Economics, Commerce, Government, Social Studies, and Nigerian major languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba** and many more started appearing as individual 'subjects' in the Nigerian Schools curriculum. The diversification of subjects was the work of the Ministry of education then headed by the Education Minister **Professor Babs Fafunwa**. While Christians studied Christian Religious Knowledge, Nigerian Moslems took care of **Islamic Studies** in their **Koranic Schools**. There was no attempt by government or private agencies to combine Christian Religious Knowledge with Islamic or Koranic Studies or to impose religious and Islamic studies on Nigerian students, in both private and public schools. It was not a compulsory subject, like English and Mathematics.

Importance of History as a School Subject

There are not a few educationists, who believe that lack of knowledge of History on the part of the citizens of any nation is a disaster. History curriculum documents for schools, like other school subjects, often contain statements providing descriptions or definitions of the nature of the subjects, their aims or objectives. Developments in Post-war Nigeria draw attention to the need to provide a justification for the vision and purpose of History as a school subject in our schools. There is no doubt that History lessons and Nation Building relate much. There are a number of adages too, that make the point clearer; *"If you don't know history, you are doomed to repeat it"; "To know where you are going, you must know where you have been"*. There are others I know in Igbo, translated into English like; *"If you didn't know where the rain started beating you, you may not know where it stopped". "One who was not there when a corpse was*

buried, may not know from where to begin if the corpse was to be dug out afterwards"

In many developed and developing countries, there are serious calls for History to be made a **compulsory subject** and for the history curriculum to be strengthened or expanded. The question of 'suppression', 'complete' or 'partial ban' of history studies would never arise. Surely in some dictatorial regimes all over the world, governments ban or suppress history studies for well-known reasons! In Nigeria the situation has not been clear since the military intervention in Nigerian politics in 1966. Was History removed from the school curriculum? Nigerian political and church leaders, including parents, and the so-called 'stake-holders' are showing little concern about what looked like the 'suppression' or 'disappearance' of history from the school curriculum. Many do not see the need to restore it as quickly as possible. Rather the ministry of education has been busy tinkering with the contentious religious issues, like the introducing of **'Islamic studies'** and even going further with reckless ideas of making 'Islamic studies' compulsory for Nigerian students! What of the rumors that **'Arabic'** was becoming the 'official language' of the nation, after English! Unbelievable! While many countries are working hard with issues that would unite them and help produce responsible patriotic citizens, Nigerians look for troubles and create loopholes for divisions and acrimony. In South Africa, for example, a minister of Basic Education was quoted as saying that "reports indicated that many of those South African youths who participated in the looting, violence and vandalism during xenophobic attacks in 2015 were youths we need to equip with an accurate account of our **history** in order for them to make educated decisions regarding their own future." The minister maintained that the curriculum change should aim at contributing to nation building.

What constitutes History then as a school subject? "What is History?" In Nigeria, up to 1966 students were taught mostly what one could describe as **'British, American or Western History'** There was great emphasis on **'World History'**, and students knew little about their countries, past and present. Topics like *Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria, The British Conquest of West Africa, The Royal Niger Company, The Islamic Conquest of Northern Nigeria by Othman Dan Fodio, The Scramble for Africa, The Slave Trade, and many others*. Nigerian students knew the

names of almost all past British Prime ministers, senior and junior ministers in British parliament, and very little about Nigerian political leaders. In most cases only the British views or ideas were disseminated. In the Amalgamation story, for example, students were not told the names of Nigerian political or traditional leaders who signed the document, if there were any signatories at all. Was there any referendum organized to ascertain the wishes of the people before any decision was imposed on Nigerian? Most of these questions are being asked today by both Nigerian youths and the present leadership. If such details did not appear in the history books, what really was the type and value of history Nigerian students learnt those days? What is the purpose of history? This brings us to the heart of our discussion, and 'subject'.

History and Events

What is "History?" What is this discussion all about? From our Secondary School studies I still remember our history teacher told us that history was a branch of knowledge dealing with past events. These events could be continuous, systematic narratives of past occurrences as related to a particular people, country, period, person, etc., usually written as a chronological account. But history could equally discuss related or unrelated themes or topics. It can throw light to some events and often beginning with biographies of the principal actors in political, cultural, social, and religious movements. When for instance, the names like *"Yakubu Gowon and Odumegwu Ojukwu"* are mentioned, many young and elderly Nigerians are able to tell stories of the Nigerian-Biafran conflict, at least inasmuch as they have heard, or read about the event. Some, no doubt stand in the position of recounting some personal eye-witness accounts of the conflicts.

An event could be a noteworthy happening or occurrence. We learnt and copied notes on topics like **"First World War", "Second World War", "The Jewish Holocaust", "Trans-Atlantic-Slave trade", "The Nigerian Coup d'état of 1966"** that led to the Nigeria civil war, also known as "Nigeria-Biafra War". We heard about **"The Rwandan genocide"**. A lot of things continue to happen all over the world today. Some are big events that attract the attention of most nations or regions of the world, while others may have little social media coverage. They are all parts of history.

Some Historical Events NOT reported!

Unfortunately, for well-known reasons most important historical events are not reported. One of them is the following, which we never heard about in history classes until only recently. Such events are important as one can see reading through the Tulsa Pogrom in the United States history. It took place in 1921.

Tulsa Race Riot and African-American Pogrom

The Tulsa race riot, sometimes referred to as the Tulsa **massacre, Tulsa pogrom**, or **Tulsa race riot of 1921**, took place on May 31 and June 1, 1921, when a **mob of white citizens** (KKK alias Ku Klux Klan), a secret, dangerous, white American nationalist, supremacist, right-wing extremist, terrorist, violent organization attacked residents and businesses of the **African-American community of Greenwood in Tulsa, Oklahoma**. The discriminated African-ex-slaves had successfully built a 'paradise on earth' for the Blacks in Greenwood, Tulsa and the white supremacists were not happy. **This is considered one of the worst incidents of racial violence in the history of the United States.** The attack carried out on the **ground and by air**, destroyed more than 35 blocks of the district, at the time and where the wealthiest black community in the United States lived. More than 800 people were admitted to hospitals and more than 6,000 black residents were arrested and detained for several days. The Oklahoma Bureau of Vital Statistics officially recorded 36 dead, but the American Red Cross declined to provide an estimate. How many Blacks were really massacred? Some sources put the figure to 10,000 victims!

The riot began over a Memorial Day weekend after 19-year-old Dick Rowland, a black shoe-shiner, was accused of assaulting Sarah Page, the 17-year-old white elevator operator of the nearby Drexel Building. After he was taken into custody, rumors raced through the black community that he was at risk of being **lynched.** A group of armed African-American men rushed to the police station where the young suspect was held, to prevent a lynching, as a white crowd had gathered. A confrontation developed between black and white people; shots were fired, and twelve people were killed, ten white and two black. As news of these deaths spread throughout the city, mob

violence exploded. Thousands of white people rampaged through the black community that night and the next day, killing men and women, burning and looting stores and homes. About 10,000 black people were left homeless, and property damage amounted to more than $1.5 million in real estate and $750,000 in personal property ($31 million in 2018).

It was known that **policemen had joined the mob** and **National Guardsmen fired machine guns into the black community and planes dropped sticks of dynamite**. In an eyewitness account discovered in 2015, Greenwood attorney Buck Colbert Franklin described watching a dozen or more planes, which had been dispatched by the city police force, drop burning balls of turpentine on Greenwood's rooftops. Many survivors left Tulsa. Black residents who stayed in the city remained dumbfounded about the terror, violence, and losses of this event. **The riot was largely omitted from local, state, as well as national, histories: The Tulsa race riot of 1921 was rarely mentioned in history books, classrooms or even in private. Blacks and whites alike grew into middle age unaware of what had taken place.**

In 1996, seventy-five years after the riot, with the number of survivors declining, a bi-partisan group in the state legislature authorized formation of the Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. Members were appointed to investigate events, interview survivors, hear testimony from the public, and prepare a report of events. There was an effort toward **public education** about these events through the process. The Commission's final report, published in 2001, said that the city had conspired with the mob of white citizens against the Tulsa black community; it recommended a program of reparations to survivors and their descendants. The state passed legislation to establish some scholarships for descendants of survivors, encourage economic development of Greenwood, and develop a memorial park in Tulsa to the riot victims. The park was dedicated in 2010.

History and Personalities

Names of persons, political and religious leaders also link us up with particular events and locations associated with certain countries and movements. We learn parts of historical events through the activities of leaders or personalities. So many world and local leaders and personalities are associated with events in

many countries. **Confucius,** the great Chinese sage and philosopher. Chairman Mao Zedong, commonly known as **Chairman Mao**, was a Chinese communist revolutionary who became the founding father of the People's Republic of China, which he ruled as the Chairman of the Communist Party**.** **Joseph Stalin** was a Soviet revolutionary and politician of the Soviet Union from the mid-1920s until his death in 1953, and served as General Secretary of the communist party and formalized the Marxist-Leninist ideology. There are more names of great personalities that at a glance may summarize the history of their countries and the roles they played, which as well brought about changes in their localities and in the world at large. Some names that readily come to mind include **Fidel Castro of Cuba, Martin Luther King (Junior) of USA, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Emeka Odimegwu Ojukwu of Biafra and many others.** Some American Presidents are remembered better than others for various reasons. **George Washington** – first American president, **Abraham Lincoln** – 16th American president, led his country through its civil war and fought for the abolition of slavery in the USA, **Barrack Obama** – the first American Black President.

Some political leaders are easily remembered for nasty roles they played in local and world history. They are 'famous' figures in history. They include **Adolf Hitler**, who was the leader of Nazi Germany from 1934 to 1945. He initiated fascist policies that led to World War II and the deaths of at least 11 million people, including the mass murder of an estimated 6 million Jews, **Idi Amin Dada of Uganda** known for his brutal rule. **Mobutu Sese Seko,** president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire-Kinshasa) identified with dictatorship. These names and many more tell stories that would fill volumes of books. They are all part and parcel of history studies. Names of some countries trigger fear in minds of people – **Rwanda, North and South Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria and Somalia!** Somalia's endless war and crisis over the past 20 years: from Cold War to civil war (1988-91); state collapse, clan wars and famine (1991-92); and international humanitarian intervention in the 1990s.

History is more than a series of events

The word 'history' comes ultimately from Ancient Greek ***(historía),*** meaning "inquiry", "knowledge from inquiry", or

"judge". It was in that sense that Aristotle used the word in his "Inquiries about Animals". The Greek word was borrowed into Classical Latin as ***historia,*** meaning "investigation, inquiry, research, account, description, written account of past events, writing of history, historical narrative, recorded knowledge of past events, story, narrative".

Our friend John Paul Okwudili, a Nigerian History student, adds a welcome voice, when he states: "History, after local or tribal languages is the most important subject in any part of the world as a subject in schools. He insists that "History is the soul of any existing society. Forefathers, warriors, heroes, founders in important fields of life, philanthropists, humanitarian men and women, writers, prominent authors and even honest, good and dishonest leaders of nations make history. The writers of national anthems, inventors, great researchers, good teachers and professors, great events, conservators of ancient infrastructures, etc, make history. All these make History and any nation where history is not taught in schools or where history is ignored cannot be called an existing nation or country. History makes a country or nation. History and Philosophy are the ancillary of education and knowledge. History is very important in a community of human beings and must be taken very serious for the conservation of memory and story itself". *(sic)*

Ancient and Modern History

Sometimes historians talk about "Ancient" and "Modern" history. The history of the civilizations of the Mediterranean areas and the Near East up to the fall of the Western Roman Empire in AD 476 is often referred to as 'Ancient history'. Bible studies reveal a lot of ancient history. "Modern" history can refer up to the present day, from some arbitrary points taken to represent the end of the Middle Ages. In some contexts it may be contrasted with "ancient" rather than "medieval" history, and start, e.g., from the Fall of the Western Roman Empire. Ancient or modern, all the accounts, recorded in books or transmitted orally from one generation to the other, form the topics or accounts of what students must know about the world and local events that shape and reshape human lives every day.

Historical 'Terms', 'Themes', and "Names"

There are some issues, topics, discourses, and names that cannot easily be categorized as 'ancient' or 'modern', irrelevant, or obsolete. The 'terms' will ever remain vivid in the minds of peoples of our planet till the end of the time! The stories which connect to some names can make people shudder, quiver, and tremble convulsively. Some would say, "Please, don't mention it again". Some tell stories of unbelievable shocking human tragedies, and answer the questions "What", "Why", "When", "How", "Which", and "Really?" Name some: (1) Anglo-Burmese wars (1824-1826) (2) World wars (3) Vietnamese war (4) Korean war (5) The Berlin Wall (6) Cold War (7) Mexican-Border Wall (8) Arab-Israeli war (9) Iran/Iraqi war (10) Syrian civil war. (11) Rwandan genocide, and many more. "Please, you may not mention these names again!" Many people get heart attack remembering them! (1) Adolf Hitler (2) Emperor Nero and Valerian (3) Henry VIII (4) Martin Luther (5) Prophet Mohammed (6) Ahmed Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto (7) Murtala Muhammad (8) Sani Abacha (9) Ibrahim Badamose Babangida (10) Diezani Alison Madueke, (11) Osama Bin Laden (12) Yasser Arafat, to name but a few in this category. Their stories evoke a lot of bad feelings and make full titles of various books.

You see I get agitated when I hear stories about these 'themes', too: (1) Slavery - ancient and modern (2) Colonialism and Neo-colonialism (3) Racism (4) Apartheid (5) Genocide (6) Ethnic cleansing (7) Hiroshima (8) Atomic bomb (9) Chemical warfare (10) Nuclear war or Nuclear weapons.

What are these terms and institutions? (1) Democracy (2) Dictatorship (3) Communism (4) Anarchy (5) UNO (6) NATO (7) OAU (8) Aligned and non-Aligned nations (9) EU (10) International Court of Justice at The Hague? Please can you tell us more about these interesting events and personalities?" (1) The Sputnik (2) Moon-Landing (3) Albert Einstein (4) Bill Gates (5) The Apple (6) Social media (7) Cell phone (8) The Bible and Koran (9) Jesus Christ (10) William Shakespeare (11) Mother Theresa of Calcutta (12) Wole Soyinka (13) Chinua Achebe (14) Pope Paul VI (15) Pope John Paul II. History, as a subject in school curriculum is a very important course that can never be ignored by any educational authorities in any part of the world today, and definitely never in Nigeria! History should be a compulsory subject in Nigerian schools and colleges.

How does the knowledge of history affect us?

The study of history enables us to understand how past human actions affect the present and influence our future, and it allows us to evaluate these effects. So, history is about learning how to think about the past, which affects the present, in a disciplined way. History is a process of enquiry. Therefore, it is about asking questions about the past: What happened? When did it happen? Why did it happen? What were the short-term and long-term results? It involves thinking critically about the stories people tell us about the past, as well as the stories that we tell ourselves. In most simply sense, and example; what led to the Nigeria-Biafra war? Who were the key players in that tragedy? Who did what during the war? There is a lot of information the youths who didn't experience that war should know about it. Are there History Books or documents within reach? History is a distinctive and well-established academic discipline with its own methods and discourses. Its field of study is potentially limitless, in that it encompasses the totality of past human experience. Among scholars who study history there can be differences and even controversies between some who regard it as an account of an actual past, and others who view it as an entirely imagined or constructed past". Here we might encounter those topics, some of us heard about or copied down in our history notebooks, which they called "World History". Are the 'stories' of discoveries of the 'New World' or the "Dark Continent' by mainly British Explorers facts or fiction?

There are important elements involved. There are what might be referred to as historical concepts and skills, change and development, the relationship between the past, present and future, and enquiry and questioning. There is the case for history as an academic discipline, stressing particularly its narrative, critical and constructed nature. Most nations of the world or communities have their own 'history' or 'histories', for example, 'the origins of the world', 'Why and how sin entered the human society', 'how the man became the head of the family'. Whichever vision of history scholars adopt, there is need to have at hand (1) Trained History teachers in Nigeria; (2) Available **History Text-Books** for schools and colleges in Nigeria; (3) **Curriculum Planners**. This last group should draw the scheme of work and course for different grades of students, namely Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Institutions. And very

importantly, there must be **"National History Commission**" appointed by government and Ministry of Education to see about the relevant topics for students of history and as well approve adequate history books for the entire nation or for particular regions of the nations.

The Nigerian Post-War Situation

Any 'history', 'stories', of the past and the present Nigerian state, before and after the amalgamation to the present, may not be complete without the inclusion of the **"Biafra Event**". This book does not set out to accomplish all that may be required by all competent authorities. The author has mainly the interest of **school and college students** at heart; ***hence care has been taken to explain even in details and in parenthesis certain difficult or 'technical' terms, words and expressions, which younger readers might find hard to handle***. In some areas these terms and expressions have been purposely highlighted for emphasis. Since Nigerian political leadership at a time, especially during the periods of military rule decided to suppress History in school and college curriculum, for whatever reasons, why shouldn't any individual or groups pick up courage and produce a History book for our youths in schools and colleges? Why couldn't Nigerian historians by profession continue from where the renowned Nigerian Historian, **Professor Kenneth Dike** and fellow associates stopped? **History and not Islamic studies** should be made compulsory for all Nigerian schools. How can a nation grow with absolute ignorance of the records of its people and institutions?

Our present History Book covers records mostly from the Amalgamation to the present times. The present author is not a history professor, and can't boast to know the best tools for organizing all the thoughts as he has done in his other publications on various subjects, including, Theology, Philosophy, Sociology, Languages, Religion, Literature, Education, and politics. The author by the way is only trying to persuade Igbo and Nigerian historians, who may be better qualified on the subject to produce what would look like **a comprehensive History of Post-War Nigeria**, much better than what we have in our possession today. Perhaps Nigerian scholars, professors, educationists, authors and writers might rise from slumber and 'force' Nigerian politicians to reconsider their position on the future generation of our youths and future

leaders and restore fully Nigeria History studies in our institutions of learning. **History states the bitter truth, which must be told, no matter whose horse is gored.** The ancients state it, namely that it is hard to cover the moon with just a palm (the conclave part of the human hand). Certainly Nigerian military leaders from Yakubu Gowon to the last recycled ones in civilian uniform could not handle the realities of the Biafran story in print, neither could any serious Historian, Igbo or non-Igbo accommodate even an edited version of the **'History of Igbo Holocaust".** What are critics saying?

Lack or absence of a systematic documentation of what we can call "Nigerian Events" since the civil war was the worst tragedy that struck Nigeria and in short removed the nation from the African School and College Geographical and Historical map. Hitherto Nigeria has rightly been identified as the leader of Africa, the wealthiest and most powerful nation in Africa. Today, Nigerian school children and students at all levels of education have been left with only headlines and scraps of historical details about their fatherland and these can only be collated or copied, not from textbooks, but only parts of uncertified private articles, write-ups, commentaries, speeches of politicians and lecturers 'online' on the social media! Collation of statistical records of government activities may not contribute much in history studies for younger students. Some new 'History' books in Nigeria are full of such data and contain little narratives of events and authentic historical records.

What a piteous spectacle! History studies must fully be restored in Nigerian schools, from Kindergarten to the Universities! A reality or still in the making, irrespective of the number of years it takes the people to realize the dream, the younger generation of Nigerians must know their history. It is inconceivable, shocking, and indeed sad, that at a time in Nigeria, certainly during or after the civil war, a bunch of Nigerian leaders decided to delete the name **"Biafra"** from the world map, for reasons best known to them. How many Nigerians have asked questions? It doesn't sound funny. What is the future of a nation or a generation whose citizens might remain ignorant of 'stories' of forebears? What simple facts and figures do Nigerian youths know about their fatherland? Authentic historical facts or documents about Nigerian-Biafra conflicts are hard to come by and most of those available have been 'mutilated' and 'demolished' by narrators and certain truths of the matter and facts, distorted, and those that remain, can be

said to be "corrupt", depending on who is telling the story and from what part of Nigeria he is coming from! There are a lot of dark pages of 'Nigerian History', of facts and figures about Nigeria most Nigerians, youths and adults are absolutely ignorant of.

What is the population of Nigeria?

Soon Nigerians begin to compare with the big world powers – **United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Soviet Union, China and others;** how wonderful these nations are, economically, politically, technologically and so on; the type of democracies they practice, the infrastructural set up, the 'miracles' that happen there, peace and order and what have you! Little do our Nigerian 'lecturers' try to let us know that almost every toddler in America knows the actual figures, the population of the United States of America, and the population of each and even country and their regions and states! **What is the population of Nigeria at a glance?** Unfortunately there are no reliable census figures letting Nigerians and the world at large know exactly the number of human beings who either by birth or adoption are Nigerians, just like Americans or other European countries can confirm in matters of seconds or minutes the population of their people in 1750, 1950, 2018 and even projected figures in the year 2050, with possibly with a margin of error less than 1%! With such accurate figures they are able to plan ahead of time, and take care of possible economic and demographic (increase or decrease in population) problems Nigerians, adults and youths have absolutely no idea of the population of Nigeria in 1914 or 1960, 1970, and certainly in 2019. Today we get a 'quotation' of an 'estimation' of 120 million. Tomorrow we get new figures 'about 180 million.' The number could rise to 250 million or there-about in the year 2020! Who knows what the figure will look like in 2099! Some Nigerian census pundits already tell the world that by the end of this century Nigeria may become the most populous nation, not only in Africa, but in the whole world!

Some other questions about certain grouping systems remain unanswered or unresolved. Why '**Hausa-Fulani?".** Do we know why Hausas and Fulanis are usually grouped together? How did each group exist separately before, and when did they get married? What is the 'estimated population' of the **Hausas** and that of the **Fulanis?** On what grounds do Nigerian

politicians and certain authors quote Nigerian population estimates in 'percentages?' What Nigerians read or hear often is something like this: "More than 50% of Nigerian population is Muslim and Christians South about 30% or 40%. Who are the rest of the 20 or 10%?? Are they 'Animists, Communists, or Atheists? Among the Hausa-Fulani group, how do we identify their major leaders? Are the following, for example, Fulanis or Hausas – Tafawa Balewa, Ahmed Bello - Sardauna of Sokoto, Murtala Muhammad, Ibrahim Babangida, Muhammed Buhari? Are the large numbers of 'migrants' and herdsmen who freely cross Nigerian borders from Chad, Niger, Mali and other North African countries and settle in Nigeria really Nigerian citizens? How do we differentiate Nigerian citizens from foreign Islamic settlers?

This is why it is impossible to organize any 'free', 'fair' and 'credible' elections in Nigeria, whether on local government, state or national level. Some skeptics put it this way, "it will be easier for the head of a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than any exercise called 'election' in Nigeria to be accepted as 'reliable'! There are no census figures. There are no reliable records of registered 'voters' or lists according to their constituencies! Any election exercise in Nigeria can be called 'fraud' without any atom of doubt. Without reliable figures how can government prepare for the exercise and check possible irregularities? How can in a constituency with a presumed record of 1000 registered voters, at the end of the exercise produce a winner with 3000 votes? Can it be attributed to the usual 'electoral fraud' or 'statistical absurdity'? This is just one single example; how and where 'historical data' can play a vital role in the development of a nation. But elsewhere, in the free world, history plays a very important part and function in the lives of the people and government! What of the Igbo? Today it is estimated that Igbo population in Nigeria is about 50 million. How reliable are these figures? What is the population of Igbos living in each state of Nigeria and in the Diaspora today? Are the population figures provided by states in Nigeria reliable enough to be acceptable as basis for allocation of funds?

History forces students to think and ask questions.

Many Nigerian concerned authors and critics have exposed some of the undisputable reasons for government's suppression of **Nigerian History** as an important subject in schools and

colleges**.** Rather officials responsible show much interest in **Arabic and Islamic studies.** They even take further steps to making them compulsory subjects for all Nigerian students – Christians and Moslems! With no one to challenge them, Christians will wake up one day and find out how their plans had materialized. Who were consulted when Nigeria became a member of the OIC! The following are some of the reasons for the sagging interest in Nigerian history studies. A book can be written on each of the following ten (10) topics and Nigerian youths should know what happened and what might still be going on.

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(1) They didn't want you to know that Usman Dan Fodio was a migrant who arrived and was welcomed as guest by the Hausa king of Gobir. He later attacked, killed and took over his host's kingdom. That was the origin of Fulani-colonization policy.

(2). They didn't want you to know that the British deliberately rigged the Nigerian political system, using the constitutions of 1922 to 1960 to sow the seeds of rivalry and disunity and stop Nigeria from being truly independent. And when it became obvious Nigeria must be left free, the British stood for the North, for their selfish reasons, during the Nigeria-Biafra conflict till date.

(3) They wouldn't want you to find out how the Northern People's Congress (NPC), willfully disbanded the Action Group (AG) by pitting Akintola against Awolowo to weaken the opposition during the First Republic.

(4) They didn't want you to find out that the North was the first region to seek for secession in 1953 following the first motion for self-rule in the parliament. Northern representatives opposed this motion and were booed and derided by the Lagos media. Northern leaders threatened to pull out of Nigeria.

(5) They didn't want you to find out that the 1964 elections were so rigged by the NPC government and when Awolowo protested he was tried and jailed for "treasonable felony"

(6) They didn't want you to find out that the first coup of January 1966 was not an Igbo coup. It was a patriotic coup by young officers who wanted to save their failing country from corrupt politicians. These officers were only so naive that they failed to "balance" the ethnic composition of their groups and their victims. They were subsequently framed as Igbo coup plotters. The coup plotters had vowed to install Awolowo as the next president of the country!

(7) They didn't want you to discover that Yakubu Gowon was merely the gentle face of a terrorist Northern government. He was handpicked as a Christian and used to cover up genocide. He stood idly by and watched as thousands of Igbos (everyone from the old south east) were attacked and killed all over Nigeria; yet when the unwanted Igbos decided enough was enough and wanted secession, he started preaching about "keeping Nigeria one", as directed by the Northern cabal and the British masters. The majority of the northern leaders, including the military had wanted to pick Murtala Muhammed as the leader of the military government after they assassinated Aguiyi Ironsi.
(8)They didn't want you to discover that "unity" was not the real reason the federal government fought the civil war. It was oil. Leaders of the north had decided to secede after the July 1966 coup. Remember Gowon's famous declaration after the so-called retaliation or counter-coup: "There is no basis for Nigerian unity, which has been so badly rocked, not only once, but several times" (August 3, 1966). Aburi Accord was mutually agreed as a first step to separation. It was only after the British High Commissioner met with Gowon and told him that oil would be an important mineral later that Gowon repudiated the accord and made war inevitable. Then Gowon and his military cabinet turned to force: "To keep Nigeria one is task that must be done".
(9) They didn't want you to discover that the creation of states in 1967 was not to encourage development. It was purely to divide the South East and prevent its other ethnic groups from forming a common front with the Igbos. Today, the same ethnic groups are treated like colonized peoples with no value except the oil in their land. Today the major ethnic group that played a vital role in the genocidal war against the Igbos, unfortunately Gowon's ethnic group is under extermination by the Hausa-Fulani Islamic Jihadists, Boko Haram, in the cloak of Fulani Cattle Herdsmen.
(10). They didn't want you to discover that the people of Port Harcourt were promised free inheritance of the houses and assets of Igbos in exchange for ditching (getting rid of, end association) with Biafra and supporting Nigeria. Today, we see the consequences. In short, they don't want you to think,

Ignorance of history is a disaster

Can anyone contest any of the above 'allegations?' Would the subsequent governments, dominated by the Hausa-Fulani and their collaborators from the South, have felt comfortable with the

circulation of the true facts and situation of affairs in Nigeria, while each administration grabbed its own share of the 'oil wealth?' The only few books Nigerians have seen around are individual publications on the Biafran tragedy by a few Igbo authors or old hackneyed and boring pre-independence historical accounts of Nigeria and the British. We must remain grateful to these few Igbo authors otherwise most of the younger generation of Nigerian youths, born after the war, would have been completely lost.

In whichever side Nigerians find themselves, Moslems or Christians, believers or atheists it is obvious that history has little or nothing to do with religious affiliations. History simply means an "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation". It is the study of the past as it is described in written documents. Events occurring before written records are referred to as oral tradition and are part of modern history. It is an umbrella term that relates to past events as well as the memory, discovery, collection, organization, presentation, and interpretation of information about these events.

Biblical History or Studies is a big department in religious education and theology because the amount of materials the department handles is enormous. What we call the Bible or the Koran was once oral stories about the ancient religious leaders and their activities. Their successors and scribes later put down into writing collections of these stories. The scribes or 'secretaries' edited some of the materials and finally we could have with us stories about the ancient Babylonians, Israelites or the Egyptians, as well as the prophets, Jesus and other messengers of God. In advanced Tertiary institutions Biblical History occupies an important position among courses or subjects studied. And without experts in these studies, including Exegetes and Biblical Theologians, most Christians or members of other religious organizations or denominations would have remained in the dark as regards our concepts of God, life, and the here-after.

A Historian as an Essayist, a Writer

An essayist is one who writes articles, compositions, and papers on different topics for publication in newspapers, magazines or periodicals for pleasure or work. An essayist can become a historian. Anyone can write history, tell stories of past and present events. You, as a student can write an essay, a school or

class composition about your family (1) (Family history), all you can remember, all you have been told about your ancestors till the present times. You can write ancient and present stories about your kindred, village, community or town (2) (Tribal or ethnic history), all you can remember about "The people of the Lower Niger", "Ngwa", "Ikwerre", "Ohaji-Egbema", "Niger-Delta", "Arochukwu", "Ibibio", "Ohafia warriors" etc. A 'historian' should also have good knowledge of Geography. In our case here, knowledge of the earth and its atmosphere, human activities and locations, as they affect the topics and themes being discussed.

"General Knowledge" is important

While the ancients tell us that knowledge is power; it is as well true that 'ignorance is a disease. And there are many **'educated ignoramuses'** all over the world. You, young or elderly Black African, a **Nigerian,** what would be your answer to a White person who asks you about 'one of your African brothers or sisters he claimed he met somewhere in Africa **- Kenya or Zambia?** What would be your reaction if he a westerner asks you whether **Nigeria shares border with South Africa**, **Zimbabwe or even China!** What would be your reaction when he asks you to tell him more about Africans who sleep on top of trees or those who have tails and jump about on tree branches? What of naked Africans who have never worn anything called 'clothes?' What of those whites who claim that Africans use only leaves to cover their private parts? What of hunger, poverty, wars, corruption and refugees in Africa! Western news media surely report only about evil, diseases and disasters in Africa. There are no cities or roads in Africa. And there are many ignoramuses all over the world and lack of knowledge is a disaster. History is important and necessary. There is nothing good in knowing all about America and United Kingdom and little or nothing about your own state, country or continent. Nigerian students know more and teach those who have little knowledge of **other world languages, History and Geography**!

What is a Continent?

There is need to rehearse our old history and geography lessons. It is often referred to as **"General Knowledge".** A continent is

one of several very large landmasses of the world. Generally identified by convention rather than any strict criteria, up to seven regions are commonly regarded as continents. Some are big, others small. Some are familiar with 2, 3, or 4 climatic conditions each year. From the biggest to the smallest we have (1) Asia (2) Africa (3) North America (4) South America (5) Antarctica (6) Europe (7) Australia. Hopefully you will be able to name at least one city in these continents – Asia (China), Africa (Nigeria), North America (USA), South America (Argentina), Europe (United Kingdom), Australia(Canberra), Antarctica (about 98% of this continent is said to be covered by ice and deserts and with less than a population of 1,000 inhabitants.)

What of Seasons, Weather and Climate?

History students should know what these are at a glance, even as part of our elementary school knowledge! Seasons are divisions of the year, defined by changes in weather and the position of Earth in its orbit around the Sun. The seasons are said to occur because of the tilt in the Earth's axis with respect to the plane of Earth's orbit. Spring, summer, autumn and winter are four well recognized seasons. But in some African countries, including Nigeria, one may talk about two main seasons – Rainy (Planting) and Dry season, though it is generally 'hot' throughout the year, except a short period of 'harmattan' (a dry dusty easterly or north-easterly wind on the West African coast often occurring from December to February) Weather? Weather or Climate is the state of the atmosphere, at a place and time, as regards heat, dryness, sunshine, wind, rain etc.) If the weather is good we go out for a walk.) Please do not step out or drive the meteorologists (weather forecasters) are talking about likely storms, over-flooding, landslides, hurricane or tornadoes and even possible earthquake. Many Americans may not forget 'hurricane Catharina!

Is Africa a village, a town, a country or a continent?

In a college/university interview conducted in the United States of America in Mid August 2018, none of the students questioned could differentiate **between a country and a continent**, especially as African was concerned. Was it a foolish exercise? Do not be embarrassed or get angry. For some white people, Africa is a village or at most a town. But however, we leave the

whites alone. They are not ashamed when they are ignorant of simple facts and figures; but Africans must memorize the history of all the western nations!

With no further enquiry students should know that **Africa is the world's second largest and second most-populous continent.** At about 30.3 million km² including adjacent islands, it covers 6% of Earth's total surface area and 20% of its land area. Africa is a continent made up of 54 sovereign nations. But some Europeans, and Americans very learned and unlearned, till today strongly believe that Africa in a bush village with an unfriendly hot climatic condition. It rarely rains in Africa. There is always drought and hunger! This is what they think!

But surely Africa is a continent with the following populations of each of the 54 countries as in 2015, to the nearest million, namely (1) Nigeria: 181 m (2) Ethiopia: 103 m (3) Egypt: 89 m (4) Democratic Republic of the Congo: 77 m (5) South Africa – 55.2 m (6) Tanzania: 51.4 m (7) Kenya: 45.6 m (8) Sudan: 40.2 m (9) Algeria: 40.1 m (10) Uganda: 37.4 m (11) Morocco: 34.3 m (12) Mozambique: 28.3 (13) Ghana: 27.5 m (14) Angola: 25.3 m (15) Ivory Coast: 23.3 m (16) Madagascar: 23.1 m (17) Cameroon: 21.3 m (18) Niger: 18.2 m (19) Burkina Faso: 18.1 m (20) Mali: 17.4 m (21) Malawi: 16.4 m (22) Zambia: 15.3 (23) Somalia: 14.5 m (24) Senegal: 14.2 m (25) Chad: 13.3 m (26) Zimbabwe: 13.1 m (27) South Sudan: 12.4 m (28) Rwanda: 11.6 m (29) Tunisia: 11.3m (30) Guinea: 10.7 m (31) Benin: 10.3 m (32) Burundi: 10.2 m (33) Togo: 7.4 m (34) Eritrea: 7.2 m (35) Sierra Leone: 6.5 m (36) Libya: 6.2 m (37) Republic of the Congo: 4.5 m (38) Central African Republic: 4.4 m (39) Liberia: 4.2 m (40) Mauritania: 3.6 m (41) Namibia: 2.2 m (42) Botswana: 2.2 m (43) Gambia: 2.2 m (44) Equatorial Guinea: 2.1 m (45) Lesotho: 2.0m m (46) Gabon: 1.8 m (47) Guinea Bissau: 1.7 m (48) Mauritius: 1.2 m (49) Swaziland: 1.1 m (50) Djibouti: 0.96 m (51) Comoros: 0.78 m (52) Western Sahara: 0.52 m (53) São Tomé & Principe: 0.20 m (54) Seychelles: 0.007 m.

Nigeria, the largest and most populous nation in Africa

What can you tell the foreigner about Nigeria? You should have known that Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960 and became a Republic in 1963. What is Republic? A student should know that a Republic is a form of government in which power is explicitly vested in the people, who in turn exercise their power

through elected representatives. Today, the terms **republic and democracy** are virtually interchangeable, but historically the two differed.

Nigeria operates a democratic system of government simply defined as (government of the people, by the people and for the people). We have the upper House of Representatives, the Senate; the lower house - House of Representatives, and representatives in the State House of assembly, as well as on the local government level. Before the end of the First Republic which ushered in military regimes, Nigeria had strong regional governments – East, West, North and Mid-West. The military terminated regional governments and created 36 states plus the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, with strong center at Abuja. Students may have to know about the creation of states; namely that on 27th May 1967 the regions were dissolved and 12 states created, subsequently further divided into 19 states and a federal capital territory (3 Feb 1976), 21 states (23 Sep 1987), 30 states (27 Aug 1991), and 36 states (1 Oct 1996). Local government administration has 774 local government areas (LGAs). Each local government area is administered by a Local Government Council consisting of a chairman who is the Chief Executive of the LGA, and other elected members who are referred to as Councilors. Each of the areas is further subdivided into wards with a minimum of ten and a maximum of fifteen for each area.

The **36 states** are (1) Abia (2) Adamawa (3) Akwa Ibom (4) Anambra (5) Bauchi (6) Bayelsa (7) Benue (8) Borno (9) Cross River (10) Delta (11) Ebonyi (12) Enugu (13) Edo (14) Ekiti (15) Gombe (16) Imo (17) Jigawa (18) Kaduna (19) Kano (20) Katsina (21) Kebbi (22) Kogi (23) Kwara (24) Lagos (26) Nasarawa (26) Niger (27) Ogun (28) Ondo (29) Osun (30) Oyo (31) Plateau (32) Rivers (33) Sokoto (34) Taraba (35) Yobe (36) Zamfara. There a lot more Nigerian students must know about their country, even before engaging in serious studies of African or European or American history. Didn't the ancients once again say that "Charity begins at home?"

"Do You Teach Them History?" (Nelson Mandela)

"What do young Nigerians think about your leaders and their country and Africa? **Do you teach them history**? Do you have lessons on how your past leaders stood by us and gave us large amounts of money? You know I hear from Angolans and Mozambicans and Zimbabweans how your people opened their

hearts and their homes to them. I was in prison then, but we know how your leaders punished western companies who supported Apartheid. **Your leaders must spend a lot of your resources on education. "Educate children of the poor,** so that they can get out of poverty. Poverty does not breed confidence. Give young Nigerians good education. Teach them the value of hard work and sacrifice, and discourage them from crimes which are destroying your image as a good people." *(Excerpts taken from a 2007 interview with Nelson Mandela conducted by Dr Hakeem Baba-Ahmed)*

History can't be ignored

There is surely 'waning interest' in history studies in Nigeria, unlike in other countries of the world. Whether as part of 'Government' as a subject, Civic education' or 'Social Studies', the knowledge of 'stories' of past events, local, national and international is crucial in the modern times as it was in the past. In the United States, for example, one may not become a **United States Citizen** without undergoing intensive course in **American History**, past and present. Nigerian students should however be made to understand the ugly implications of excluding History from their Secondary school and College education. This is why we have produced our ***"Post-War Nigerian History Book for Schools and Colleges"***.

CHAPTER 2

AT THE CENTER OF THE POST-WAR NIGERIAN HISTORY: THE IGBOS OF NIGERIA

> ***"Igbos are wandering Jews of West Africa – gifted, aggressive, westernized; at best envied and resented - but mostly despised by their neighbors in the federation" (Henry Kissinger, January 28, 1969)***

The above 'citation' summarizes the truth about who the Igbos are. Only a few ***Anti-Igbo elements*** or the same ***'Igbophobists'*** will try to instigate controversies over the 'quote', its source or authenticity. But Igbos are used to such frivolous antics of their enemies**.** ***Anti-Semitism*** waxes strong today, many decades after the Holocaust. However as the ethnic group whose secessionist bid nearly led to the breakup of the Nigerian federation and eventually to the three-year civil war, there is no way one can do justice to post-war Nigerian history without letting our younger generation of Nigerians know who the Igbos are, and as well, what the rest of Nigerians, who care, say or think about the Igbos of Nigeria. Our story might equally be of interest to our non-Nigerian friends and world community. From the Igbo-Biafra perspective, there is need to revisit **"the Igbos of Nigeria"** in the first few chapters of our book. Stories of Igbo 'bounce-back' into the mainstream of Nigerian economic development in particular have been told in rhymes and parables. We have seen a lot of the stuff already. They are a tribe, powerful people to reckon with in areas of education and economic development. We explore more of the Igbo background and strength in this chapter. Who are the Igbos? A lot of books and documentaries, written by foreign and Igbo authors, are all over the place, and they tell the stories of the Igbo race.

The Igboland, the Igbo nation

Geographically, the Igbos occupy the present Southeastern states of Nigeria, made up of the following states: Anambra, Imo, Abia, Enugu and Ebonyi. Igbo influence, command, territory and homeland extend to the present Rivers state, Edo and

Delta states. Igbos are also found in the areas known as Middle Belt of Nigeria. By nature, the Igbos like migration to other parts of Nigeria and the rest of the world to do business and discover better opportunities for survival and development. Though they love their native homeland, villages and communities, and love to return to the village at least once a year, normally during Christmas or traditional festivities, the Igbo quest for settlement in the other cities of Nigeria and elsewhere in the world is irresistible and unprecedented.

The saying that 'every third black person found in any part of world is a Nigerian' is true of the Igbo. Substitute 'Igbo' for 'Nigerian' and you will be perfectly correct. Right from the colonial era, there was no part of Northern Nigeria one would not meet or find an Igbo. They settled and did whatever business or trade like the owners of the land. They easily integrate, mix with owners of the land, and learn their languages and dialects. Behold the Igbo! As his business flourishes, he acquires land and begins to develop the new land of his sojourn. Right from the early '50s, the Igbos had dominated the civil service and education in Northern Nigeria. Northern politicians including Ahmed Bello Sardauna of Sokoto have never been happy about what they refer to as "Igbo domination" Often the Igbo forgets his village or town, as the sources of his newfound wealth are almost located elsewhere, except in his home village in Igboland. His children, born and raised in Hausaland, Yorubaland and in other Nigerian cities speak perfect languages and dialects of the 'communities.' They embrace the culture of the people, except perhaps their religion. Most Igbo politicians, pre-war army officers and businessmen and women were born and raised in Northern Nigeria. Only their last or surnames identify them as Igbo. Some attached their places of birth in the North to their full names, **Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. Nnamdi Azikiwe was born and raised in Zungeru, Northern Nigeria.**

During the war, certainly the Igbos lost almost their whole life support, their entire earnings and properties in the rest of Nigeria. As refugees back home, in the villages, many could not even boast of a hut, a small bungalow in Igboland. Their entire life investment was outside Igboland. Even as they returned to their former territories after the war, in Kano, Kaduna, Zaria, Maiduguri, Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and other big and small cities all over Nigeria, most Igbos, one can say, have not learnt much from the Biafra war experiences! They have an insatiable greed for land acquisition and development outside their

'Igboland.' Visit the big cities of Nigeria, including Abuja, Lagos, Kano and Port Harcourt and see the Igbo at work! Their friends and families who frown at their foolishness, stubborn and arrogant disposition, or lack of common sense to admit or recognize that "there is nothing like home', and that "charity begins at home", refer to this anomaly as a great tragedy that has struck the Igbo race! If Nigerian youths are found in almost every remote corner of the world today as well as in every capital city of Europe, North America and Asia, count them, you find out that more than 80% of them must be Igbos!

For long many authors who admired Igbos have not stopped pointing out that the Igbo have become known as the *'Jews of Africa'* and as well are loved, despised and envied for their achievements and acquisitive spirit, both in their fatherland Nigeria and elsewhere all over the world. Some people go to the extent of identifying successful Negroes or ex-slaves in America as Igbos or at least having "Igbo blood or roots." Sometimes such praises lavished on Igbo race do not go down well in the eyes and hearts of their enemies, mostly Nigerians of the other ethnic groups. One can equally lament with Ojukwu (Jr) over the Igbo dilemma. The frustrations are too high: "The reason for Igbophobia is unfathomable: ...over the years, nobody can explain, why it is that when Igbo quarrel with Yoruba, Igbo are killed, when Igbo quarrel with Hausa, Igbo are killed, when Yoruba quarrel with Hausa, Igbo are killed ...Eventually, people say enough is enough, we can't take this ... What happened on the Sharia issue is also the frustration which the (Igbo) youths have. They just can't understand the apparent Igbophobia in Nigeria. ***(In Biafra Africa Died,* Emefiena Ezeani.*)*** The phenomenological episode of Igbo hatred seems to be more of a reality than a myth."

Igbo leadership in Nigeria or *"Igbo Presidency"* is not possible, and the Hausa-Fulani leaders as well as the other ethnic groups, don't like to hear about it It is true to say it loud too that the British, Americans and other allies do not like the "Ibo" (as they write and pronounce "Igbo", the correct spelling). Read about the "Ibos of Nigeria", written by ancient and modern writers, foreign and local authors, and take notes. Have you read the book ***"Among the Ibos of Nigeria,"* by G. T. Basden, (1922),** a work of the British missionary who lived among the Igbos for many years, recording the complexities of their culture at all stages in life, from childhood? What of ***"The Biafra Story: The Making of an African legend,"* by**

Frederick Forsyth (1969, 1972, 2012)? Forsyth is the only British man who 'fought' on the side of Biafra and, like Okokon Ndem, aired the truth about the plight of Biafran. Have you taken a look at ***"The Politics of Biafra and the Future of Nigeria,"*** **by Offodile Chudi or "*Build, Innovate, and Grow: My Vision for Our Country*," by Moghalu, Kingsley?** There are other books by foreign authors that reveal the greatness of the Igbo as well as their weak sides and why Igbos are not so loved by the British and perhaps by other people who encounter them, at the home-front as well as in the Diaspora.

All writers and commentators, including those quoted above, never failed to cover the areas of political, religious and cultural frictions that always had threatened the corporate existence of the Nigeria state since the amalgamation in 1914. The main problem lies in the leadership sector; yes, necessarily on the quality of leadership, BUT also and most importantly the **Igbophobia.** Instead of this dreadful factor -- arising from jealousy and hate as a result of the Igbo people's hard work and achievements -- bringing admiration, praise and accommodation, it has brought rejection, persecution, genocide or attempts toward total annihilation of a race, summarized in the last stern statement: **"Igbos go home!"** Those were the key words in the order or ultimatum credited to the so-called "Arewa Youths" of Northern Nigerian hate group! The Northerners were reminding the Igbos to take it to heart that they did not belong to the Nigerian nation, or at least to that part of Nigeria. The Yorubas had often issued such warnings or reminders to Igbo people. The Southerners, also known as the South-South region, did not hide their ill feelings against the Igbo race, when at the end of the war, the claimed rightful owners of the land declared Igbo properties in the then-Rivers areas of Nigeria (***Mba-Mmiri)***, "**abandoned properties."**

The Igbos, Special People – Love Them – Hate Them!

From my own findings, the following can be said and written about the Igbo: This excellent human species, long known as Igbo race, today had long existed on the planet, long before the European "Scramble for Africa," "British Conquest of the Third World Territories," including a territory she named Nigeria, having performed some ritual ceremonies called 'amalgamation, 'thus chaining together very different peoples and tribes, just for

economic reasons. The Igbo race was already a nation, by whatever definition and standard before any white man set foot on the shores of West Africa, long before an unknown set of itinerant migrants from Fouta Djallon Highlands in the central Guinea, referred to as Fulani, under a Muslim religious leader named Othman Dan Fodio, began the conquest of North Africa by coming to Northern Nigeria. They first subdued the Hausas, and then about 50% Yoruba Land and some good chunk of Edo regions.

The aggressive religious fanatics and jihadists could not penetrate further South as the march of the invading Islamic army, today called "Boko Haram" (meaning "Western education is evil – anathema – death to unbeliever, infidels), was halted and pushed back by the colonialists. It was certain that the Igbos could not have tolerated the Islamic army it they ventured to penetrate Igbo territories. It is no wonder today that the two ethnic groups or tribes, Hausa-Fulani and Igbos have been perpetual enemies at loggerheads, (all the cosmetic decorations and plastic surgeries being performed since 1914 in the name of 'Nigerian unity,' notwithstanding). The un-sticking union got into the biggest trouble from 1967-1970, a bitter civil war, that would have ended in the breakup of Nigeria, but which was settled by a **'temporary truce'** under the banner of **"No victor, no vanquished.**" It was the second phase of the conflict that raged under **"*Operation Python Dance.'*** That was a military operation conducted by the Nigerian army to quell what the Buhari administration saw as another **Igbo-Biafra rebellion**, in the face of mounting Igbo marginalization in the corporate existence of a nation in which Igbos should be equal partner. President Muhammadu Buhari had in several interviews warned Igbos to stop their new Biafra dream!

This excellent people called Igbos are rated worldwide, (not just among fellow blacks of Africa) as 'superlative' in most areas of human endeavor. They are very smart and intelligent. They detest any type of centralized political administration by kings and queens. They like freedom and fresh air and space, and freely migrate to other parts of the world and engage in all works of development. They are never tired of work and they shun laziness. Surprisingly, the so-called Igbos don't know or value their worth! Open any ancient book written by foreigners (missionaries and colonialists) and read what the writers tell the world about ***"The Ibos of Nigeria."*** Wow! Having evaluated and rated the Igbos as 'stubborn' but 'great' and even greater

than their masters, the colonialists, particularly the British colonial masters, unfortunately did not like the Ibo! The stubborn, flamboyant, and sagacious Igbos always stood on their way to political, economic interests and domination in Nigeria. There was the most recent example: While Biafran leadership rejected the exchange of oil for military support by the Russians during the Nigeria-Biafra war, Nigerian leadership, without any ado, handed over all the oil fields and wells to Britain and the Soviets in exchange for military aid. Everyone then witnessed the consequences. The Igbos lost the support of the super powers.

The British equally worked hard to get other European and American powers to hate Igbos, and the rest of the ethnic groups to follow suit! In peace or times of conflicts in Nigeria, Europeans and the Americans have always preferred the weaker, more conservative and less informed, and less educated Muslim leaders, and ignored the Igbos. A document, said to have been found in some archives of United States Foreign Service, summarizes the 'vision of the Igbo' by the whites and also lends support to most of the things that have been said about the Igbos worldwide, ancient and modern. In an important part of the White House memo of 1969, 'foreign relations document, volume E-5', Kissinger's description of the Igbos of Nigeria, aptly portrays the Igbos and their experiences in Nigeria. Over the years, the Igbos have been the victims of massacres so numerous that they have lost count. Most of the violence directed against the Igbos had been state-sponsored. One can say that the Igbos knew how to spell "state-sponsored terrorism" before the rest of the world did. The state-sponsored terrorism directed against the Igbo in 1966, led to the declaration of the Republic of Biafra and the subsequent civil war.

Over 2 million Igbos died in the civil war, primarily by starvation. One will not be wrong if they call the Igbo the **"Tutsis" of Nigeria.** Today, an Islamic terrorist conglomerate led by the dreaded Boko Haram is still slaughtering Igbos and other Christians in Northern Nigeria. Igbos have always seen themselves as a bulwark against the spread of Islam to Southern Nigeria, and as a result, a perennial target of Islamic zealots. **The Kissinger-White House document** continued: "However, the Igbo are one of the largest and most distinctive of all African ethnic groups. Predominantly found in South-eastern Nigeria, they number about 40 million worldwide, with about 30 million in Nigeria. They constitute about 18% of Nigeria's population, with

significant Igbo populations in Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Ivory Coast. Today the Igbo predominate in seven (7) states in Nigeria-Imo, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Rivers, Abia and Delta.

During the slave trade, Igbo slaves were known to be the most rebellious. Most of the slave rebellions in the United States, Haiti, Jamaica, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana were led by Igbo slaves. In South Carolina, Igbo slaves were reported to have drowned themselves, rather than be kept as slaves. Today that place is called "**Ebo Island"** in commemoration of the slaves who died there. The Gullahs are Igbo. Igbo were one of the 13 African ethnic groups that provided the bulk of the slaves who were brought to the Americas. The majority of the slaves who ended up in Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee, Maryland, Arkansas, Mississippi, South and North Carolina and Georgia were Igbo. An Igbo museum has been built in Virginia to honor the contributions of Igbo slaves to the state. One of the Igbo slaves who sent to Liberia by the American Colonization Society, Edward Roye, became the fourth president of Liberia.

"Ibo Landing" – In American History Curriculum

Another important document or source throws further light into our investigation. **Igbo Landing** (alternatively written as Ibo Landing, Ebo Landing, or Ebos Landing) is said to be a historic site at Dunbar Creek on St. Simons Island, Glynn County, Georgia, USA. The story and importance of "Ibo Landing" can be compared to that of "Olaudah Equiano," the Igbo slave through whom much about ancient Igbos of Nigeria had come to the light. What type of people were the Igbos?

"Igbo Landing" was the setting of a mass suicide in 1803 by captive Igbo people who had taken control of their slave ship and refused to submit to slavery in the United States. The event's moral value as a story of resistance toward slavery has symbolic importance in African-American folklore and literary history. The historical setting of the incident was in May 1803 as a shipload of captive West Africans, upon surviving the middle passage, was landed by U.S.-paid captors in Savannah, to be auctioned off at one of the local slave markets. The ship's enslaved passengers were said to have included a number of Igbo people from what is now Nigeria. The Igbo were known by planters and slavers of the American South for being fiercely

independent and resistant to chattel slavery. The group of 75 Igbo slaves was bought by agents of slave dealers John Cooper and Thomas Spading for forced labor on their plantations in St. Simons Island for $100 each. But what followed revealed much about the Igbos, ancient and modern.

Igbo-Landing and the Biafra Revolution

"Igbo Landing," therefore, was the final scene of events which in 1803 amounted to a "major act of resistance" by the Africans. These events have had enduring symbolic importance in African-American folklore and literary history. The mutiny by the Igbo people has been referred to as the first "freedom march" in the history of America. Although for more than two centuries most authorities considered the accounts to be an Afro-American folktale, research since 1980 has verified the factual basis of the legend and its historical content. The site was included as a historic resource in a 2009 county survey. The site bears no official historical marker. A sewage disposal plant was built beside the historical site in the 1940s despite local opposition by African-Americans. The site is still routinely visited by historians and tourists. The event has recently been incorporated into the history curriculum of coastal Georgia schools. The well-known Igbo slave, **Olaudah Equiano,** wrote the famous slave chronicles.

The Igbo uppityness – stigma of hate and dislike

During the colonial period, the British disliked the Igbo because of their supposedly **uppityness** (putting on or marked by airs of superiority, arrogance and presumptuous attitude, haughty, pompous) and argumentativeness. During military service in Burma and India, the pride of Igbo soldiers amongst other African soldiers was proverbial. In the company offices and orderly rooms, the first few words from the white officer speaking to an Igbo soldier was followed by "don't argue, you! Or "you want to be too clever!" There were other similar expressions. Their expressive and aggressive mentality which they enjoy in their culture at home does not always allow them to accept false charges or accusations without responding. The late famous writer, Langston Hughes, observed "the Igbo looks proud because he is bred in a free atmosphere where everyone is equal. He hates to depend on anyone for his life's need. He does not

mind if others look proud. He has much to be proud of in his land. Nature has provided for him. He is strong and able to work or fight. He is well formed. He is generally happy in his society where no leader overrides his conscience. He likes to advance and he is quick to learn. He likes to give rather than take" This is exactly the Igbo of the old and the present. He has not changed and may unlikely change. **Politically**, the Igbos are very effervescent and volatile. According to author Dan Jacobs: "for Britain and for the British civil servants who continued to work in the Northern Region, the Igbos have always been troublesome element in the federation, a people with a **democratic tradition** who are not easily controlled. Many British were glad to see them out of a central position in the federation, as were those who had driven them back to their homeland and those who now held the civil service and other jobs they had left." The Igbos had been the most ardent advocates of a **united Nigeria**.

Cultural Delineation: "Umunna System",

Culturally, the Igbos are a very diverse group with different clans, families, subcultures, and subgroups. However, the customs are similar with local varieties. Although there are disagreements about the origins of the Igbos, there is a consensus that they originated from Nriin Anambra State of Nigeria. The language of the Igbos is Igbo or Ibo. It is one of the largest spoken languages in Africa, with Hausa and Yoruba. Igbo-speaking people are divided into four geographically based subcultures: Mid-Northern Igbo, Mid-Western Igbo, Southern Igbo and Eastern Igbo. Not as urbanized as the Yoruba, they live in multitudinous villages, fragmented into small family groups. They do not have hereditary chiefs like the Yoruba or Hausa/Fulani. Every Igbo more or less is his or her own master. The Igbos operate the **"Umunna System",** which emphasizes the patrilineal heritage, rather than the matrilineal. There are many Igbo cities, communities and villages. We mention a few: OnitshaarEnugu, Umuahia, Aba, Asaba, Mbaise, Igweocha (Port Harcourt) Abakaliki, Orlu, Okigwe, Awka, Owerri, Mbano, Anioma, Agbor, Enugu-Ukwu, Ngwa, Nnewi, Nsukka, Ohaji-Egbema, and Oguta.

Most Liberal and Accommodating

Igbos are among the few groups of people in the world whose core traditional philosophies of life consist of virtues rather than vices – justice and fair play. The Igbos have a view of universal brotherhood of everybody and nation. These beliefs are found in their sayings, aphorism, proverbs, folklores and adages such as:
(1) **Oje mba enwe ilo** (A traveler should not make enemies).
(2) **Ikpe kwu oto,** *(*Truth, straight-forwardness)
(3) **Ikwuba aka oto,** (Impeccable declaration of innocence),
(4) **Iji ofo na ogu**, (One's destiny, future in the hands of the Most High)
(5) **Egbe bere, ugo bere** (Live and let live, equal opportunities for everyone)
(6) **Ofo ka nsi** (Right is might),
(7) **Aka-anyi- di- ocha,**(innocence, no quibbling or deceit)
(8) **Nwanne di na mba** (One finds a 'brother', a relation even in a foreign land; though, in a foreign land).

"Oje mba enwe iro and "Nwanne din a mba"

Both wonderful accommodating qualities found exclusively among the Igbos have their 'disastrous consequences'. The Igbo should settle down and feel safe everywhere. There is always a friend, a close relation around. This philosophy of life makes them settle everywhere and take any place as their home. As well, Igbos offer special kindness and welcome to foreigners in their midst, more than they show to their own blood-relations. This extraordinary characteristic and symbol of human kindness is so ingrained in Igbo culture that it could sometimes be misconstrued as an anomaly by a non-critical observer; hence the notion that 'Igbos don't love themselves! Igbos fight hard to develop every part of Nigeria and places of settlement better than Igboland, their fatherland! Often then the philosophy of their universal brotherhood portrays them as **'mean' (contemptible, lacking in mental discrimination), 'foolish' and 'irresponsible' among the other tribes of Nigeria.**

But whatever the case may be, the Igbos are peace-loving community. Who says that Igbos want the disintegration of Nigeria or are agents of disunity in ***"One-Nigeria?"*** Anathema! The agitation for separate existence is a situation the Igbo people were pushed into. No! The Igbo people like to settle anywhere

and develop these places. This is why they have more possessions elsewhere than in their homeland. Where they settle and do their business is their second home, in **remote and arid places of Bauchi and Katsina, Maiduguri, Sokoto, the swamps of Yenegoa, and the present areas known as Rivers State today.** They are found in the **Ajegunle ghettoes of Lagos.** There is no primitive and underdeveloped part of Nigeria that looks scary to the Igbo as long as they find reasons to settle there. In one lonely sleeping community of **Jinkwaka in Jigawa state** of Nigeria, one Igbo young man with his younger brother and apprentice was not afraid to settle in this strange community. He operates a chemist shop where he administers all types of medical treatment to the friendly natives who flock the shop every day. He has learnt the trade from an uncle who had left that region when the Boko Haram menace put fear into many minds of non-northerners everywhere in Nigeria. The young "doctor" put his safety into the hands of God and decided to stay. Once a month he travels to Onitsha or Abuja to buy necessary medications for his clients. There are many similar stories of brave Igbo people who believe Nigeria is their home no matter in which part one decides to settle.

Who says Igbo people are not **friendly and compassionate?** While most other Nigerians dislike and hate the Igbo, massacre them during crisis, destroy their properties or burn them, the Igbo rarely take revenge. Igbo people receive and accommodate foreigners and other Nigerians more than they do to their fellow brothers. The Igbos grant their other Nigerian fellow citizens better protection than can be expected. They strongly believe that any harm done to a visitor or foreigner under one's custody is punishable by God in a strange way. One smart Yoruba dress maker, who has lived with his family of two wives and six children in the city of Orlu for decades, still enjoys the grand hospitality of the Igbo community. He has no fear of any harm, day or night. Igbos patronize his business, and the man has become prosperous but refused to buy land and build his own house. He lives in a large rented apartment with his family. He is Yoruba and has no intention, like the Igbo, to make Orlu his second home. Igbo people settling in other parts of Nigeria will not leave anyone in doubt of their intentions. They have come to settle down in one united Nigeria! In the same city of Orlu is a good, honest auto mechanic named Joshua, who specializes in engine repairs. He also enjoys

good hospitality and patronage of the community. He is from Benue state in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria.

Super-Intelligent "Con-Man"

However good, clever, hardworking and intelligent these Igbos are, it will be a blatant lie and self-deceit to exonerate the Igbo from some bad habits and intolerable criminal offenses. Only two examples suffice for our purpose here. An 18-year-old Igbo guy can trick the most intelligent professor of economics, medical doctor, political scientist, a holy man of God, that he, the Igbo "con man" (a man who cheats and tricks someone by gaining their trust and persuading them to believe something that is not true), can convert dark painted sheets of paper, cut to sizes and sprinkled or smeared with magic wash-wash liquids, into thousands and tens of thousands of dollars in a few minutes! He has succeeded in deceiving many of his country men and women, Americans, Germans. Chinese, Australians. He has succeeded in collecting thousand of genuine dollar notes in exchange for a few pieces of fake dollar notes. This cleaver Igbo guy can "date" five desperate white women at the same time online and make thousands of dollars and Euros! He is, at his best, a "yahoo guy" and "419er!" He alone can teach the most sophisticated professor how ignorant and stupid people can be! STOP! He is a "super human" if he is adopted and treated like a king by the state intelligentsia!

Igbos and Education

Education is highly emphasized and given priority in Igboland. Converted to Christianity by Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian missionaries, they took up self-improvement with such enthusiasm that, by the 1960s, the Igbos had the highest percentage of doctors, lawyers, engineers, physicists, and teachers than any other ethnic group in Africa. Because of the abundant educational talent in Igboland, many newly independent African nations recruited them to fill vacancies in their civil service. The first American-style University built in Africa was in Igboland; the University of Nigeria at Nsukka. Its founder, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, was a graduate of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. The Igbos and the Yorubas are the most educated ethnic group in Africa.

The Igbo – Versatile in Languages

Listen to this story. One Igbo business man and politician was to address an audience in one northern city of Nigeria. Noticing that more than 60 of his listeners were Hausas and Fulanis, he addressed them in Hausa. At the end there was no applause and any noticeable impression among the audience that the speaker spoke a foreign language, Hausa is one of the Nigerian major languages, followed by Igbo and Yoruba. Another Igbo political leader who grew up in Lagos also addressed a mixed audience made up of over 60% Yorubas, addressed his audience in perfect Yoruba and even conveniently interjected his speech with Yoruba idioms and proverbs as the listeners roared in laughter filled with joy.

Then a one-time federal minister from the north went to Imo state capital of Owerri to address his political supporters, 100% Igbo. At the beginning of his speech the Hausa-Fulani politician (President Shehu Shagari) was only able to greet the large number of people in what feebly sounded like Igbo expression: **"Ibo Kenu! Kenu! Kenu! Dalu nu!!"** The crowd roared in a surprise, amiable applause! Then an uncontrollable standing, deafening ovation filled the auditorium. There was great manifestation of love and admiration of the Hausa speaker, further manifested by an endless clapping and shouts of "great!" and "wonderful!" Wherever Igbo people settle, they learn the language of the people and adapt to their culture, including food and dressing. Later in the years it might become difficult distinguishing the Igbo from the owners of the land. Igbo students include Hausa and Yoruba languages in their WASSC and NECO national exams, but rarely does one find the rest of Nigerian students caring about Igbo language!

Apart from his name, the Igbo is American in America, Chinese in China, Russian in Russia, Yoruba in Oyo, Hausa in Bauchi, Efik and Annamg, Calabar and Uyo. Igbo kids born and raised in non-Igbo-speaking tribes of Nigeria speak the language of their second homes better than the owners of the land. While one can easily distinguish other Nigerians in America from the other immigrants, it is, of course, difficult to separate Igbo young men and women from the African-Americans, in speech and gesture.

Igbo, Igbo language and culture

The Igbo youths, born and raised in America, are more American than the typical blacks, aka **"Akatta!"** This is a negative connotation, or nickname, drawing the attention of the passer-by that there is snake in green grass; you are dealing with an extraordinary black American, rugged, unreliable and possibly violent or aggressive! Nearly same as the expression, "He is an Igbo man!" Most Catholic Igbo missionaries - men and women - in the United States of America and Europe are multilingual. They write and speak *American-English, British English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French and German* fluently. Igbo Catholic missionaries in East and Central African countries write and speak *French, Swahili* and other native languages of East Africans. Those who minister to Christian communities in French-speaking regions of Central Africa and Cameroon speak and write perfect *French*. We don't need to talk about Igbo missionaries in the Caribbean.

Sad enough; behold Igbo becoming a dead language! Once upon a time **Latin and Greek** were the languages of civilization, religion and culture, Once, both were the official languages of the church. One who became a medical doctor by profession, lawyer, engineer, teacher, and church minister couldn't have functioned well without good knowledge of **Latin.** Today Latin is said to be a **dead language;** no more spoken in Rome or even in the Vatican City, the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. The language is no more taught in public schools, not even in the seminaries! The Latin Mass, which used to be popular before and after the Second Vatican Council, is no more celebrated in the Catholic Church because the new generation of priests doesn't know the language, It looks like the future of the Igbo language, spoken by over 50 million people in Nigeria and other countries of the Diaspora, now hangs in the balance. The owners of the language living right there in Igboland, in fatherland Nigeria, are making matters even worse. Igbo parents raising their children in Igboland even proudly let people understand that their kids cannot speak Igbo! "They hear or understand a little stuff, but can practically not speak Igbo!" Most of them can't even pronounce their last or surname, the only remaining sign of their identity. Can that be true? Oh yes!

The tragedy of a dying race

Igbo language, together with the culture, is indisputably on the decline, Igbos are no more promoting their language and culture. What are the Igbo elders doing? What are the custodians of Igbo language and cultural heritage doing? A multi-billion Naira question! Could this be part of the 'Trouble with Igbo people?' Elsewhere in the Diaspora, including North America and Europe, millions of immigrant parents and their children speak their native languages fluently together with the other foreign languages. In America these are Indians, Chinese, Vietnamese, South Americans, Middle Eastern Arabs, Africans and many more. Their children speak perfect English as well as their native languages and dialects. Among Nigerian families living in America, you find Hausa, Yoruba, Efik and others. Their children speak their native languages; but not the Igbos! This simple story illustrates the contrast I am drawing about the ambiguity one finds in Igbo language and culture.

I was among many priests invited to a Vietnamese "New Year Celebration" in a small city of Bakersfield in Southern California. As the small community of this Asian people formerly from South Vietnam continued entertaining their guests in a wonderful and admirable cultural fiesta extravaganza, one 6-year-old Vietnamese boy in his traditional attire approached and pleaded with me to patronize their fund-raising with sales of bazaar tickets. He spoke in the strange and unfamiliar tongue of Vietnamese! I told him I didn't understand. Behold the speed and elegance with which the little boy switched over to perfect American English! I bought two tickets instead of one!

Not an Igbo kid! There is however genuine concern among the Igbos in Igboland and Diaspora with the disgraceful neglect of Igbo language by the owners. Efforts are being made now to put back Igbo language into its natural position within the Igbo cultural heritage in general. Encouraging efforts are being made by good-spirited Igbo lovers in the United Kingdom and North America (USA and Canada). One can find useful teaching materials on You Tube and other social media. **Chief Chris Ikenna Onumonu is from Edenta Awoidemili, Imo State**, is married to an English lady, and lives with his family in London. His three children (as of 2019, 16, 12 and 8 years old, respectively) speak fluent Igbo and are well tutored in Igbo

language and culture. "Helping to keep Igbo language and culture alive is a challenge to all Igbo parents, and elders, in Igboland and in the Diaspora," he said.

It is sad, it is frustrating that spoken and written Igbo language is not seriously taught or promoted in schools and colleges. Parents prefer English to Igbo. Adults who attempt speaking Igbo really make fun of the language. Not even the men of God can preach well in Igbo without mixing it up with funny English gutter dialect. In Nigeria, do Igbo priests preach in English or IGBO? It is a shame, a calamity to listen to Igbo priests, young and elderly preach to Igbo congregations at Mass in English. We Igbos must preach to our people absolutely in our native language with no introduction of any foreign word or expression (Check the Yorubas, Efiks, Ibibios and others) – not in "polished" American and British English. Behold how an Igbo funny radio entertainer gave the best illustration of the tragic situation of a dying language and culture: Here is how an average Igbo man, woman, young and the elderly express themselves today, in private and public places. Can you make out what they are saying, asking, discussing? It is not funny but a tragic, disheartening dilemma! They call it *"**Engligbo**"* (mixture of Igbo and gutter-English, slang or pidgin. Is Igbo language not dying gradually?

Igbo: Commerce and mobility

There is no part of the world you don't find the Igbo, including forest regions and deserts. They seek for opportunities and life-fulfilling adventures denied them in the fatherland. As big as Nigeria, Igbos are found in many smaller West African countries. Igbo students still take up a lotof admission chances in these West African schools, colleges and universities. The influx into overseas schools, where they were offered chances and opportunities for education and other vocations, began as far back as the early 1940s and 1950s. In these places they dominated also in business, marketing and labor.

In commerce, the Igbos are a mobile, vividly industrious people who have spread all over Nigeria and Africa as traders and small merchants. In countries like Gabon, Ivory Coast, Equatorial Guinea, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Gambia, Igbo traders predominate in retail trade. Most Igbos are clannish, despite their individualism, and hold closely together in non-Igbo communities. They are often very unpopular in the communities

they live in, because they push very hard to make money and often dominate the retail business in alien communities. In his book, *The Brutality of Nations*, Dan Jacobs describes the Igbos "as ambitious, dynamic and progressive people whose education and abilities did not endear them to those among whom they lived. Even during British rule, there were massacres of Igbos in Northern Nigeria -- in Jos in 1945 and in Kano in 1953. The Igbos have acquired the sobriquet, **Jews of Africa."**

Igbo Traditional Religion, Beliefs and Practices

We have already dealt with the some of the tenets (beliefs and doctrines) of Igbo religion. There are a lot of books researchers can find on traditional Igbo religion. Only a synopsis of key beliefs and practices can be given. Igbo religion is traditional in the sense that it is rooted in Igbo culture. It is received by oral authority from one generation and transmitted by the same process to subsequent generations and, thus, has the effect of being widely diffused among Igbos before Christianity invaded the Igbo religious landscape. Everyone from birth is a member of only one religion. Names were given to each Igbo child at birth, what is today referred to as 'Igbo name" or middle name, before the surname or last name. The religion exhibits very traditional peculiarity with highly ontological phenomena, pertaining to the question of existence and being. Furthermore, within the traditional life, the individual is immersed in a religious participation, which starts before birth and continues after death, for the life of an Igbo man is like a religious drama, which vitally links the living with the ancestors and those yet to be born in a mystic continuum. Through our grandfathers, who never converted to Christianity, we learnt a lot directly from their practices, beliefs and ways of life. Many authors have affirmed correctly that Igbos are religious people of whom it can be said, as it has been said about the Hindus, that they eat religiously, dress religiously, sin religiously and so on.

Religion in Igbo traditional society partakes fully of all the features of a traditional world religion, including its beliefs, sacred myths, oral qualities, strong appeal to the hearts of adherents, high degree of rituals, and possession of numerous participatory personages such as officiating elders, priests, and diviners. Everyone is in fact a religious carrier. There are no missionary elders to propagate the religion, and one individual does not preach his religion to another as is the case with

nontraditional, proselytizing religions. The objects of Igbo religion and worship in the strict sense are God, nonhuman spirits, and the ancestors. The Igbo believe in the Supreme Being, who is the controller of the world and all that are in the world. Their firm belief in the Supreme Being is manifest in Igbo names: children: Chukwuma, Chukwuemeka, Chijioke. *My name is **Ikechukwu** (God's Power) Nathaniel Ndiokwere.*

In more generalized sense, this deity is believed to be ubiquitous and invisible. He is looked upon as the fountain of justice. The Igbo, apart from their belief in the great God conceived as transcendental and incomprehensible, also believe in a pantheon of lesser deities, such as Ala (Earth goddess), **Ahiajọkụ** (god of agriculture), **Idemili** (god of water), **Agwụ** (god of medicine, divination, and possession), and so forth. The activities of these lesser deities are closely associated and interwoven with the daily life of the Igbo people. These deities, they believe, protect them, control their behavior and worldview. Conversely, human beings have some influences over these deities. In addition to the above-mentioned gods are some personalized gods such as Chi and the Ikenga. The Igbo believe also in the cult of the ancestors. Every Igbo man has his own personal image or figure of Chi, and everyone reveres the ancestral spirits (referred to as Ndị nna anyị ("Our fathers"). The personal god, Chi, is what they call the guardian deity deputizing for Chukwu. They are no doubt like **angels** in Christian religion.

Studies have shown that the term **"ancestor worship**" is a wrong nomenclature! Igbos **honor (not worship**) their ancestors as Christians do not worship but honor the **saints and Blessed Virgin Mary**. The Igbo society believes in character and has very strong belief in life after death. This is not different from what Christianity professes; Life is changed, not destroyed! In the doctrine of reincarnation, dead ancestors do not come back in their original forms; rather, they become especially interested in the newborn child, who they say may inherit some of the ancestors' characteristics. The ancestor becomes the tutelary spirit of the child and sees to the well-being of the child. The Igbo regard these ancestors as the special guardians of morality and create shrines in their honor, as well as creating symbolic references to their existence. Only good ancestors, saintly ancestors, reincarnate. In Christianity only a very tiny percentage of the dead are canonized saints!

There is freedom of worship in Igboland. Igbo people generally have no problem with Nigerians who profess faith in

Allah and his messenger, Mohammed. An Igbo community may not find anything wrong with offering land, even free, to Moslems in Igbo community to build their house of prayer or mosque, as well leave Moslems in their midst to practice their Islamic religion. While it is rare to find any Igbo person who can truly embrace Islam (unless for earthly rewards), Igbo people do not attack or slaughter Moslems during religious and civil unrests in Nigeria. Igbo people do not slash people's throats with knives and cutlasses. They don't behead even criminals. That wonderful quality of feeling free everywhere they settle can never be interpreted as domination. Their traditional and ancient philosophy of life ("live and let live"), openness to competition, fair play, and the will to succeed must be commended and not rejected as evil. Emefiena Ezeani **("In Biafra Africa Died." p. 173ff)** quoting many other authors and sources, gives a beautiful summary of the accommodating qualities of Igbo people for readers to comprehend.

Igbo Hospitality and Kola Nut Ceremony

Despite being regarded as proud, which is not a justification to hate and persecute any people, the Igbo, nevertheless, were believed to be one of the most welcoming, friendly, hospitable and tolerant people. They "are renowned for their hospitality, and their friendship and welcome is encapsulated, defined and given cogent identity and expression in the Kola nut." There is no gainsaying it: If Igbo were to be the pope in the Vatican City in Rome, he would offer cola nuts to his private visitors as a demonstration of friendship and, of course, upholding a custom or tradition of overwhelming significance to a blessed people of Igbo race! A stranger finds shelter readily in an Igbo family, and a family member may often not mind days of inconveniences caused by unexpected visitor. The philosophical background to the idea of hospitality relates to common blood flowing in humanity. The main emphasis is hospitality to those without kinship in the areas they find themselves; a religious hallow surrounds visitors whether they are known or unknown. Ndigbo easily accept and mix with other people.

They comfortably and easily adopt other people's way of dressing, food and language without bothering. When a stranger may be suspicious of an Igbo person, as a potential enemy, the

Igbo, on the contrary, would see the stranger as a brother or sister from afar, and as a friend. This may explain why, while the Yakubu Gowon Government looked the other way while the people of Eastern Nigeria origin were being slaughtered in the North in 1966-1967, the government of Emeka Ojukwu provided free transport to Northerners in the East and made sure no single Northerner was harmed. Igbos are generally outgoing, accommodating, and friendly. He belongs to a world community and settles down where he finds accommodation. He is not a stranger to any culture. Igbo is Hausa in Hausaland, Yoruba in Yorubaland, Edo in Edoland, American in America, British in the United Kingdom, South African in Johannesburg, Durban or Cape Coast. But that is not all about the Igbos of Nigeria. There is a lot more you can admire about this wonderful people. Keep on reading!

Why Igbos should be liked and admired, not hated

Surely, one's enemy is not expected to sing his praises. In the long run, many Nigerians and foreigners have come to appreciate the Igbos and welcome them to places they live, in their fatherland Nigeria or in the Diaspora. **Prejudice, jealousy, envy** are the bedrock of evil, hate, misunderstanding and confusion in communities all over the world. Introduce to the Western women, Europeans and Americans all the examples of Nigerian male youths from among all ethnic groups and ask them to choose whom they like to marry or make friends with. They tell you "IBO." And if you are a black African or a Nigerian and you want to date any white girl, the first question you get from them is "Are you Ibo?" Ask them further and they respond: "Ibos make good husbands." or "Ibo men are caring!" Verify this if you can.

Who says racism, narcissism, egoism, self-centeredness can easily be erased from some cultures and human behavior? Igbos have vices and, as well, many virtues embedded in their traditional aphorisms, which most of us had memorized in the vernacular in primary schools: ("Live and let live"; "A traveler has no enemy"; "Don't leave your brother, neighbor behind";"Share the little you have with your visitor"; "Welcome your visitor with open mind and heart, offer him a kola nut"; "Invite your visitor to the table, share with him, even the last bit of the meal"; "truth and honesty, the best policy"; and many others). With no atom of exaggeration,

a detribalized Nigerian and an objective researcher can conveniently affirm that a very tiny percentage of peoples of the ancient and modern world compare with the IGBO in fame and achievement, their weak sides notwithstanding.

(1) Igbos should be liked because they are **intelligent.** Hausa-Fulanis of Nigeria call Igbos **"Book People**." Igbo youths take first positions in academic competitions. Igbos right from the colonial times have accepted the adage; namely *"Knowledge is Power."* White man's power, conquest of Africa and domination of the world is a result of his intelligence acquired through education in schools and colleges. Igbo wine-tapper will struggle and send his children to college as much as possible.
(2) Igbos are **industrious –** The Igbo, young and the elderly, is ready to take up any job to earn a living and survive: cab driver, office cleaner, garbage disposer, baby-sitter, etc.
(3) Igbos are **enterprising,** marked by an independent energetic spirit and by readiness to act. With only a miserable 20 pounds that Awolowo decided to give, out of thousands of pounds they had in their bank accounts at the end of the civil war, Igbos within a short period of time bounced back into business and economic development in Nigeria.
(4) Igbos are **friendly** and receive strangers and foreigners in their midst and land, and expect friendly reception and accommodation from their hosts, too.
(5) Igbos are **brothers' keepers** by teaching and promoting their servers, aides and apprentices.
(6) Igbos are **philanthropic;** they dispense individual funds for humanitarian purposes, community developments, etc. Igbos are great donors, in church and communities -- more than any other ethnic group in Nigeria.
(7) Igbo husbands are the **most caring** of all husbands all over the world, at home and in the Diaspora. Ignore very tiny exceptions.
(8) Igbo men and women are the most **decent in sexual matt**ers and observe traditional sex taboos better than all Nigerian ethnic groups and beyond (Ignore the recent activities of few Igbo "prostitutes" who join in the international search for greener pastures overseas).
(9) Igbos are a generally **merciful race.** No Igbo can cut even a thief's throat with a knife, kill or massacre enemies. Igbos condemn "Jungle Justice." Igbo youths who participate in such atrocities (kidnapping, shooting to kill) today

have been corrupted by the other ethnic groups in Nigeria, especially the Islamic jihadists.

(10) Igbos are traditionally a **very respectful** race. Insult meted to an adult attracts divine punishment. In communities, Igbo youngsters don't usually address adults, far and wide, by name. This is the deepest sign of respect and humility. Igbos give up seats to adults.

(11) Igbos are **kind and "Good Samaritans**." They help the aged, the handicapped and the poor and help out in emergency situations at the risk of harming themselves.

(12) Igbos are great **developers;** Give him an opportunity, the Igbo will turn a desert into an oasis, an abandoned village, or community; he will turn it into a city and blossoming environment. The Cow-Fulani still roam about the country in the 21st century with their cattle in search of greener pastures. Give the Igbo the opportunity and he will set up modern ranches, and the revenue from the project in a few years will be enough to transform the entire Northern Nigeria into a land flowing with milk and honey. They are blessed with cows.

(13) Igbos are **talented, great inventors and researchers**. Igbo scientists and engineers stunned the world during the civil war with great inventions in warfare, Check it out if you are in doubt. Igbo engineers didn't need any white man to manage the oil fields, build refineries, and provide oil products for military and civilian needs during the civil war.

(14) Igbos have **good, warm hearts and emotions.** They celebrate with achievers and mourn with the lost and the bereaved. Igbo traditional religion teaches that those who rejoice at other people's misfortunes attract divine vengeance to themselves and future generations, and may suffer similar misfortunes, sooner or later.

IGBOS are talented: Igbo School Girls Won Gold in World Tech-novation Challenge in USA, August 10, 2018

The breaking news which went viral in the social media also firmly confirmed and added more flesh to our contention that Igbos are talented. The five Igbo girls from *Regina Pacis Secondary School in Onitsha, Anambra state, Nigeria,* that represented Nigeria and Africa at the World Tech-novation Challenge in the Silicon Valley in San Francisco, USA, won the gold medal in the contest. The team defeated representatives of other technological giants, including the USA,

Spain, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and China.. The girls who became Africa's Golden Girls were made up of five brilliant girls: *Promise Nnalue, Jessica Osita, Nwabuaku Ossai, Adaeze Onuigbo, and Vivian Okoye.*

As the Junior Division winners, Team Save-A-Soul hopes that its app called FD-Detector will help consumers identify and avoid the intake of fake drugs in Nigeria. According to Team Save-A-Soul, Nigeria has one of the largest markets for fake drugs. The girls plan to partner with the agency responsible for drug regulation in Nigeria, the National Agency for Food & Drug Administration and Control. "Leveraging technology to save lives is our utmost priority, that is why we have decided to maximize this opportunity to solve the incessant rate of death caused by fake drugs," said Team Save-A-Soul.

False Misconceptions about the Igbos

Love them, hate them, Igbos can't easily be ignored locally, nationally and internationally, and some of their leaders' roles tell the rest of their stories about their worth. In leadership positions, **Dr. Leonard Madu**, president of the African Caribbean Institute and African Chamber of Commerce in Nashville, Tennessee, USA, draws the attention of all and sundry to the following rich information about the Igbos. The information in "questions and answers" format does not need any further comment. The informant begins his story thusly:

"I was going through the archives of the evergreen Nigeria Village Square and I saw an interesting post that tried as much as possible to clear some **false misconception about the Igbos.** In this piece, I intend to focus on the Igbo as a people. The Igbo, their culture, civilization, and their contributions to world greatness are, perhaps, among the most little understood, taught, publicized and recognized of all human knowledge. What is sometimes upsetting is the little the Igbo themselves, including their educated sons and daughters know about themselves. Or, more bafflingly, how the educated Igbo parrot, and hold fast, without taking a second look at the false information about the Igbo, which they heard or read from scantily informed or biased sources, foreigners and natives, and, of course, the ever busy Igbo detractors. I decided to write this article after the now familiar surprise look I get from many an educated Igbo when I begin to discuss **Igbo factoids**

(invented fact believed to be true because it appears in print) and misrepresentations. What embarrasses most of them is that certain incontrovertible, and some would say, elementary facts about the Igbo, which were always self-evident, now suddenly hits them like a thunderbolt and it becomes crystal clear to them that their previous beliefs which they parroted were false." Here are a few facts in question and answers:

Question 1: Is South-East and Igboland the same thing?
Answer: Not at all. South-East is only about three-fifths of Igboland. Igboland covers the whole of South-East, parts of Rivers, Delta, Benue, and Akwa Ibom states.

Question 2: Why were we taught in school that Igbo people are Easterners?
Answer: It is both an unfortunate parroting by teachers and careless adoption by the Igbo educated class. Igbo people come from Southern Nigeria and not Eastern Nigeria. It may be correct to say that the Igbo are found predominantly in Eastern Nigeria. However, by saying that the Igbo are Easterners, the implication is that the Igbo in western Nigeria, numbering about **3 million** (Agbor, Ogwashi Ukwu, Ibuzo, Okpanam, Asaba, Oshimili, Ndokwa, Anioma, and so on) are not Igbos. The best known Igbo anthropologist, Professor Mike Onwuejeogwu is from Mid Western Nigeria. Chukwuma Nzeogwu, the leader of the 1966 coup, Dennis Osadebe, Okonkwo Adibe (the famous musician)of the nineteen fifties), Sony Odogwu, etc, are all from the western part of Nigeria. They are no less Igbo than those who live in the eastern part of Nigeria. The correct answer to your question is: "The Igbo come from Southern Nigeria."

Question 3: Why do some Igbo refer to themselves as "Core Igbo?"
Answer: That is clearly arrant nonsense. Nobody is "core" and others "peripheral." All Igbos are the same. It is arrogant, thoughtless and insensitive for anybody to regard others as "marginal."

Question 4: Is Igboland landlocked?
Answer: Not at all. Igboland stretches from Igwe Ocha (Port Harcourt) to Agbor. The Atlantic Ocean washes the shores of Igboland. Africa's second largest river – River Niger, traverses Igboland, with one part of Igboland in the east and

another part in the west of Nigeria. Oguta Lake has the potential of accommodating large ships and could be made a navigable port. If Igboland is landlocked, then all Nigeria is landlocked.

Question 5: Is there oil in Igboland?
Answer: Yes, indeed. There is a lot of oil in Imo State, Abia, Ebonyi, Rivers State and Delta States Igbo areas, and now in Anambra. Besides, Igboland has many other natural resources, including coal, limestone, etc.

Question 6: Are the Igbo a nation or a tribe?
Answer: The Igbo are a **nation,** and a very large one. There are many tribes in Igbo nation, just like you have **many tribes within Israel.**

Question 7: Why do some Ikwerre people say they are not Igbo?
Answer: First, it is not up to them to say what they are and what they are not. When God created them, He did not ask them who they wanted to be. He just created them Igbo. The only way you'll know who belongs to what ethnic group in Nigeria is the **name and what language** the name comes from. Anybody whose name is Amadi or Onyeri, or Eke, or Odili, Wanodi (Nwanodi) does not need to tell you who he is. He is Igbo, his politics notwithstanding.

Question 8: But they claim that their language is Ikwerre, not Igbo.
Answer: That is politics. Ikwerre is a **dialect** of Igbo language. Just like an Ngwa man speaks Ngwa-Igbo, Arochukwu speaks Arochukwu Igbo, Isu, Orsu, Oru, etc.

Question 9: Some people say that Igbo language is not complete, is it true?
Answer: No language is complete. All languages borrow from each other. Igbo language is very rich. It has inexhaustible and rich linguistic features like **idioms, proverbs, aphorisms, sayings, anecdotes, riddles, folklores,** etc. Igbo language is one of the major languages of the world, being spoken by millions of people.

Question 10: How many are the Igbo?

Answer: The Igbo are very numerous. There is educated guess that if Nigeria's census is properly enumerated, the Igbo could easily be the largest ethnic group in the country. They may number up to **40 million**. Everything right now, is speculation. Nobody knows the true stratification or ethnic populations in Nigeria. The Igbo are the only ethnic group found in large numbers everywhere in Nigeria and foreign countries -- more than any other ethnic group in Africa.

Question 11: Do the Igbo have a culture of their own?
Answer: Yes, indeed. Igbo culture is perhaps, one of the richest and all-encompassing cultures in this world. Igbo culture always observes the temporal and the spiritual aspects of cosmology. The study of Igbo culture reveals that it is extremely deep and original.

Question 12: Why do the Igbo wear Yoruba Agbada and Hausa Babbanriga but the Yoruba and the Hausa do not ever wear Igbo national dress?
Answer: Unfortunately this is the case. The Igbo have very attractive and resplendent national dresses. And they come in assortments that are extremely dignifying. The Igbo take up foreign cultures more readily than other Nigerians, and they seem not to care that nobody reciprocates their carefree attitude to life. Most ethnics promote their cultures and show off what makes them unique. Actually, it is still the same so-called educated Igbo class who behave with such disgraceful and the devil-may-care attitude.

Question 13: Why do the Igbo call themselves Biafrans?
Answer: Great question. Some people have the idea that Biafra originates from the Bight of Biafra. But that is wrong. There was the Kingdom of Biafra that ruled most of the ancient world about 50,000 years ago. Unfortunately, nobody talks about it for whatever reason, I do not know. But, it is in the ancient maps of the world. If you wish I'll make a copy and send to you.

Question 14: Were the Igbo also taken into slavery during the slave trade?
Answer: Yes. The Igbo slaves themselves gave account of their travails in slavery. **Olauda Ekwuano**, an Igbo ex-slave who bought his freedom in Britain, was the first slave to write about his experience in slavery. His book has become a classic. You

ought to find it and read it. Also, other Igbos who were brought to America revolted, with some said to have walked back on water to Africa. Several books have been written about them. One of such books is **"Ibo Landing."** It is available in bookstores like Barnes & Noble. In **Haiti,** the Igbo settled there and refused to be colonized by anybody. There are many places where the Igbo left their mark or their signature.

Question 15: How did the Igbo know days and years?
Answer: The Igbo invented an accurate, if not the most accurate calendar, called "Iguafo Igbo (Igbo Calendar)." In Igbo calendar, there are **four market days – Eke, Afor, Nkwo, Orie --** that make one week. ***Four days make one week, seven weeks make one month, and thirteen months make one year.*** There are 28 days for each month, with the last month having 29 days. Each month starts the same day as the previous. Igbo calendar forms the perfect astronomical alignment with the cosmos, and regulates the seasons, agriculture, navigation, astrology, geography, mathematics, travel, etc.

Question 16: Did the Igbo have their own alphabets?
Answer: Yes, indeed. It is called ***"Nsibidi."***

Question 17: How about mathematics; did the Igbo know mathematics?
Answer: Yes, indeed. There are such inventions as "Okwe" and "Mkpisi," which the Igbo used to resolve figures.

Question 18: Did the Igbo know anything about banking?
Answer: Yes. Igbo banking was more in the nature of **savings and loans.** The authentic Igbo savings and loans invention is called **"Isusu' (Utu Oha),** in which contributions are pooled each week and are collected by one person who has the need, and which is still in practice. Igbo slaves took this invention to the Caribbean Islands where they still practice it and call it "Sue Sue."

Question 19: Some people say that Igboland is too small for the Igbo, that they have no alternative than to live as Nigerians: is this true?
Answer: False. Igboland is a large country. Do every Igbo need to stay and work in Igboland? No. Everywhere in the world, some

will stay home, while others venture abroad in search of opportunities. Igboland is large enough for the Igbo. And it is a very rich and hospitable part of the world. It has rich soil for agriculture, abundant rainfall, good sunshine, and table land in many parts. Its land space and population are more than that of over half of the present countries in the world.

Question 20: Where did the Igbo come from?
Answer: That question is still being asked. There are very intriguing theories or histories now being studied. You may have heard of the Jewish angle, the Egypt angle, and the 0rigin of man angle. This 21st century, hopefully, will resolve the mystery.

CHAPTER 3

HOW NIGERIA TREATED THE DEFEATED BIAFRA: LOSS OF IGBO INGENUITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

> The Research and Production (RAP) Unit of the Biafran Army should have been the first to be **"arrested**" by the Nigerian military regime at the end of the civil war and placed in a detention camp, in safest custody for "further interrogations. Special commission of inquiry should have been set up to discover how the Young Igbo-Biafran scientists and engineers did it! ***(Ex-Biafran Scientist)***

Nigerians, who don't like Igbo, usually identify the Igbo (unfortunately and negatively) by the following characteristics and qualities couched in the three letters "IBO" (the way the British administrators pronounced IGBO, or as well "IGBO", which other Nigerians amusingly interpret as "I BEFORE OTHERS", OR "I GO BEFORE OTHERS"! In this case or situation, other Nigerians see the Ibo/Igbo as arrogant, disrespectful, fearless, and greedy, always grabbing and taking the front seats etc. However, when it comes to Ingenuity, Industry, Learning, Development and Achievement, the Igbos are quite admirable people. Positively evaluated, the Igbos are known for hard work, smartness and bid to achieve success. Education was seen by Igbo-elders, right from the first contact with the British colonialists as true 'Key to Success'. They saw the extraordinary power of the white man to conquer and rule as fundamentally coming from his great knowledge and learning acquired through education. Hence the Igbos sent even their 'worthless sons" like Okoye in ***"Things Fall Apart"*** to attend the white man's school, while the "worthy sons" were groomed in the traditions of the ancients and kings and chiefs. Education is power. Education is success. So right from ancient times Igbo communities knew the value of education. They established differing types of levies and trust funds and scholarship schemes to enable their able sons of the communities to travel abroad, Great Britain and America to study, graduate and so be in the position to compete with the white man.

"Igbo Made Products" - "Igbo Made"

An 'Igbo-made' product, machinery and accessories with or without the label 'Igbo-made' was once a trade mark of Igbo and black man's ingenuity and excellence in science and technology. It used to sound 'crude' or 'fake' in the ears or eyes, but closely examined Igbo-made material used to be proof of originality, toughness, durability and of course ingenuity. Placed side by side, experts would prefer an Igbo-made 'Dane Gun', (firearms in the group of guns of Igbo production by the old **Awka blacksmiths**, to a foreign made one. During the British administration there were Native Authority control and licensing of Dane Guns. So, there was a time when Igbos excelled in metal and wood work which competed favorably with European-made products. Awka, the present capital of Anambra state was once the center of excellence in local and African metal works. At the right time the Igbo, then Biafran engineers would put into practice the original Igbo scientific discoveries and stun the world with Biafran-made armored tankers, ferret cars, flying and mass-destruction bombs **(Ogbunigwe),** including the most dreaded 'Ojukwu buckets' and many other locally manufactured products and firearms invented for the prosecution of the war. These and many more were among the Biafran war arsenal, collection of weapons and military equipment invented by Igbos and employed in the prosecution of the war of self-determination.

"Igbo Made" Vis-à-vis "Foreign-Made Products"

At the highest pitch or level of **Igbo relevance** in Nigeria, the Igbo product or Igbo production was highly rated in quality and durability. Today such reverence and admiration would be equated to the modern German engineering and technology seen in that nation's auto industry, engineering and architecture. German built cars are durable, as well as German roads and houses. Terms like **'German roof and Garman-floor'** technologies are house-hold-names all over Nigeria and Igbo land. These structures are so durable as well as fine, that they withstand enormous adverse weather conditions. Like the biblical story found in Matthew 7.34ff: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because

it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!"

Igbo Farm Implements

The great German engineering technology identified in their auto and building industries has become a paradigm for excellence and hard work all over the world. So were once the old Igbo products and productions. The old Igbo metal and wood materials had durable values. In the areas of locally produced agricultural and farming implements including wheel-barrows, trucks, knives, shovels, hoes, diggers, metal and wood-cutters, iron axes and transportation vehicles, Igbo productions have enjoyed enormous patronage until the end of the civil war. Since then the subsequent Nigerian leadership, military and civilian had never paid any attention to local manufactured items including food. Nigerians have developed veracious appetite for foreign made goods to the detriment of the locally manufactured ones. Importation of every item of food and other materials from Europe, America and Asia has become the order of the day. They include articles of clothing, every type of drink, including water, and sticks like tooth picks! Local rice production or farming, including yam, cassava, cocoa, and groundnuts has not received any boost and support from government and farmers, and Nigerian has become a poor nation that can no more feed its people.

Igbo Weaving Industries

Nigerian leaders are basically to blame for lack of development and patronage of Igbo and locally made products, especially in shoe and dress-making. The famous Akwaete weaving industry was once source of great pride for Igbo people. Akwaete cloth was a unique hand woven textile produced in Igboland which the town of Akwaete, near Aba, in Abia state was famous. The traditional Igbo weaving as demonstrated in Akwaete processed sisal-hemp, raffia and spun cotton into finished products. While coarse raffia materials are used by masquerades and in the past as head gear for warriors among other uses, the hemp material was used to weave towels, ropes and handbags. The more

comfortable and colorful spun cotton is used to weave cloth for everyday weaving. Aba city in Imo state is today revered for its shoe industry which compares favorably well with western manufactured shoes and other wares made in Italy and other European countries. Designer dresses, shoes, handbags other leather products of Igbo origin if locally given the support and patronage well deserved by the indefatigable Igbo young designers will definitely place Nigeria in the rightful position and level it merits. Unfortunately appetite for foreign products has destroyed the markets for Igbo and Nigerian made products.

Igbo Medication

"Ogwu Igbo" (Igbo Medication), herbs, roots, leaves, fruits and assorted types of juices prepared by competent traditional Igbo doctors, for the treatment of various diseases and ailments, like malaria, venereal diseases, women and men's diseases served so many of our people in the past. Since few doctors took interest in the research of Igbo or African medicine, so followed the demise of the old 'Igbo doctors', and hence the virtual death of the science of Igbo medicine. Today we depend on prescriptions of Indian, Pakistani, and Turkish drugs from Nigerian doctors. This fake drugs, some local connections and adulterated products, compounded by greedy Nigerian 'pharmacists' destroy the lives of hundreds of Nigerians every day. Not only that, the modern Pentecostal prophets founders of healing ministries have almost succeeded in replacing the old traditional 'medicine men and women' in Igbo communities. People flood their churches, healing centers and adoration ministries for miraculous healing.

Igbo Ingenuity and Biafra War Experience

An "Igbo made" material or product (metal, wood, plastic, fiber etc) might look 'primitive' in appearance but closely observed and assessed, they usually compete well with their counterparts imported from overseas! **"Igbo Made"** simply connotes **'durability and lasting service'**. The Igbo technology was actually put into strict operation or test during the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. With the total blockade of Biafra by land, air and sea, Igbo scientists and engineers had no option than to develop and construct their weapons of war locally. Arms factories blossomed in the inner cities and villages of Biafra, not affected by refugee problems mostly in the Orlu provincial region of break-away

Biafra. Most of those weapons and machinery can be seen in Biafra war museums today. Using local materials Igbo scientists and engineers were able to construct their own airports at **ULI and UGA,** as well as sophisticated labyrinths of military and refugee bunkers and underground shades.

Research and Production Unit (RAP)

The establishment or founding of a "Department of Research and Production" (RAP) by the Biafra army administrators was one of the best things that happened with the birth of Biafra nation; then followed by patriotism which was the hallmark of the Biafra dream which led to initial successes during the war. Knowledge, hard work, and ingenuity added flavor to the struggle. All the 'experts', the best brains, scientists, engineers, researchers, laborers, educators, and many others contributed if any progress was to be made. The Research and Production Unit of Biafra army was an epitome of ingenuity, production, and development in whatever could help in the prosecution of the war. In Biafra those days, villagers picked and collected old and discarded iron rods, iron sheets, scrap-tins, parts of abandoned vehicles, stones, and broken bottles, and sent them to collection centers and headquarters located at **Dikenafai, Nkwerre, Okwele, and Abba.** Scientists and Biafran army engineers figured out how to produce sophisticated weapons of war with those 'scraps'. It worked. No one ever thought the Igbo engineering students, scattered all over Nigeria and beyond had enormous manpower in almost every field of science and technology. They knew how to quietly 'step down' or 'dismantle' the famous Niger Bridge, to prevent the enemy forces from crossing the bridge and attack the great Onitsha market city. Biafran engineers did not destroy the bridge! Unfortunately the frustrated enemy bombardment of the biggest market in West Africa actually set the huge market on fire and destroyed the multi-million pound structures. That was among the worst Biafran loses during the war.

The Biafra army engineers were again able to "cut off" the greatest convoy of Nigerian federal forces heading towards the city of Onitsha, via **Abagana,** near Nnewi, the city of Ikemba Ojukwu, the Biafran war lord, and destroyed the enemies' huge quantities of arms and ammunition ever assembled in the prosecution of the war. Nigeria lost an unbelievable number of army officers and soldiers as well. Once again, thanks to the

gallant Biafra army that was able to deploy those locally manufactured weapons in the war fields. Thanks to the army engineering corps, their efforts and ingenuity, Onitsha was saved from both North and Southern sectors of the war. While Nigeria depended on foreign pilots, including Egyptians, Russians and the British to fly their war planes, it was on record that Biafrans depended on Igbo pilots who were reported to be among the bravest and best in the world. Biafran pilots were able to take off and land their planes in most difficult terrains and bad weather conditions, including poor lighting of the airports and even under attacks from hovering Nigerian jets.

Fuel and Oil Products.

Land locked and surrounded, blockaded by air, land and sea, the importation of fuel and other oil products was impossible. However, Biafran army engineers, with headquarters at **Umundugba, present Isu Local government area of Imo state,** were able to refine its oil products for the prosecution of the war. Fuel was available in large quantities for both the army and civilians! Large, heavy and light oil drilling and refining machinery and vehicles brought homeward from Port Harcourt before the fall of the great oil city to the federal forces were quickly assembled and put into operation by the Igbo engineers, who worked day and night at the service of the military operators. Who says oil business is for Europeans, Americans and Asians only, for Shell, Agip and Chevron? Behold Igbo oil men and women and even better and more competent hands everywhere in this part of the black continent!

Food Production and Supplies - Ancient and Modern.

During the Biafra war food was scarce and hundreds of thousands of children died of the deadly disease called "kwashiorkor", result of malnutrition and vitamin deficiency. Biafran department of Food Research and Production did not waste time inventing new types of food products that could supplement those imported or donated by aid organization like the Red Cross, World Council of Churches and Caritas International. Most arable lands and open fields in Igboland were turned into farms for the cultivation of food products, including yams, cassava, maize, plantains and vegetables. Right from time immemorial the Igbos had been known for hard work

in farming. There were then not many colleges of agriculture. Each family taught their members how to cultivate the land. The men specialized in yam production. They not only produced enough yams to feed individual families. They too produced food in excess for storage in large barns. Some of the products were also sold, and money realized from such sales served for other needs. "Women food products" included **Coco-yams, Cassava, Plantains, Beans and assorted types of vegetables**. In some swampy areas of **Arondizogu** and environs rice was equally farmed. Food was in abundance and people fed well. Each Igbo family cultivated smaller gardens from where vegetables and tomatoes and other spicy food products were within easy reach. Few foot items were purchased by families from the markets.

In **Abakaliki** city of Ebonyi state, **rice** was abundantly cultivated and extra supplies were always ready for export until the invasion of foreign rice from Asia and India. In fact that was the beginning of food crisis in Nigeria. Regular meat products came usually from domestic animals, like **sheep, pigs, goats, and fowls**, which almost each family took interest in raising. While there were no large rivers and seas in Igboland, much of the fish products were purchased from the Riverside areas of Port Harcourt (Igwe Ocha) and Bayelsa and other South-South regions where Igbos again made up large population of fish farmers. Both fresh fish and smocked ones were always in large supply.

Palm Oil and Kernel Industry

Processing of palm oil and kernels was a familiar family affair. Each region of Nigeria and ethnic groups had their own specialties. The **Northern** areas had **groundnuts, cotton, cattle, hides and skin**. The **Western part of Nigeria** was known for **Cocoa production.** The **Mid-Western region** was famous for its **timber and rubber products**, the **Igbos** were blessed with **palm trees**, whose products include, **palm oil, palm kernel and palm fiber products**. Women invested in oil products and would frown at whatever would disrupt supplies or drop in sales and prices. This last point was partly responsible for the famous **"Aba Women Riot" of 1929** during the colonial era.

Among the causes of the Women riot, as recorded by some Igbo authors, was the effects of the British policy on oil

products. The imposition of direct taxation and the economic upheaval of the global depression of the 1920s saw a drastic fall in the price of palm produce and a high cost of basic food stuff and imported items. Thus the women's protest was precipitated, in part, by the global depression. The protests occurred when the income which women derived from palm produce dropped, while the costs of the imported goods sold in their local markets rose sharply.

For example, from December 28, 1928, to December 29, 1929, the prices of palm oil and kernel in Aba fell by 17 percent and 21 percent, respectively, while duties on imported goods like tobacco, cigarettes, and gray baft, a coarse fabric, usually cotton based, made in India, used to make dresses, increased 33 percent, and 100 percent, respectively. The deteriorating terms of trade led to the impoverishment of women, and once the rumor spread that they would be taxed, the Women's War started. Although the government suppressed the protests ruthlessly to avoid future disturbances, Igbo women mounted similar protests during the 1930s and 1940s against the introduction of oil mills and the mechanization of palm production, which undermined the local economic interests.

BIAFRA – The Dream State of Igbo Excellence

This is the most important part of Biafra History and our readers are advised to give this portion of our discussion the required attention. There is no need to repeat the obvious. Igbos are special people, talented, industrious, and enterprising and in fact a rare species of humans among Nigerians. African, Blacks, and Whites all over the world admire and respect the Igbo, in spite of other vices the Igbos equally exhibit. Igbo priests, and religious (Catholic Missionaries, men and women) are found all over the world. The minister in different areas of the apostolate and are rated among the best. An Igbo bishop has been appointed 'nuncio' (Papal representative or Ambassador) to Ireland. Ireland was once one of the well-known western European nations that produced the largest number of Catholic priests and nuns who evangelized the rest of the world including Nigeria. Many more Igbo prelates serve as papal envoys in different parts of the world. The Igbos, who are always energetic and have passionate commitment to succeed will definitely place Igbo nation in the **"First World"** category or nomenclature when development or progress becomes a yardstick for

measuring achievement, civilization and success. Yes! The Biafra of Ojukwu dream as enunciated in the ***"Ahiara Declaration"*** could have competed favorably in world soccer competitions and Olympic Games, and would always return with trophies and countless number of medals, **next to USA, China, Russia, and Britain**. Among all the nation-participants, graded on merits (not alphabetical order) Biafra must always appear among the best 10!

In technology Biafra will be competing favorably with the **"First World Nations"** in the areas of science and technology and behold too, in food and agriculture. Biafra, if it becomes a reality, most Igbos believe, will never be grouped among the nations referred to as "**Third World".** "Anathema!" Biafra will not be importing second-hand wears, used cars, shoes or other foot wears from Europe, Asia or America. Biafra will not be importing food, rice and Palm products from Thailand and Malaysia, when every village has abundance of palm trees, when for example, the special industrial city of ABA is there and the rice mills of Abakaliki are functioning and rolling! How can Keke na Pepe (made in India) dominate the streets of Nigeria, when Nnewi Auto Industry is there? No! Biafra will be an exporting country, supplying these products to other African countries and the world at large!

The Igbo Scientists in the Post War Nigeria

The "Research and Production" Unit of the Biafran army was the best the world and Nigeria should have **"arrested**" first after the war and placed in a detention camp, in a safest custody for "further interrogation!" Special commission of inquiry and investigation could have discovered "How they did it". **Young Igbo-Biafran engineers** could have revealed to anyone who cared how intelligent and ingenious black man can be. Truly the disastrous defeat of the Igbos in the civil war almost quenched the Igbo spirit of competition and quest for excellence in almost every field of development. All is lost for where the Igbos are found today especially in Europe and America they and their children are never left behind in the struggle to succeed and in fact to take front or first positions in various institutions of learning. Nigerian post war government was not wise in discarding with the Igbo-Biafran war scientists and engineers! Nigeria is to blame. Though Biafra dream did not work; but Biafra 'dream-team' could have brought development and fame

to Nigeria!' These best Igbo black brains could have placed Nigeria in an enviable position, to compete with countries like India, Korea and China today.

Nigeria and the Ex-Biafran scientists

That was the titled of a powerful write-up by a renowned Nigerian scholar, **Reno Omokri**, and it is worth reproducing, at least for the interest of the youths on both sides of the divide. There is no doubt that the author added a lot of substance, in fact rich testimony to our story about **"Igbo-Made Products".** It further underlines the importance of the subject, leaving out any further atom of doubt. **Students of History** need to take note of this important reminder and contribution to Nigeria's future development. We can learn a lot from our past mistakes, from the highlights of this rich document!

"Biafra in 1970 - like Japan in 1945"

"On the 15th of August 1945, the axis nations fighting in the Pacific theater defeated imperial Japan and two weeks later, Japan formally surrendered to allied forces led by the U.S. General, Douglas McArthur, who formally accepted the signed articles of surrender. But though the U.S. defeated Japan, they never decimated Japan's great technological and industrial complex. They were visionary enough to distinguish these from Japan's military industrial complex, which they scrapped. Realizing that Japan was decades ahead of the West in many technologies, the allied powers, led by the US, allowed those industries to remain as an on-going concern and took the unique step of enacting legislation and policies to enable them flourish. What they did in Japan, they also did in Europe. In Europe, the US, acting unilaterally, even went a step further by introducing the **Marshall Plan** through which America sent financial and other types of aid to help Europe (and especially Germany) recover from the ravages of the Second World War. The point of the allied and American actions in Japan and Europe is that technological advancement belongs to the human race and should not be allowed to suffer because of a quarrel or war amongst humans. Wars should not be allowed to destroy technology or civilization

"This lesson was thoroughly established in 642 AD when the Library of Alexandria was burnt to the ground during the Muslim conquest of Egypt. It has been argued that that act set the world several centuries back in technological advancement and has become something to watch out for during the prosecution of a war. A war is a quarrel between or amongst people that is settled by means of violence. It is not a quarrel between or amongst technologies, so civilized nations have pursued the policy of fighting wars while preserving technology. Gone should be the days of the scorched earth policy which is why despite the bestiality of the apartheid regime, President Nelson Mandela did not do like a Mugabe, but rather left intact White owned farms, industry and universities and only insisted that they be opened to Blacks and other races.

"The Igbo ethnic nationality is the most technologically advanced Black race on the planet earth". (Reno Omokri)

This brings us to Nigeria. I would like to state a fact that will be argued against, but still a fact that even those who would argue against it know it to be true. The Igbo ethnic nationality of Nigeria is the most technologically advanced Black race on planet earth, bar none! This is a fact. A fact that was proven to be true for 30 months while they were landlocked in their constantly shrinking enclave known as Biafra. Cut off from the rest of the world, the ingenuity of the Igbo came to the fore during the civil war as they constructed the Uli airstrip and when that airstrip was bombed, they repaired it in record time and under the most trying circumstances. They would go on to repair Uli not once and not twice. The Igbos refined petrol from a variety of non fossil fuels, including from but not limited to palm products (from which they also produced diesel). They manufactured surface to air missiles which they also adapted to surface to surface missiles **(the Ogbunigwe).** They converted commercial planes to fighter jets and thus 'weaponzed' them. That was no mean feat in 1967.

In fact, when in 2012, the Nigerian Army rolled out the 'Igirigi' and promoted it as the first indigenous armored personnel carrier; they were wrong. I am not a Biafran. I am proudly Nigerian. And beyond that, I am a proud dark skinned Black African yet I make bold to say that the **'Igirigi'** is not the first indigenous APC, (Armored Personnel Carrier!). In fact, the

first indigenous armored personnel carrier in Black Africa is the Red Devil, built by the Igbos during the Nigerian Civil War. The Nigerian Civil War ended in January 1970 and the Nigerian Army unveiled the 'Igirigi' in July of 2012. If they had converted the **Red Devil** to their own use, they would probably be talking about a greater feat in the year 2012!

Why didn't Nigeria (like the Americans) not integrate the military and industrial complex of Biafra into its Defense Industry Corporation of Nigeria (DICON)?

"My question is what happened in the intervening ***42 years between 1970 and 2012?*** Why didn't the Nigerian Army integrate the military industrial complex of Biafra into its Defense Industry Corporation of Nigeria, DICON? Why did we have to reinvent the wheel at great cost in terms of time and money? The Nigerian Civil War ended on a note of 'no victor no vanquished'. That was a watershed moment inspired by the Christ-like mind of General Yakubu Gowon. That gesture is to be applauded. But why did we as a nation not go the whole hog and take advantage of Biafra's technological advances and integrate her scientists into our Research and Development sector much like the US did with German and Japanese scientists? That is where we failed as a nation.

How the Americans treated the defeated German Scientists, Engineers, Technicians

"In an operation code named Operation Paperclip, 1500 German scientists, engineers and technicians were airlifted to the United States and given US permanent Residency and citizenship immediately after the defeat of Germany in 1945. The primary aim of Operation Paperclip was to prevent these skilled men and women from falling into Soviet Russian hands. Hans Erich (Eric) Hollmann who was one of the fathers of radar technology was one of such scientists airlifted to America. Kurt Lehovec the pioneer of the integrated circuit systems in electrical engineering is another. He was airlifted to America in 1945 where he became a Professor at the University of Southern California and passed on his knowledge to America's next generation of scientists.

The allies had been having issues with the jet engine and were not able to develop planes like the German Messerschmitt Me 262. But after the defeat of Germany, US forces gave safe

passage to Rudi Beichel who went to the US and became an adviser to the US army on liquid propulsion. Other German scientists such as Magnus "Mac" Freiherr von Braun and his brother, Wernher Von Braun helped reverse the engines of the German jets which led to the development of the US American F-86 Sabres, a plane that helped the US dominate the air during the Korean War. More importantly, Wernher Von Braun provided much of the know-how that helped America build the Apollo spacecraft which allowed America beat Russia as the first nation to get to the moon. Methamphetamine was invented by a Japanese chemist, Nagai Nagayoshi and the drug was shared with their German allies and helped their soldiers stay awake and focus. After the war, German scientists helped American scientist synthesize the drug which revolutionized the US health industry.

Igbo-Made-Products - Biafra RAP

"Why can't we do the same in Nigeria? Can you imagine what our technological base would have been if we as a nation had a policy of patronizing the so called Igbo made products right from the end of the war till today? What if we had absorbed the Research and Production Organization of Biafra (RAP) as it was then known into the Nigerian Army Corps of Engineers? By now, we may have been manufacturing jets and we would not be dependent on foreign nations for weapons to fight terrorists. This is why I was so disgusted with the ***minister of science and technology, Ogbonnaya Onu*** for aspiring, on Nigeria's behalf, to produce pencils by 2018! I mean this man is the first civilian governor of the old Abia state which today encompasses both Abia and Ebonyi states. Right there, under his own nose, Nigerians of Igbo extraction, without any governmental support, are manufacturing electronics and heavy machinery components and one is caught up on pencils!

The Igbos in the face of government lack of vision

"One should visit **Nnewi** if one knows where it is. Right there one would see a city that does not wait for government. Nnewi people are so industrious that after years of waiting endlessly for government to provide basic amenities, they have built their own roads, have their own power stations and their own water works. Just like Japan, Nnewi has manufacturers of such things like batteries, pistons, automobiles and other products. These Nnewi

manufacturers have built schools for the kids of their workers on site, just like in Japan. It is however heartening to see locally made vehicles, like busses and trucks becoming a blossoming business in the city of Nnewi, Anambra state, the city of great Biafra head of state, Odumegwu Ojukwu. Adapted to the Nigerian weather and road conditions, there is no doubt that the future of auto industry is bright in Igboland. You just need to visit Nnewi or Aba to see what is going on in Nigeria. These guys are Nigeria's most guarded secret because even the federal government is not aware of them. And the reason why this is so is because these people are Igbos!

"It is time for Nigeria to accept the Igbos as equal partners in the nation's project and use the Igbo God-bestowed talents to accomplish the much-desired technological advancement of the black world. Notice we say Africa; not just Nigeria. I don't say this lightly. Nigeria needs Igbo resources and advantages for development. The Igbo wit is his chief asset. All over West and Central Africa, Nigerians of Igbo extraction are the backbone of the commercial and technological sectors. I can say what I have said above without any accusation of self or group interest promotion because I am not Igbo and neither am I married to one. I have said the truth as my conscience sees it because I am committed to the advancement of the Black Race, and because as a proud Black man, I know that no black African tribe is as great as the Black Race when it is united.

*To **"Reno Omokri":** We can only say "Thank You" for this big contribution to our project **- Post-War Nigerian History Book for Schools and Colleges**. Igbos occupy the center stage in our history project. You are God-sent! Whether you are Igbo, Hausa- Fulani, Yoruba, Urohbo, or any other Nigerian, one thing is clear, you are a de-tribalized Nigerian, and educated patriot. Of course education or truth does not know any boundary, though only few people like you (Reno) will be courageous enough to openly write as much as you have done. However we need to address and underline some of the important issues you raised otherwise the younger generation of Nigerians would learn nothing from our stories.*

The Leadership, Patriotism and Vision

Fifty years after the end of the Nigerian civil war (which presumably ended on a less nasty note, ***'no victor, no***

vanquished'), no patriotic leadership with any clear vision of where the presumed most populous and richest African nation is heading to, has yet surfaced. No attention has ever been paid to the possibility of Nigeria leading the African continent in the manufacturing industry, the possibility of Nigerian made products flooding African markets, before penetrating the borders of Europe and Asia and even America. Rather, a lot of energy has been devoted to the flooding of the Nigerian markets with every type of imported goods from all over the world. In Nigerian markets Ghana-made cooking dishes, utensils, farming tools are sold everywhere. Ghana palm oil, vegetables, tomatoes and spicy pepper, sparkling bottled-water and other products flood the Nigerian markets. Assorted wines from South Africa are sold in Nigerian super-markets. "Made-in-Nigeria" bottled drinks (wines and water) are not patronized by the people because most of the commodities have truly been proved to be 'adulterated', or are manufactured or assembled in unapproved, unhygienic and deplorable environments. **Palm wine** in Nigeria has lost its original flavor. Many people are afraid to test a few drops of it. They rightly claim that the wine is worse than 'poison!' It is known to be heavily adulterated with artificial sweeteners, especially **'sarkari' and raw sugar.** Only recently Nigerians started enjoying imported **Indian Garri and oatmeal**! Igbo or Nigerian products are no more patronized and so have disappeared from the markets. Most Nigerian businessmen and government officials have become importers of every type of useful and useless merchandize, just to make money!

Biafra Scientists, Engineers scared to death

The Nigerian military leaders that finally conquered Biafra and forced the solders to surrender their arms never thought those guys were truly great warriors, **scientists, and inventors**, both within and outside the battle field. Who would convince Reno, my friend that I, the present writer was part of the RAP Unit that organized the collection of scraps metals, broken bottles and abandoned plastic materials in bushes and side-ways during the Biafra war, for the construction of bombs, missiles and other weapons of war? Most of the authors' university friends were great technicians and inventors, but could hardly show up after the war, unless invited by no other than *Odumegwu Ojukwu or his Deputy Philip Offiong*. They were the only ones that could be

trusted. Igbo leaders, civilians and those who were part of the military were scared to death when they learnt what happened to the expatriates the Gowon government summoned to a 'meeting' in Port Harcourt a few days after the war ended.

The expatriates, especially the white missionaries, who received the invitation to assemble in Port Harcourt for important meeting with government, happily handed their rectory keys to their cooks and left with small hand bags, never saw their compounds in Igboland again! Rumors had it that they were gathered in a large hotel in Port Harcourt and shot one by one or were kidnapped and taken to unknown locations in Nigeria! They were accused of helping Biafra with arms and ammunition, food and medications and stuff! There was panic over Igboland until news came from overseas radios and newspaper reports debunking the rumors. They were deported having been accused of aiding Biafra in 'various ways which helped to prolong the war'.

Nobody could really say exactly what was in the mind of the Nigerian leaders, namely how they would have dealt with the **'Rebel Biafrans'**- civilians and ex-army officers and engineers. But it was however reliably learnt that the reigning Pope that time, **Pope Paul VI** intervened and personally warned Nigerian leaders, military, and ecclesiastical, about the grave consequences of further massacres or atrocities committed against the Igbo people of Nigeria. The world had earlier witnessed the tragedy of Biafra genocide and grave starvation and death of thousands of children, and millions of displaced refugees. One of the worst tragedies was the great **Asaba Massacre** witnessed and reported by the world press.

Biafran scientists and Nigerian political leadership

"There is no basis for unity", declared by Gowon after the July 1966 counter-coup made the situation worse. True recognition of the talents or natural ingenuity or contributions of the 'Igbo rebels' appeared worthless. While in the eyes of the world such breakthroughs in science and technology by Biafrans appeared 'commendable' but within Nigeria they were worthless, for 'a prophet is not acknowledged in his own village.' The stumbling block to such recognition of achievements and even thinking about keeping records and awarding certificates to achievers stood with the northern cabal, the Muslim political lords of Northern Nigeria, who hated the Igbos. In Nigeria, the

most feared secret and most powerful force behind every successful or unsuccessful Northern-led-Nigerian-government or leadership is the *Cabal.* It is a simply *a core Muslim lordship, conspiratorial group of plotters or intriguers, schemers, united in some close design together, usually to promote their private views,* namely the Hausa-Fulani interests; in short, political Muslim agenda. It is widely believed that since the amalgamation of northern and southern regions of Nigeria the vital roles of the northern Nigerian cabal had been set in place. Like the British and French colonial Freemasonry and Lodges the Cabal's powerful function in determining the political future of Nigeria, and of course, its government and leadership had never been a secret. The political agenda is primarily that of the Islamic leader Usman Dan Fodio; namely the Islamization of Nigeria.

The cabal has virtually been the Consultative assembly on Northern Nigeria, no matter which government was in power. They made decisions. There was political turmoil when an 'Islamic vacuum' was created after the first military coup! General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi must be murdered to create room for a trusted northerner. At the death of Musa Y'adua, a military coup was averted to when Goodluck Jonathan, (a Christian and a southerner), the deputy took over office. The Cabals vowed to make Jonathan's tenure 'ungovernable' - the birth, root and emergence of **Boko Haram**! Throughout the entire hospitalization of President Musa Y'ardua in Saudi Arabia clinic the cabal was in-charge of day-to-day government administration and not Jonathan's government. Many commentators consistently used to maintain that Nigerian military leaders have no business in 'politics'. "They intervened to correct the ills of society and move back to the barracks!" That was only in theory. They cabal was always there to deliver. It was clear that the OIC agenda (Organization of Islamic Conference), nearly destabilized Nigeria during the Babangida and Shagari administration. The OIC saga was the cabal's plot, together with all connections with all **Islamic and Arab financial and military institutions and alliances.**

The so-called National constitutional conference of Nigeria, organized in several occasions to resolve serious political issues surrounding the future survival of Nigeria as a united country has never produced any tangible results. The Northern cabal has always thwarted any progress or decisions that run contrary to their Muslim agenda. They have never shown any interest in a constitutional conference that does not make

provision for Sharia law that guarantees perpetual domination of Islamic political leadership in a United Nigeria. Who agrees that other regional, ethnic, cultural, religious and political groups should fold their arms while the northern cabal controls power and governs Nigeria as they want?

Igbo Entrepreneurship vis-à-vis Indian breakthrough in Economic Development, Science and Technology

Why should Nigeria remain stagnant while other nations develop? There are many examples that shed light to the present debate and impasse. Had Biafra survived, Indians, for example would be visiting Nigeria for medical necessities and perhaps not the other way round. This is the view of most Nigerians and Biafrans. Many honest Nigerian writers, unlike foreigners, are not happy how Nigeria has turned herself today into a "beggar nation". They don't fail to compare Nigeria with countries like **India, South Korea, Malaysia and South Africa** and **Ghana** that have made much economic and technological progress. Our contention is that Nigeria would have become a real giant in the continent, in economical, technological and political spectrums. This would have been possible if the Post-War leaders, including the military regimes had considered the efforts and ingenuity of the Igbo-Biafran scientists and engineers.

In spite of its population and great diversity of peoples, ***India*** managed to thrive, chose the best and right offers from the colonialists. ***India*** among the best chose 'technology'. ***Nigeria*** made bad choices and remained unprogressive. ***Nigeria*** chose colonialist religion and culture and rejected technology**.** ***India*** manufactures and exports. ***Nigeria*** consumes and imports. Nigeria imports the **petroleum** products, **rice, beans and even toothpicks. India** is not hindered by its size and religious diversity; ***Nigeria*** has problem of religious identities. Some would say that our undoing is our size. The 2018 United Nations estimate puts Nigeria's population at **180 million**, while India has a population of about **a billion**. Some would blame it on the multiplicity of ethnic groups: we have about **250 ethnic groups**; India has more than **2000 ethnic groups**. Some would hang it on the diversity in religion. We have two major religions **– Christianity and Islam**; but India has many, **Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Christianity, and Islam.** There is no doubt that religion and

politics would for long remain the worst enemy of Nigerian unity and development

Nigeria at the Crossroads

Since the recent Islamic push southwards through the **Middle Belt States** of Nigeria, killing and seizing of 'colonies', there have been so many Christians who seem lately to be rising from their slumber. What are they saying? "Had Biafra emerged victorious in the civil war, things would have looked different in Nigeria today!" Had Biafra won the war against Nigeria, not necessarily militarily, the situation or events Nigerians are experiencing today would have looked entirely different. The present chaotic political, military and economic scenario in Nigeria today would not have deteriorated, not even emerged! Where will the non-Moslems and Christians of the North and Middle Belt who are entrapped in the deep Northern region find refuge? What should be the fate of those who shared borders with Hausa-Fulani, or are majorities and minorities in **Benue, Plateau, Kaduna, Adamawa, Kogi, Taraba, Kwara, Zamfara, Bauchi**, and others? Where would they take shelter, as their people were being pursued by government army, they gave the name 'Boko Haram' and the government sponsored Jihadist militia that roam about with AK-47 Rifles, in the name of 'Herdsmen?' it had been a critical situation for most Middle Belt people as perhaps they had started experiencing their grim sessions of **Python dance!** The Islamization and 'colonization' project was on and the disturbed Middle Belters had been calling for help. The villages which the Jihadists claim to have 'liberated' from the 'infidels' were quickly given new Islamic names. Was that not a war going on? Who tells you that there is anything like 'truce' in Jihad?

Nigeria's political Institution in disarray

Today the beloved political party is **PDP.** Tomorrow the **APC** reigns supreme. Singly or in groups, former members of **PDP,** mostly opportunists decamp to **APC.** Unsatisfied with opportunities offered by APC, the same political **ramblers** may join **APGA.** No one will be surprised if the same shameless **marauders** reject **APGA** and camp with the **PDP** or **APC** again! This is Nigeria and everything is possible in the nation. Students! Hope you know who a **marauder** is? A marauder is

someone who roams around looking for things to steal. You might hear new reports about a **marauder** breaking into cars in your neighborhood.

Who must be rejoicing and who should be mourning? Aren't the de-campers and their new 'friends and masters' not birds of the same feather, the criminals who have succeeded in messing up Nigeria right from independence, impoverished the once-prosperous nation, in which other poorer African nations, including Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Togo, Cameroon and others once used to seek refuge and employment when their governments faltered and Nigeria was the greatest giant on the sun! Today, Nigerians are seeking refuge and employment in these African countries and overseas, in remote parts of strange world! The first has become the last! Behold, how the mighty have fallen!

Today's Nigerian political 'Campers and De-Campers' - are the descendants, sons and daughters of the same crooks in sheep's clothing and political opportunists. Their forefathers in Nigerian politics were the ones who set the peaceful country ablaze, rigged elections in the 1960s that called in the military Boys to intervene. No wonder Catholic Priests (not these 'fake men of God founding churches and duping people'), are barred by the Catholic Church from participating in politics! How can a serious Catholic clergyman profess faith in 'APC' today, and tomorrow, switches over and pitches camps with 'PDP', as his Roman Catholic congregations watch? How can a priest loot the nations' coffers and share money to win elections? And those days, things really got worse and civil war erupted. At the end Gowon declared 'No victor, No vanquished'; but there were victors and the vanquished. It was only a truce that was declared as the vanquished Igbos continued to suffered unparalleled humiliation, marginalization and alienation from government that promised reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

No matter how they try to deny it or endeavor to put it dawn a new revolution was unpreventable, as young generation of Biafrans continued asking questions and receiving no answers from their leaders. 'No victor, No vanquished' declaration was only an alibi, only another way of celebrating victory and punishing the 'rebels' that dared break-up their "United Nation, Nigeria". Even their former kit and kin in the South-South denied Igbo identity and vowed never to do anything with the IGBO again. They didn't mean it, however. They should be forgiven. They only feared federal government reprisals! The

Igbo nation hitherto, before the wicked politicians messed up Nigeria, was the only ethnic group among so many that believed in a United Nigeria 'without boarders'.

If Biafra had survived – Not a Dream

If Biafra had survived, there would be peace, progress and development in both countries, Biafra and Nigeria**. Biafra scientists and engineers** would have taken charge of job creation and employment opportunities for millions of stranded youths. **Niger Delta** and the entire, '*Mba Mmiri',* including **'Igweocha' – (Port Harcourt),** would have been fully developed with the oil resources from their land. There would be nothing like Shell-BP-exploitation of the owners of the land, messing up their environment, and stealing the oil. There would be nothing like building refineries in Kaduna, Sokoto or Katsina, thousands of kilometers from the main sources of the crude oil depots. There would be no need laying oil pipelines from Niger Delta to Bornu in far away Northern hinterland just to make sure that the Emirs and their subjects, including the Almajari, got the lion share of the 'gold deposit' that nature did not locate in their region of Nigeria. But that didn't mean that the North would be starved or denied of petroleum products from Niger Delta. The North would equally have benefitted. **Engineers and scientists are not politicians**. They have no time to steal. They don't loot nations' coffers. They are busy talented individuals (Igbos have them in abundance) and spend precious times, months and years in research projects to improve humanity. Scientists and engineers get their satisfaction when they see their people enjoy the fruits of their labor. They don't live in mansions but spend time in laboratories and on construction sites and under sun and rain.

Biafra, Nnamdi Kanu, IPOB to the Rescue

As some regions and states of Nigeria taste the bitter pills of Islamist conquest, the names Biafra, Nnamdi Kanu, IPOB don't sound strange any more. Those who believe in them are no more seen as crazy ignorant youths looking for trouble. As Nigerian politicians and Buhari dictatorial regime were doing all sorts of funny things to bring about a complete collapse of the country, many frustrated Nigerians continued 'decamping' and everyday expressing their desire to join the New Biafra Movement. Only

the God we serve knows the number of Nigerians that have continued to express such views openly, while some others try to hide their identities. Memories of first and second Biafra Revolution offer new hope for Nigerians who must contend with the Islamic aggression and Jihad. It is not too late to make amends. If Nigerians will drop Igbophobia and reap from Igbo ingenuity very close to Jewish world, Nigeria will gain, but the fortunes, which Nigeria would gather may not differ much, even if Biafra remained only an independent neighbor, a separate nation as Nigeria.

CHAPTER 4

NIGERIA BEFORE 1966 – A SHORT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

When looking back at the Nigerian civil war with hindsight, namely with a better perception of the events that led to the crisis, one discovers that there were clear alternatives to the war. Were Nigerians and their leaders able to discover those possible alternatives or options to the war? For the generation of youths yet too young or yet unborn before the war, there is need to get a glimpse of the situation, and in fact some highlights of what took place. Then they will be able to make better judgments and conclusions and possibly draw some lessons from the catastrophic events. It may be foolish to conclude that because war is usually 'destructive', wars may no more be fought by peoples and nations. If such a position is valid, why then are there stories of looming third world war? Why do nations continue to manufacture dangerous nuclear weapons of warfare? Why are some so-called powerful nations accumulating, manufacturing, distributing and selling weapons of war, while at the same time preventing others from making and storing theirs? Why are some nations and peoples condemning the proliferation of arms and weapons of war? Why are there still persecutions and massacres of minority groups all over the world, including those in the English-Speaking Cameroon, Nigerian's neighbors, and the minority groups in the Middle-Belt regions of Nigeria? Should these unfortunate groups fold their arms and watch their enemies slaughter their people? Surely there will be more wars and conflicts.

I was one of the young College Students who had taken the West African Examination Council - the May-June Examinations (WASEC) - in 1966, and had the results released before the rumors of war filled the skies of the entire Eastern Region of Nigeria. Some of us had taken the entrance exams for admission into Higher Schools, and "JAMB" for the University of Nigeria Nsukka, when the Nigerian-Biafran conflict erupted into a shooting war. I had gained admission into the University of Nigeria Nsukka, to do Medicine. The names of successful candidates were published in the "**Biafra Sun" Newspaper** and my admission number was SMS42 (School of Medical Studies 42). On account of the looming war Nsukka was to re-open as University of Biafra in Port Harcourt. It never did.

However, it seemed everybody was seriously preparing for the Biafra war and I, too, got ready.

I honestly kept a note book I gave the title "**Biafra War Records"** and was determined to publish the **memories of the war**, with great hope that Biafra, in spite of all odds would survive as one of the most powerful nations in Black Africa. We were confident and trusted every assurance by Ojukwu that Biafra would be victorious. Though since the end of the Nigeria-Biafra War, I have published several books which made several references to the war and as well treated many interesting topics of religious, political, social, historical, and cultural importance, I did not publish my **"Biafra War Records" as a 'History' Book worthy of that name,** simply because I am not a recognized competent Igbo or Nigerian Historian. I am only a Catholic theologian. Some of my contributions and my publications however in this field can easily be accessed from my website (aloradunque.org). I was determined to publish 'memories of the war', because I was eye witness to most of the events. We travelled to Enugu to behold with our naked eyes thousands of mutilated Igbo bodies that arrived from the North in trains. The stories about Igbo genocide were not fairy tales.

Flashback at Nigeria before 1966

It is interesting to recall the situation of Nigeria before all those troubles started. Our subsequent accounts will definitely throw light to the causes of the drastic changes and evils that predominated. How did Nigeria look like before the year 1966? What could the Nigerian coup plotters tell us were their actual reasons for throwing the hitherto peaceful nation into turmoil, and hence the disastrous civil war?

Shortly before the Nigerian independence on October 1, 1960, I could recall there had been no big excitement among Nigerians in general and Igbos in particular with so-called .black-rule'. There were no expectations of better and high quality performance in leadership from the indigenous succeeding patriots. There was rather suppressed skepticism from most Nigerians including most elders and parents. The elders and even some youths never believed the Blackman, Igbo, Yoruba, Efik or Hausa-Fulani could perform better than the white man, very highly rated all over the world as most civilized, decent, industrious, trustworthy, intelligent and powerful, second to God in everything sphere of life. The white

missionaries in their religious activities completed the rest of the story. We understood what they were preaching or telling us in schools. They came to bring life and civilization to primitive backward race. Yes. They came to abolish evil found among primitive peoples of the 'Lower Niger' or Ibos, inter-tribal wars, killing of twins and all sorts of superstitious practices. The white peoples, the British colonialists, together with their brother and sister missionaries came to Igboland to educate the people, establish institutions of learning, from primary to college and university to empower the black people to look like them and even better. They built schools, hospitals, maternity homes, dispensaries and vocational schools for young men and women. We didn't hear that the white people came to kill us and take away our lands and occupy them forever!

There was no atom of doubt that the white man came to Nigeria and Igboland for peaceful purposes. Perhaps they had some other motives, allegedly 'to rule and conquer or to exploit and to enslave the colonized peoples of the world'. But that was only a later 'political and economic ideology' as far as the common Nigerian was concerned. They were God-sent and our savior. Nobody knew how they got all the money for the charities. There were no stories that the British came to Nigeria to conquer and exploit the people, steal their wealth, create divisions among the tribes and leave them in perpetual slavery. **Where were the oil wells and vast mineral resources and deposits located in Nigeria** if the white men did not visit this part of Africa? Who would have explored, mined and drilled the oils wells and made money out of the vast natural resources in the land? When the Igbo politicians and patriots and agitators for independence visited our schools on political enlightenment campaigns or exercises and preached the need for freedom, we sang songs of freedom and marched in the fields to honor the august visitors like **Mbonu Ojike, Nnamdi Azikiwe, and later K.O. Mbadiwe, M.I. Okpara** and some others. "Freedom....Freedom...there must be freedom for every one!!! We sang loudly in great excitement! What did they mean? What would be the benefits we would reap at last? No one explained! We heard about the Yoruba frontline agitator called **Obafemi Awolowo**. We also heard about some lousy 'anti-independence' Hausa-Fulani leaders like **Tafawa Balewa** and **Ahmed Bello**, **Sardauna of Sokoto.** Other political figures started featuring later in the news. But we did not understand their stand on the 'Freedom' issue!

Were the Whites and British Colonialists 'Oppressors?'

Anathema! Let the tongue that says that be cursed! Igbo elders including my parents never trusted the Igbo politicians and Nigerian political leaders at large or their capabilities in leadership. Rather the impression we got as kids from our better informed elders and parents was that Nigerian politicians would be our **real enemies and real oppressors,** if white men could be labeled as wicked and oppressors. The cautious acceptance of freedom and liberation messages of the Nigerian political agitators for independence by our elders pointed to disastrous outcome of the post independence crisis. It did not take long to witness the consequences as predicted by the "**Man of God"** when the Israelites of 'Old' were demanding their type of autonomy and leadership 'like other nations'. They were sternly warned in (I Samuel 8ff). Within a few years of independence the fears of our elders and parents were totally confirmed!

Like Israel, Nigeria asked for Independence

"And when Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beer-Sheba. Yet his sons did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after gain; **they took bribes and perverted justice.** Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, "You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations." But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to govern us." Samuel prayed to the Lord, and the Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.....

Give them King, but warn them first!

"Now then, listen to their voice; only—you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them". So Samuel reported all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your

sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers. He will take your male and female slaves and the best of your cattle and donkeys…" In short the Man of God warned that the new leaders would be rogues, money launderers, and looters of the public treasuries, armed robbers and true enemies and oppressors of the people.

"Israel's Request for a King Granted

But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, "No! But we are determined to have a king over us, so that we also may be like other nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles." When Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the Lord. The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and set a king over them." Samuel then said to the people of Israel, **"Each of you return home."** So the Israelites got their independence or self-rule!

Sad Memories of Black-self-rule

I still remember my mother's remarks during the Biafra war: She told fellow women at a meeting as they discussed ways of helping out in the win-the-war efforts She intoned: "I had told you long time ago that this *'Udubendenti' (Independence)* will bring disaster and not peace and progress. Look now at their **'Biafra'.** It simply means **'Biafuru'** (come and see evil, disaster, nightmare)! *"Udubendenti"* is a disease manifested in the ailment called 'mumps' (an acutely contagious virus disease which causes fever and swelling in the lower part of the cheeks. Other manifestation of mumps was in **kwashiorkor** during Biafra war, caused by a severe malnutrition in infants and children especially of impoverished regions caused by a diet, low in protein. My mother was telling her fellow mothers: "Behold the consequences of your agitation for Nigeria and Biafra

independence". See disaster, destruction and confusion!" My father and mother had great quarrels over Biafra. While our dad supported Biafra movement or simply was indifferent to the young people's excitement, our mother did not want to hear about Biafra or even Nigeria. She did not trust the Black man's competence, honesty and sincerity. She always warned that things would get worse as long as the white man was not on seat!

Independence and African political problems?

It would look foolish to ask such a question today! Every little enclave in Nigeria wants 'autonomy'. Was it necessary to oust the white people and replace them with Nigerian black leaders? **Barely six years after independence, Nigeria war in crisis!** For the African liberationist thinkers and patriots it looked unpatriotic, not to clamor for **'liberation' from the white man's 'hegemony'.** For any black person in his or right senses it was ridiculous not to see the whites as enemies of black race, oppressors and conquerors. But for most Nigerian elders those days and even today it is foolhardy to insist that the colonial masters came to Nigeria and Igboland to steal our wealth and enslave us and leave us in perpetual state of poverty and underdevelopment.

For most Igbos at that period in time there was no serious reason to expel the white man and replace his administration with that of the black man. No! At least not yet! In their eyes and minds, Nigeria was not yet ripe for independence. Surely the Northerners declared they were not ready in **1957!** Ghana was the first black African nation to get their independence in 1957, 3 years earlier than Nigeria, and no sooner the military took over power from **Kwame Nkrumah,** the first president of the new republic of Ghana! Nkrumah died in exile and Ghana began its journey to hell, with military interventions, chaos and death. It took years of bloody conflicts before some type of relative peace could be restored in Ghana. Jerry Rawlings what he termed "Holy war" (not in the Islamic ideology). But he dealt with most of the corrupt political leaders of Ghana in most spectacular manner most Ghanaians and even Nigerians applauded, and called Rawlings in a 'messiah'. In an interview he granted to the world press, Rawlings lamented the sufferings of the masses – lack of potable water, abject poverty, absence of health-care facilities and others, while a few rich corrupt leaders had every good thing at their disposal. Nigeria's

post independence dilemma is not different from that of Ghana. The only difference was that Ghana's political crisis did not lead to a civil war. But where are we, Nigerians today! Hence the nostalgia being expressed by most Nigerian elders, a longing for the past years of British administration!

Consequences of Marginalization and Suppression

Had the Igbos any premeditated plans to secede from Nigeria? The answer is absolute 'No!' All the allegations and theories of rebellious and secessionist mentality of Igbos and plans to divide Nigeria, dominate the minority groups within their regions and rule Nigeria remain fantasies. **Igbophobia** is the root cause of Nigeria dilemma as a united entity. There is no other ethnic group in Nigeria that believes in **One United Nigeria** than the Igbos, before, and in the post-war Nigeria. So far only a few Nigerian leaders have cared to state in clear terms what must be seen as the truth of the matter. A second republic governor of Kaduna State, **Alhaji Balarabe Musa's** suggestions must be taken seriously when he was quoted as stating the "real reasons why Igbo people are still calling for separation from Nigeria." The core Northern elder statesman gave the following reasons among others we have already heard from other Nigerians. But his 'propositions' refer to the Post-war Igbo grievances! What of the pre-war situation or realities?

One reason he suggested was that Igbos were doing so because they never had their fair share in the scheme of things in Nigeria. May be! Musa admitted that since the civil war ended, Igbo people have not been treated as co-owners of the country. His words: "Sincerely speaking, the South-East has not had a fair-share since the civil war. Their marginalization is quite obvious. "But if the policy of reconstruction, reintegration and reconciliation of General Gowon and the late Gen. Murtala's administrations had continued, the agitation by the few Igbo for Biafra state would have been a thing of the past. "It is the marginalization that is making a small section of the Igbo to agitate for Biafra'. The Northern elder statesman maintained. In some other documents circulating in the social media, the two-time president of Federal Republic of Nigeria, **Olusegun Obasanjo** was quoted to have given similar reasons why he claimed "Igbos are angry with Nigeria". Alhaji Musa was not far from the truth. But his further observation and warning may not be easily ignored under any pretext when he added: "But the

agitation for Biafra is a ticking time-bomb just as the level of poverty in Nigeria. The system of development in Nigeria tends to divide the people. There were times in history when the Igbo were targeted and isolated because they were enterprising and because of the system that operates in Nigeria. And probably the system could marginalize everybody until there is a brutal revolution." A time bomb waiting to explode!

Igbos in various Nigerian cities (1960 – 1966)

What did Nigeria look like from independence to the fall of the first Republic? Wherever they settled - in the East, West, North and South - Igbos lived comfortably with their neighbors and heavily engaged in serious business of making the ends meet, in clean business for better. While the Hausa-Fulanis were seen as simple and easy-going people, always satisfied with the day's needs; Igbos had been described as **"Eri eche echi"** (while he is fending for today's needs, he is equally worried about what to eat tomorrow"). He never rests. For success in life, there are always multiple choices before the Igbo man. He believes that one should not put eggs in one basket. There must be provisions for tomorrow!

The City of Aba

The first time I spent the long school vacation outside my village was my first year in college and that was a visit to my uncle who lived and engaged in wholesale and retail business in salt, in the present Enyimba and commercial city of Aba. That was in 1962. Aba was a beautiful city and a big commercial city like Onitsha. There was no type of commodity, foreign and local one would not find in Aba. I helped in the market, promoting the salt (local and foreign English PZ stuff) business of my uncle. Igbos I saw in Aba were great traders and looked satisfied with life. There were no express roads but as it appeared to me Aba was still enjoying the beautiful state of affairs and the level of development the white colonial administration had left there barely two years after independence. Who would believe the same Aba I visited in 1962 is the one that had suffered irreparable rot and shameful degradation 58 years and more after the black man took over political leadership of the nation called Nigeria. At my last visit to Aba in 2016 I saw 'Hell' in Aba! I saw Igbo traders in such unbelievable piteous unhygienic and filthy conditions moving

around like marooned creatures in bondage, in chains seeking for slave ships that would export them to the Americas as in the 1800's! Aba was in a total mess and no white man would have tolerated such a deplorable situation in a country so blessed with human and natural resources.

The state of roads in Aba city as up to 2018 was so deplorable that most worried Nigerians who had known Aba as a flourishing city like Lagos or Port Harcourt had continued wondering whether the city could ever be redeemed from the ruins! The growing city of Aba, which many proud businessmen and women in Igboland had thought could better compete well with some exporting countries like China and Italy in the production of high quality shoes, leather bags, upholstery seats and wears of every type, including, trousers, pants and popular blue jeans, was abandoned by the wicked politicians. Many had actually believed that Aba, even before the creation of Abia state, was getting ready to start exporting shoes to other African countries. "Made in Aba" products, especially, shoes, were already selling faster in many parts of Nigeria, better than Italian shoes as early as 2005! They are all made in Aba. But may have foreign trade marks to satisfy the psychological black man's taste and preference for 'foreign good', instead of their local made products! That was pre-war Aba and the post-war Aba!

Enugu – The Coal City

My first visit to Enugu was in 1959, a year before the independence. I was in Standard 4 and accompanied my senior brother to Enugu during Easter school holidays at our senior uncle's coal city family home in the heart of the capital city and **headquarters of the old Eastern region.** Our uncle Sir F.N.D. Ibezim was a well educated man and senior member of staff in the Coal Mining industry. In the present set up in Nigeria our uncle would occupy the position of a commissioner or something higher. Enugu I saw it was still in the hands of the colonial masters, like "Small London". As the seat of Eastern Regional Government, one could imagine how busy and important the city was. As seminarians in the prestigious major seminary, Bigard Memorial Seminary Enugu, I joined a group of fellow seminarians in a proud visit to the NBC (Nigerians Broadcasting Service Enugu). The seminary re-located to Ikot-Ekpene, when the city of Enugu was over-run by the federal forces. When Ikot-Ekpene (in the present Akwa-Ibom state) was

threatened by the advancing federal forces the BMS (Bigard Memorial Seminary re-located again to Amaimo, then to Amakohia, near Owerri. There at Amakohia, seminary studies continued until the end of the war in 1970.

Kano – 1963

I started developing eye problems when I was in primary school, but no one noticed I was short-sighted or had eye problem called 'myopia'. To get a better eye treatment my mother sponsored my long trip to **Kano in 1963.** The eye center was called **Sudan Interior Mission Eye Hospital (SIM, now ECWA).** It was my first locomotive train journey from Enugu to Kano and the journey lasted four good days. Most Igbo traders and business men and women, pharmacists, school teachers, government workers and students I met in Kano were nice and happy people and looked satisfied and comfortable in the midst of the predominantly Hausa land owners. Surprisingly as young as I was then about 16, the "Igbo Union in the North", Kano branch organized a 'Red Carpet Reception' for me and introduced me to their members.

Scared by the unbelievable atrocities committed against the Igbos during the civil war by the Hausa-Fulanis in the city of Kano, many Igbos had vowed never to return to Kano for any business ventures again. However a great number of Igbo traders and Businessmen had since gone back to Kano to continue their trade and other business ventures. The next and last time I visited Kano was in 1986. I met a lot of Igbo communities there going about their normal businesses. But with renewed wave of Islamic conquest of the entire North and the Middle Belt and further encroachments in farmlands belonging to Christians in the South, including Igbos in Enugu and Ebonyi states, many Igbos are afraid of their lives and properties in most parts of the North, including Kano. It is very unlikely that the situation will return to its pre-independence status.

Ibadan – 1965

I visited Ibadan, said to be largest city in the entire West African sub region and the seat of West regional government of Nigeria. Like Enugu, Kaduna and Port Harcourt, Ibadan had a lot of traces of the colonial administration and the first indigenous university sited there makes Ibadan, too, a citadel of learning as

well as recognizable feature of black man' intellectual empowerment. They said the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan was Professor Dike, an Igboman. Igbo presence was strong in the city in all sectors of life and economy. However, I observed that the political turmoil and crisis that eventually led to the first military coup in Nigeria were showing signs of escalating. I had to cut my visit to Ibadan short and returned to the East.

Port Harcourt – 1962, 1967

My first visit to this part of Nigeria, presently referred to as Rivers State was in 1962, when I spent my long school holidays with my maternal uncle the late Mr. Andrew Nnadika from Owerre-Ebeiri in the present Orlu local government of Imo state. He was married to my mother's immediate younger sister née Christiana Nnabuife. They and their children migrated to the Port Harcourt suburban towns and farming villages called **Iriebe** those days. While most Igbos who migrated to Northern Nigerian were mostly traders and business people, those who found themselves in **Iriebe, Oruigbo and Ikwerre** areas were mostly large scale farmers. My uncle and other Igbos owned vast areas of farming lands that extended to acres of fertile lands and forests. They massively cultivated various crops, including yams, cassava (from which garri is processed), cocoyams, plantains, bananas, fruits and vegetables of various species. Food those days was in abundant supply and the word 'starvation' could never be found in Igbo school dictionary. My uncle employed native men and women who were ready to use their energy to earn decent living. They received both cash and food products for their pay. Igbo farmers extended their farming skills and food production to other Port Harcourt areas like **Ahoada** and **Igirinta.** Palm oil and kernel business and production featured prominently in the Igbo man's efforts to develop Nigeria and with a lot of natural resources with which God blessed Nigeria and Igboland.

In 1966 when I visited the city of Port Harcourt again, the place was vastly populated by Igbos from various parts of Nigeria. They owned lots of properties and worked hard for the development of Port Harcourt and neighboring cities. Those days there were no talks of domination, oppression and conquest. Everyone, Igbo, Ijaw, Calabari, Ikwerre and others who claimed some type of 'minority' status never saw themselves as enemies

fighting to free themselves from the so-called "Igbo-domination" or oppression. Stella Maria College, one of the prestigious Catholic Mission Schools (like BSC, Orlu, CIC Enugu, CKC Onitsha) was situated in Port Harcourt. As the seat of one of the most flourishing Catholic dioceses, under the leadership of Most Reverend Bishop Godffrey Okoye of the blessed memory, Port Harcourt had one of the largest populations of Catholics, second to Owerri. Unfortunately as a result of 'Igbophobia', almost all the Igbo priests, including the Bishop were declared 'unwanted' by the leaders of the anti-Igbo-Biafra groups. Nigerian military government, under Gowon had inaugurated an era of division, hate and intolerance in the 'Rivers' Region, (Mba-Mmiri) part and parcel of old Eastern Nigeria, by the creation of states. In a move to check the influence of Ojukwu's government in the East, Gowon announced early on **5 May 1967** (about 3 weeks before the declaration of Biafra, May 30) the division of the 3 Nigerian regions into **12 states**: *North-Western State, North-Eastern state, Kano State, North-Central State, Benue-Plateau State, Kwara State, Western State, Lagos State, Mid-Western State, and, from Igbo Eastern Region, Gowon carved out a Rivers State, a South-Eastern State, and an East-Central State.* The non-Igbo South-Eastern and Rivers states which are claimed had the oil reserves and access to the sea, were carved out to isolate the Igbo areas as East-Central state.

Abakaliki, Afikpo, Akaeze

Although my first visit to some areas of the present Ebonyi State was after the civil war, most Igbo people know how energetic and productive the people of these areas had been in farming activities. Their young men were hired to cultivate large farmlands in many central areas of the present Imo state. Their energetic farming skills earned them the nickname **Ndi-ogu-ukwu** (those who till the land with bigger hoes). Practically they used larger shovel or spade, also locally called hoes or farming implements and the ridges or mounds they make yam seedlings, cassava and other cash crops are larger in volume. Not only that farmers from these areas cultivated farmlands, they too had been known as great climbers of palm trees for the sake of harvesting and exploiting palm products from these millions of palm trees with which God blessed Igboland in particular.

If Nigerians did not recklessly abandon their living God who blessed them with abundance of good things and preferred

worthless search for only petroleum products, surely Nigeria would be among the largest exporters of food, including yams, cassava, beans and rice(about 90%) of food found on average Nigerian table). **Abakaliki rice** could compete favorably with imported rice from Thailand, China and India. Igboland could have written off Malaysia from the world map of palm oil industry!

Lagos City - Eko

LAGOS, (Yoruba: Èkó), was for many Nigerians before independence, our "**London",** with regard to beauty, development, job opportunities, enjoyment and overall center of city life. As kids Lagos was a dream-land for many Easterners, as the city was from earliest times said to have been home to many Igbos, who were civil servants, great businessmen and owners of big estates and properties. Igbos competed favorably with the Yorubas, owners of the Eko, capital city of Nigeria till 1991, when Hausa-Fulani leaders decided to make Abuja a new capital of the nation. However Lagos has not lost its status as the most populous city in Nigeria, as well as the center of business. For Nigerians Lagos is like New York, just as Abuja resembles Washington DC, United States of America. While Abuja remains the seat of government administration, Lagos remains the center of business and economic activities. The popularity of Lagos is expressed in songs and lyric compositions.

Summary

I conclude this segment of the investigation on ***"Nigeria Before 1966"*** by insisting that Nigeria as well as Igboland was very stable economically as well as politically. Outside usual small ethnic skirmishes there was relative peace and Igbos lived in peace with their neighbors all over Nigeria and carried out their legitimate businesses with little or no disruption until the eve of January 15, 1966 when the military struck and since they everything changed and as it seems Nigeria will not be the same again. Igbo people engaged heavily in all sectors of the economy to developed Nigeria, not just their own local enclave called Igboland. They migrated to other parts of the country not to dominate, conquer and rule their neighbors.

Right from independence till 1966 and even till the time of this investigation, Igbos have not shown much interest in

Nigerian or national political leadership. If there are options to choose from, the majority of Igbos would like to remain within **One Nigeria State**. Perhaps the only condition they would add is to be offered a peaceful environment where they could carry on their various businesses and engagements without any molestation. But where eventually Nigeria makes the old mistake of pushing the Igbos out of Nigeria, there is no doubt that the Igbo nation would survive as an enviable proud state in the league of world nations. Surely the rest of Nigeria would miss the Igbos so much.

CHAPTER 5

NIGERIA-BIAFRA WAR IN RETROSPECT (PART 1) – A SHORT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

> May 30th, 1969, in far away New York, a 20-year old College student named **Bruce Mayrock,** doused and set himself ablaze in the East Lawn of the United Nations Headquarters, protesting the complicity and indifference of the Global Community to the Genocide in Biafra, especially the mass starving of children to death.

My Biafra War Document

Nigeria-Biafra War in Retrospect or **"My Biafra War Document"** is not basically a chronological account of the war fought more than 50 years ago, although it contains useful information with regard to some detailed records we need in our present task. Not most of the younger generation of Nigerians and Igbos witnessed the Biafra event; but I did. I was exactly 20 as we left College after the May-June West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Exams. Some youths today can only relate what they heard from their parents, elder brothers and sisters. Some were even victims of the deadly ailment called kwashiorkor which brought many children to their untimely death. This section can only help us here to add more flesh to stories that have circulated for over 50 years, but no one can yet point at well documented accounts or history book, approved by the Nigerian Ministry of education authorities for History students in Nigerian Secondary schools and colleges. Parts of the information I included here are mostly from my personal records of the war, as well as circulated records on the social media that serve our interest at this stage of our story. The facts therein are substantiated and remain parts of 'history' no matter who the writer or narrator is. It summarizes in a nutshell a very important section of a college textbook on ***"Nigerian History".*** Whatever the case may be, we can manage here with the following Nigerian-Biafra war historical records. I identify my sources. Unfortunately there were no video cameras or cellular phones at everyone's disposal as there are today; I would have included videos and pictures to support my claims and

personal reports. This chapter is only a synopsis, a summary, in short, personal account of the war experiences.

Most of my records came from day to day news events from **Radio Biafra Enugu** (later broadcasting from Umuahia and lastly in 1970, located at **Obodoukwu**, in the present Ideator North, Imo State Nigeria. My most precious sources of reliable information were the Irish and other Europeans and American Catholic missionaries who helped truly and mostly in the relief organizations for the oppressed and land-locked Biafran victims of starvation and death. They brought newspaper reports from Europe and America. I recorded in my notebook also Biafra news coming from International Red Cross, Caritas International, World Council of Churches and other Relief Agencies or Organizations. Most of my notes too contained items of news reports from the War Fronts, especially from retreating soldiers from Biafran territories declared 'Captured' or 'Liberated' by Federal forces. Many wounded soldiers narrated their ordeals in the hospitals at Amaigbo and Orlu (established at the present Urban Secondary School Umuna, former Holy Rosary Teacher Training College for women.)

Most of my recorded Biafra War news items were never 'fake news', though I was always excited and almost entirely accepted as 'Gospel Truth' all 'Breaking News' (positive and sad) coming from Radio Biafra and usually read by the indefatigable news caster **Okokon Ndem**. He read the most important News Talks or Commentaries that usually ended the news broadcasts in the morning, midday and at 6 PM. Okokon Ndem, in the present day BBC, Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, German Radio and TV Anchor News Broadcasts was next to the Biafra leader Odimegwu Ojukwu. People tuned to Biafra news broadcasts, not only to get the 'latest' news, but too to listen to Okokon Ndem's voice and style. He was a passionate 'crier' and one of the most admirable believers in the Biafran Nation and Cause. If the war was to be won on the 'air' Okokon Ndem was the only pilot who continued to steer the plane on the right direction, in turbulent and stormy weather!

Next to the determined Biafra fighters in the air and in the bushes and war fronts was the group of well selected 'Propagandists' who produced the famous News Talk Broadcast "This we believe". Well researched materials orchestrating to the outside world, friends and enemies of Biafra, all that the young nation was fighting for, including beliefs and ideologies embedded in such wars of liberation and survival. 'This We

Believe' targeted World Audience, as well as the 'Rest of Nigeria. It was almost similar to what the leader of IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu was doing with the Radio Biafra in London. The most valuable sources of information came from the White missionaries I met in Europe and United States who had served in Biafra throughout the Biafra war as Catholic priests and relief workers. They were among missionaries deported by the Nigerian Government immediately the war ended. Although when they answered the summons of the federal government to assemble at Port Harcourt for meeting with Gowon's representatives, little did they know they were seeing Nigeria for the last time. They took little for their journey but most of the people very close to them did not forget large volumes of materials they had gathered as "documentaries" on the war. Among the documents were news paper reports of British Guardian and Observer, French Le Monde News reports and American Times and others.

I met **Bishop Joseph Whelan**, the last White Missionary Bishop of Owerri Diocese in Dublin, Ireland during my studies in London University in 1978. I was Whelan's guest or visitor at Kimmage Manor, headquarters or Mother-House of the Irish Holy Ghost Missionaries. I met Rev. Father Flanigan, American Missionary in his 90s in Fresno California in 1994 and Rev. Father Dennis McManus, my last white Irish parish priest and last white principal of Bishop Shanahan Training College Orlu (BSTC) in San Francisco, California, USA. All these priests handed over files of valuable newsworthy materials to me and other Igbo priests who met them in these places. I cannot forget **Rev Father Kevin Doheny**, the one-time Rector of St Peter Claver Seminary Okpala, Owerri, who interviewed and admitted me into the senior seminary, and one of the most notable, committed and indefatigable Irish missionaries that 'fought' on the side of Biafra in all the 'war sectors' especially in the distribution of relief materials and health-care services to the refugees and hospitals. Father Kevin Doheny can never be forgotten. Rev. Father Eugene Mac-Cathy, Rev. Fr. Courtney, alias "Father Ogwuaja" of Regina Pacis Parish, Ihioma, was in-charge of the largest Caritas International relief distribution center in Orlu Province throughout the war. He played a crucial role in this area of the war and remains a legend in the struggle for the survival of Igbo people during the war.

The main purpose of rehearsing some of these Biafra stories here is to refresh our memories and help us in the present

investigation and especially making out where we move from here. Only a well documented 'History of Nigeria-Biafra War' can open the hearts and eyes of generations of Nigerians. There is no doubt the modern Social media and the Internet have made it extremely possible to 'recover' past records from archives, including public and private interviews and newspaper reports and videos. My personal accounts of the war appear here like analysis of the key events I saw as important to recall. Our own records here have no tribal sentiments and there is no need to warn readers against possible tribal prejudices and Igbophobia. Our accounts contain raw historical facts that can easily be verified.

The Military Intervention and the Aftermath

Several reasons have been given by coup plotters and interested parties, politicians, authors, historians and groups of Nigerians representing our major and minor ethnic groups to support the military intervention in Nigeria, shortly after Ghana had taken such a measure to end the first republic in that neighboring West African nation. There was of course no jubilation or street solidarity rallies in any of the major cities, East, West, North and South of the nation in support of the overthrow of the civilian government headed by Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister and Nnamdi Azikiwe as the President. The only popular figure identified as the leader of the young army officers that caused the mayhem was Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and only his picture usually was shown in the Nigerian dailies reporting the coup events. Only few people knew about the other officers that participated and reasons why they carried out the coup and their future plans for the nation. The middle name **"Kaduna" Nzeogwu** was a bit confusing as some Igbos speculated about his identity – 'he was half Hausa, half Igbo', 'mother Igbo, father Hausa and stuff.

It was reported that the Military boys found it difficult to subdue the Alhaji Ahmed Bello, Sadauna of Sokoto, and the Premier of the Northern region. Not much was reported about the Military boys' encounters with the other key political leaders from the other regions, especially from the Eastern region. Surely while the Hausas were mourning the death of their Muslim political leaders, there was absolutely no jubilation in the East that either Azikiwe (the President). Michael Okpara (then the premier of Eastern region) or Akanu Ibiam or Nwafor Orizu,

or K.O. Mbadiwe and some other prominent Igbo political leaders were not among the dead. In fact there were many prominent Igbos who could not understand the rationale behind the soldiers' inability to get rid of all the bad politicians serving in the federal and regional governments, hence the speculation that it was an "Igbo Coup." No Igbo would have protested if the military boys got rid of Igbo political leaders too!

Looked like an "Igbo Coup!"

The insinuation that it was absolutely an Igbo coup was not sustainable at the beginning of the crisis until the so-called coup plotters began assembling their reasons for plotting the overthrow of the civilian government described as 'corrupt and inefficient'. Most Nigerians, including Igbos, did not know much about the military those days and their ethnic identities. Again there was no jubilation anywhere in the streets of major Nigerian cities that the new military administrators under General Aguiyi Ironsi would usher in new era of peace and prosperity in Nigeria. It was not a new messianic age for Nigeria. Rather the military ushered in a new era of darkness ever seen in Nigerian political history. This view or contention proved itself hundred percent correct. While many Nigerians barely 6 years after independence could not see any big justification for the military intervention, the entire Muslim North continued grieving over the death not only of their political but Allah anointed.

They not only gnashed their teeth in agony and uncontrollable anger, they planned a revenge, a jihad and their outright targets were all "infidels", particularly IGBOS whom they currently or erroneously identified as the key players in that heinous crime of killing their representatives of Allah. While for the Igbo 'their king, Obi or Igwe' is an ordinary human entity (and moreover 'Igbo enwe Eze' – Igbo have no king), the Hausa-Fulani Muslim leader is as well the political and spiritual father in the Muslim world. The murder of Sardauna of Sokoto was an unforgivable crime and the murderers and even generations of their children will continue to pay for that crime. So it did not take long before the aggrieved leaders of the Muslim North and their followers all over the world joined in sympathy in the war of total destruction of the Igbo race, revenge and aggression against all the infidels that had any links or connections with Igbos. Those who witnessed the massacre and genocide organized, like the Jewish Holocaust, to annihilate the Igbo race from the face of

the earth will agree that the leadership of the Northern Cabal was somehow pacified at the end of the senseless killings of Igbos, hence, the Gowon and Northern Elders declaration: ***"No more Basis for Unity".***

"No Basis for Unity" & "Task to Keep Nigeria One"

Igbo people or Biafrans did not go to war to found a separate state for themselves. No. They fought back Nigerian aggression geared toward the destruction of Igbo race. Only very few naïve Igbos believed we could defeat Nigeria in any military encounter. But that most Igbo youths believed that the Northern aggression should be resisted with the last drop of Igbo blood was unquestionable, hence the easy mobilization of Igbo youths for war and with the hope that at some stage the world would intervene and peace would be negotiated.

The Shooting War

It all started at the extreme Northern borders of Garkem and Nyonya, near Ogoja. Biafra had no weapons to fight back but had the will, determination and courage to defend themselves and future generations of their kith and kin from obliteration from the face of the earth. We joined the war campaign as institutions of learning closed down especially as a result of massive air bombardment of civilian populations, churches, hospitals and market places by the Arab and Egyptian pilots under the orders of the federal military government. As the federal forces advanced towards the Biafra heartland from all sectors, towns and villages 'falling' one after another or being 'liberated from clutches of the Ojukwu rebel forces' it became clear that if nothing serious was done Nigeria would in a matter of time complete its agenda of total annihilation of the Igbos. There was serious cause for alarm.

The Fall of Enugu, the Biafran Capital

The idea most Igbos had about possible end of a war was the capture of the new nation's capital or headquarters. Then there would be formal surrender or capitulation ceremonies and negotiations for peace. To most Igbos it was surprising that the war was only beginning, as Ojukwu moved the Biafra headquarters to Umuahia and intensified construction works at

new sites at Ihiala and Uga airstrips. But Enugu must be re-captured from the federal forces and their advance towards Igbo heartland stopped or contained. That was the right time again, another opportunity for most of us, college school leavers to try again joining the Biafra army and help kill or prevent the 'vandals' from encroaching further into the shrinking Biafra enclave. Since the beginning, of the hundreds and thousands of Biafra youths willing to enroll in Biafra army had often been beaten by Biafran soldiers at recruitment centers with whips and sticks and 'koboko' driving us away announcing that our services were not needed. Biafra had at that time sufficient young men to fight in war fronts or engage in other military and civil defense duties. There was absolutely no need for any force or so-called conscription into the Biafran army.

Col. Offiong addressed recruits at Agbogugu.

The Agbogugu Secondary School, near Enugu had been converted to Biafran army training camp. I was there! As federal forces continued their advance to Biafra heartland, most of Biafra's military and strategic institutions had moved to the center and 'safer' areas of Biafra, namely Umuahia, Orlu, Ihiala, Mgbidi, Nkwerre, Mbaise, Uga, Akokwa and others. The Army officers' training camp or headquarters, the Research and Production (RAP), the oil and refining headquarters and Biafra General hospital had since moved from Nsukka, Enugu, Awka, Port Harcourt, Onitsha, Owerri as these cities were constant enemy targets of air bombardments and even ground and frontal attacks. I joined my other friends at another attempt to join the Biafra Army and if possible destroy and humiliate the aggressors and now have our freedom and security in a country we could call our own. Enough of the persecution from Nigeria!

"No Weapons, but the War must continue!"

That was the first statement we heard from Colonel Philip Effiong, Ojukwu' Deputy and Second in Command of the Biafran Armed Forces, as we lined up listening to him at Agbogugu Secondary School, near Enugu, then converted to military headquarters. He gave an update of the military situation which looked so gloomy and desperate, the Mid-West military expedition and the consequent disasters, the deteriorating situations at all sectors of the war, death and starvation in Biafra

and so on and fort. But all said and done what shocked most of us, enthusiastic new recruits was when Philip made it clear that there were no arms or heavy weapons to fight back the marauding Nigerian soldiers being supported by heavy artillery and armored cars and tankers. Nigerian soldiers had no better skills or motivation to fight Biafra. They were cowards he told us and at any sight of Biafran soldiers they used to flee and abandon their weapons. He said the only option we had was frontal, surprised and courageous attack and if they fled as they usually did we could collect their abandoned weapons and pursue them. However he assured that we the newest recruits being prepared to liberate Enugu would receive one mark-4 gun for 3 soldiers to start the military expedition to liberate Enugu. He said some groups of Biafran soldiers had reported progress in Enugu sector. The news that Biafra armed forces lacked weapons like AK-47 and similar weapons of war discouraged most of my friends, who attended the training course at Agbogugu camp. We left the camp and went back home. What a suicide mission, some of my friends wondered with mouth agape!

The Mid-West Military Disaster

The decision of Biafra military command to invade the Mid-West region of Nigeria, which then registered significant population of West-Igbo presence, gave a big though short-lived boost to the Biafra war project. Most Igbo speaking high-ranking military officers as well as prominent Igbo successful civil servants and business magnets in the region at least briefly sent a big message to Nigerian military leaders and the watching world in general that Biafra could face and even defeat Nigeria in the military field. It was possible if the British, the Russians, the Muslim Arab world and others allies of Nigeria in her war of aggression against Biafra had not taken sides in the war. It was possible if Biafra had all the military hardware necessary to prosecute such a war as Nigeria had at its disposal. The Biafra command as we were told had plans to expand the war fronts into the Nigerian territories, westwards and as far as Lagos the capital city.

There was no doubt that Nigerian military leaders were scared and hence Gowon's change of the slogan from **"Police Action"** to full military engagement "to crush the secessionist dream of self-proclaimed autonomy. The ground troops' march from Benin City, through Ore and Okitipupa and most Yoruba cities was not only an ambitious project, but equally clear

manifestation of strength and courage on the side of Biafra. Perhaps, to minimize the bad feelings of the large non-Igbo speaking populations of Binis and Edos in the region it was necessary not to create the impression of conquest and domination by the Igbos; hence the declaration of a new "Republic of Benin", which was not to be a part of Biafra, but under the command of Col Albert Okonkwo. Though the life of the new nation was short-lived, the boldness and the courageous move of the Biafra leadership to pursue such venture was acclaimed by most Igbos, home and abroad. Though a bold record, we also learnt the project was another plot to ease the military pressure on the Nigerian command from the northern sectors of the war. The consequences of the Mid-West project, the sabotage stories, trial and execution of the saboteurs, the recapture of the region by the federal forces and the massacre of the Igbos of that region by the Nigerian soldiers form a large section of any meaningful history of the Nigerian-Biafra War.

Midwest Invasion of 1967 and the Aftermath

Newspaper reports and radio war news confirm most of the information in the following paragraphs. The Midwest Invasion of 1967 (August 9 – September 20, 1967) was a military operation between Nigerian and Biafran military forces. The invasion began when 7,000 Biafran soldiers led by General Victor Banjo crossed the River Niger Bridge into Asaba. The Biafran retreat from Ore was considered the turning point of the war. When Nsukka fell to the Nigerian Army on July 14 President Odumegwu Ojukwu knew that the Nigeria would next set their sight on the Biafran capital, Enugu. After a mission to recapture Nsukka on July 30 failed and resulted in death of Major Kaduna Nzeogwu, Ojukwu began drawing up plans for an invasion of Nigeria's Mid-Western Region in an attempt to divert attention away from Enugu, some Biafran critics claimed.

At 3 a.m. on August 9, 1967, a mobilized division of Biafran soldiers under General Victor Banjo crossed the River Niger Bridge at Onitsha and entered Asaba. When the Biafrans reached Agbor they split up, the Biafran 12th Battalion under Lt. Col. Festus Akagha began moving north-west to Benin City, the 18th Battalion under Major Humphrey Chukwuka made its way into the oil-rich Niger Delta, and the 13th Battalion under Col. Mike Inveso swung northwards towards Auchi. Benin City was captured with little opposition as Biafran soldiers fired their

weapons into the air upon entering the city. The 13th Battalion established control over Auchi and Agenebode while also capturing the towns of Okene, Atani, and Iloshi. A Nigerian Army unit was pursued by Biafran soldiers to the Siluko River where the two sides exchanged fire, before the Nigerians managed to escape under the cover of darkness. Within 12 hours of the initial invasion the Biafran Army had control over the entire Mid-Western Region. Unknown to General Banjo a unit of Biafran soldiers under Lt. Col. Oechi attacked the government residence of Mid-Western Region of Governor David Ejoor on the orders of President Odumegwu Ojukwu to capture Ejoor dead or alive. But Ejoor's guards resisted the attacking Biafrans which gave Ejoor enough time to escape and flee to Lagos. The 13th Battalion was given the job of defending the Biafran north flank while also cutting off Nigerian supplies going to Nsukka.

The 12th Battalion was transformed into the 12th Brigade and given the job of capturing Ibadan and Lagos from two axes at the towns of Ore and Okitipupa but this was delayed for three days while President Ojukwu and General Banjo argued over who to appoint Governor/Administrator of the Mid-Western Region. Not wanting to appoint an Igbo over non-Igbo citizens General Banjo suggested that David Ejoor, Sam Ogbemudia, or Col. Trimnell be made governor but Ojukwu refused and ultimately placed the Igbo medical-officer Albert Okonkwo governor. When General Banjo returned to Benin City on August 12 he ordered the 12th Brigade to make its way to the town of Ore but not to attack Ibadan or Lagos until further notice. In Warri, Major Chukwuka released Major Adewale Ademoyega from jail after getting into a fistfight with **Major Emannuel Ifeajuna.** Ifeajuna made his way to Benin City where he was put in command of the newly formed 19th Battalion, which consisted of 700 recently conscripted soldiers. The next day Major Ademoyega relieved Ifeajuna of his command and replaced him with Lt. Col. Henry Igboba.

The Mid-West, the New Republic of Benin

On August 17 Governor Albert Okonkwo installed dusk to dawn curfew in which only citizens with passes would be allowed to move freely at night. Non-Igbo citizens, especially the Hausa communities were subjected to harassment from Biafran soldiers while women were often molested and sometimes raped, this in retaliation for the 1966 anti-Igbo

pogrom. There was no confirmation of this allegation which circulated in the Mid West for a short while. Resistance groups however began springing up constantly consisting of mainly ethnic Urhobos and Ijaws. Because of a series of uprisings against the occupying Biafran troops in Benin City, General Okonkwo began raising a force of loyal native inhabitants to combat the 'rebels'. By August 18 Okonkwo had assembled a force of 780 reliable volunteers to keep natives from attacking or killing Biafran soldiers. Loyal inhabitants donated whatever weaponry they had to the Biafrans, which consisted mainly of single-shot rifles and double-barreled shotguns. Cooks began poisoning Biafran soldiers whenever they had the chance to and it was because of this that Biafran soldiers began only eating food that was cooked by ethnic Igbos or self-cooked. Rebellious natives who did not wish to fight would often seduce Biafran soldiers to get information out of them and tell Nigerian authorities. On August 20 a group of Urhobo/Ijaw rebels raided a Biafran camp and were successful in killing 50 soldiers while 16 rebels were killed in the skirmish, it was alleged.

Due to these rebellions Biafran soldiers began raiding and pillaging villages throughout both the Mid-Western Region and Niger Delta inhabited by anyone other than Igbo civilians. The Biafran government began broadcasting Biafran propaganda in the region while the Nigerian government carried out anti-Biafran propaganda as well. **On September 19 President Ojukwu declared Governor Okonkwo President of the Republic of Benin** in an attempt to make citizens of the Mid-Western Region loyal to a government other than Nigeria. The Radio Benin broadcast was heard all over state and beyond. The propaganda mounted by the newly formed Information ministry was strong and heartening to Biafrans everywhere. Many critics believed Ojukwu did the right thing by granting the Mid-West self-determination, a pointer to the Aburi Accord. If the Aburi accord was honored, Mid West would like the Western Region become independent Republics eventually.

Turning of the Tide

On September 20, while the Biafran 12th Brigade was stationed in Ore, the Nigerian 2nd Division under Lt. Colonel Murtala Mohammed attacked the Biafrans and almost immediately forced them to retreat. The retreating Biafrans destroyed the Oluwa Bridge and managed to get a vital head-start in front of

the advancing Nigerians. When the 12th Brigade reached Benin City they alerted their comrades and, instead of mounting a defense against Murtala and his troops, began looting the city, even stealing $5.6 million from the Central Bank. When the Nigerian 2nd Division arrived in Benin City they discovered the city largely abandoned but managed to find a trapped Biafran unit stationed in the Benin Prison, most of whom were killed while attempting an escape. Meanwhile, the Nigerian 3rd Marine Division under Colonel Benjamin Adekunle began landing in Warri and capturing it along with Sapele and Ughelli. Most Biafran soldiers trapped behind enemy lines abandoned their uniforms and weapons before integrating into the local communities, escaping eastward when they had the chance.

The Nigerian 2nd Division continued to pursue the Biafrans but was stopped after retreating Biafran soldiers detonated and collapsed the River Niger Bridge at Onitsha. On October 7, 1967, citizens of Asaba were forced to leave their homes and attend a public dance in Asaba. When the civilians arrived in downtown Asaba they were massacred by the 2nd Division, under the supervision of Lt. Colonel Murtala Mohammed, in retaliation for the assassination of Ahmadu Bello at the hands of Kaduna Nzeogwu one year earlier, this massacre became known as the Asaba massacre. The 2nd Division then invaded Onitsha and managed to capture and hold onto control of the city for less than a day before they were surrounded and massacred by Biafran soldiers.

Victor Banjo-Ifeajuna and Co-Conspirators' Plot

The detailed account of the events that led to Biafra defeat in the Mid-West are contained in the interview Ojukwu granted to press men later. In the most detailed revelation yet Ojukwu gave the reason why he ordered the execution of Victor Banjo, Emmanuel Ifeajuna, Philip Alale, Sam I. Agbam was because they wanted to remove him, remove Gowon and install Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the Prime Minister. In a secret document cabled to the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington, the US military and defense attachés stationed in Nigeria reported that based on available information at that time (3rd August 1967) "in the long run Hilary Njoku would unseat Ojukwu." In a chat with the American consular Bob Barnard in Enugu three days after the executions, Ojukwu said: "the plotters intended to take Brigadier Hillary Njoku, the head of Biafran Army into custody

and bring him to the State House under heavy armed guard ostensibly to demand of him that Njoku be relieved of command on the grounds of incompetence.

Once inside the State House, Njoku's guards would be used against him. Ifeajuna would then declare himself acting Governor and offer ceasefire on Gowon's terms. Victor Banjo would go to the West and replace Brigadier Yinka Adebayo, the military governor of Western Region. Next Gowon would be removed and Awolowo declared Prime Minister of Reunited Federation." Ojukwu continues, "Victor Banjo, Ifeajuna and others kept in touch with co-conspirators in Lagos via British Deputy High Commission's facilities in Benin. When the American consular asked Ojukwu for evidence, Ojukwu replied, "Banjo is a very meticulous man who kept records and notes of everything he did." Ojukwu said "the mistake of the plotters was they talked too much, their moves too conspicuous and they made notes which came into his hands. As a result the conspirators came under surveillance from the early stages of the plot's existence. Their plans then became known and confirmed by subsequent events." This revelation is part of the exposés contained in the 21000 paged confidential, secret and top-secret US State department's documents on the Biafra War made available to the News Men

In another document, Major [Dr]Albert Okonkwo, the Ojukwu appointed military administrator of the Midwest said he and Ojukwu participated in court-martial (judicial court for trying the members of armed forces services accused of offenses against military law) of Banjo in Enugu on 22nd September 1967 prior to his execution. Banjo "freely admitted in his testimony that a group of Yorubas on both sides of the battle were plotting together to take over Lagos and Enugu governments and unite Nigeria under Awolowo. Gowon, Ojukwu, and Okonkwo were to be eliminated; Gowon was to have been killed by Yoruba officers in the Federal Army." He said further "when arrested on the night of 20th September, Banjo offered no resistance because he said then it was too late to stop as the plot was already in motion. His role, Banjo said, was already accomplished. Major Okonkwo continues, "As far as is known, Banjo died without revealing the names of his collaborators in Lagos."

Okonkwo who before his appointment as the military administrator of the Midwest was never in the Biafran army but held pro-Biafran sympathies said that "he was fearful that the assassination of Gowon would prevent the heads of state

mission of the Organization Of African Unity from coming to Nigeria. Okonkwo believed that "the OAU mission held the best hope of sorting out the Nigerian civil war." On the night Banjo was arrested, he Okonkwo, telephoned Gowon to warn him of the Banjo plot which "would break very soon." Whether Ojukwu knew of or agreed with Okonkwo's warning to Gowon was unknown. However, on 20 September, after the warning, "roadblocks were suddenly and rather severely enforced in Lagos. They were removed after about 48 hours as mysteriously as they appeared," the American diplomat noted.

Nzeogwu's demise and Northern conspiracy

In another confidential document cabled to Washington on 12 October, 1967 it was revealed that Ojukwu who had always been suspicious of Major Kaduna Nzeogwu sent him to his death at Nsukka. According to Lieutenant Colonel Abba Kyari the military governor of North Central State, "there is no question that Major Nzeogwu , Ibo leader of 1966 coup in Kaduna, had been a nationalist, not a tribalist, who was acting for the good of all Nigeria." He described Nzeogwu as "a victim of Ojukwu" explaining that Nzeogwu, having been falsely informed that Nsukka was in Biafran hands, boldly entered Ubolo-Eke, near Nsukka at night and was killed. Nzeogwu's corpse was said to have been transferred to the north and given "*full military honors burial"* but not before Northern soldiers had plucked out his eyes so that he 'would never see the North again." These stories, described as 'confidential' truly circulated throughout the period of the civil war. Many Igbos lamented the demise of Nzeogwu. Nzeogwu's picture appeared in the front page of the 'Biafra Sun Newspaper', which denied his death. But no one agreed that it was a conspiracy to get Nzeogwu killed in battle. It was regarded as 'fake news.' Nzeogwu's burial in the North if true, was nothing '*honorable*'. Perhaps the northern soldiers wanted to mess up his corpse and that they actually accomplished. They merely decided to humiliate him, even a dead man.

The Conspirators masterminded Biafra's loss of Midwest, Nsukka, Enugu, and Onitsha

Ojukwu told the American diplomat and radio anchorman that the coup plot against him "involved many who participated in the

January 15, 1966 military intervention" and that besides the four he had executed three days before, he would not execute others yet because " he did not wish to give the impression he was conducting blood purge." Ojukwu who latter made a radio broadcast confirmed that the existence of mutineers and blamed the loss of Midwest, Nsukka, Enugu, Onitsha on them. He said they called for the withdrawal of Biafran troops from these cities and that they were even shelling Onitsha with Biafran artillery to sow panic even long before the arrival of federal forces. Ojukwu did not execute Hillary Njoku. He only downgraded him and replaced him with Colonel Alexander Madiebo. The secret US document called Njoku "the best Enugu has (and one of the very best Nigeria had produced). The UK defense advisor who had known Madiebo as subordinate officer first rescue squadron for several years said he was "perfectly charming socially, but quite worthless professionally". He said further that "he is weak, ineffective commander and consistently had worst unit rescue squadron." To affirm what he was saying he showed the US defense attaché Madiebo's Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst file that showed his abysmal records. The US attaché noted too that Madiebo graduated as an associate field artillery officer at Fort Sill in Oklahoma from 23 January – 10th June 1964.

In a separate document it was disclosed that the Head of state Major **Aguyi-Ironsi** was scheduled to have been assassinated on the northern leg of his national tour after the January 1966 coup. Some northern officers were already plotting to kill the head of state on 19 July 1966, but **"Colonel Hassan Katsina** dampened their enthusiasm asserting nothing should happen to Ironsi while in the North. Ironsi was scheduled to visit Kano, but Colonel Katsina persuaded him to cancel that portion of his trip because Lt. Colonel Shuwa then the Commander of the 5th Battalion had made arrangements for Ironsi's assassination in Kano." Katsina told northern officers that if anything should happen to Major General Ironsi, it should happen in the South. Ironsi was killed in Ibadan 10 days later by northern officers led by **T.Y. Danjuma.**

Abagana, the Waterloo of the Nigerian Army

Having re-taken the entire Mid-West region, victory for Nigeria was in sight, the Nigerian military command thought. Crossing the Nigeria Bridge into Onitsha would land the Nigerian forces in the city of Nnewi, the hometown of the secessionist leader,

Odimegwu Ojukwu. From there it would take only a few hours to over-run all the villages and towns still under the secessionist control, hence the end of the war! Unfortunately the war was showing no signs of coming to an end. Rather it was intensifying. News of the great massacred of Midwest Igbos and imminent fall of Onitsha highlighted the need for Igbos to fight harder in the face of odds to evade the total annihilation of Igbo race from the face of the earth by the Nigerian hordes as Okokon Ndem wailed on Biafra radio. To prevent an easy crossover to Onitsha via the Niger bridge by the Nigerian soldiers as we learnt the indefatigable Biafra engineers had, sort of 'dismantled' the steel bridge from the Onitsha end and that frustrated the Nigerian military command and in anger and with non-stop heavy mortar shell bombardment of the multi-million Onitsha market the entire market and city were razed to ashes by heavy shelling of Onitsha from Asaba. Only the steel structures of the market stood there miserably till the end of the war.

Meanwhile news from diplomatic circles and war reports from various sectors were never encouraging. Federal forces were capturing or as they claimed were 'liberating' one town or village under the secessionist control after another. No good news from Port Harcourt-Aba, Owerri, Okigwe and others. The worst Biafra nightmare in the Enugu-Onitsha axis was the news that the federal military command had assembled the 'mightiest ground forces' under the command of one vicious Hausa-Fulani General, Murtala Muhammad for the final assault on Onitsha! But who knew at that point in time the 'god of war' was on the side of Biafra. The most unbelievable story, a miracle of the century happened at Abagana, near Onitsha, as the gallant Biafran forces intercepted and destroyed the entire military hardware – vehicles, bombs, artillery, and other equipments and supplies – setting everything on fire, including what reports described as 'staggering number' of Nigerian soldiers and military personnel. The wreckage of that disaster – miles stood there months even after the end of the war. Abagana became known as Waterloo of entire second division of the Nigerian army under the command of Murtala Muhammed in the Nigeria-Biafra war, where Nigerians suffered their worst crushing defeat in their war of aggression against the young republic. It was said Nigeria lost about 1,500 of its solders at Abagana. As we learned in history Waterloo was a village in central Belgium, south of Brussels which on June 18, 1815 Napoleon was defeated during his military campaigns. Nigeria suffered heavy losses in both

equipment and personnel at Abagana. As reports revealed its military commander, Murtala Muhammad and some of his chief military officers traveling in the convoy could only be saved through helicopter rescue operation carried out by either British or Russian pilots and with the aid of the United States.

Eye-Witness Memories of the Abagana Disaster and a 'Tribute' by a Biafran Patriot

On March 31, 1968, there was an ambush at Abagana town in the present Anambra State by Biafran troops led by Major Jonathan Uchendu that wiped out the Nigerian two Divisions. Those Nigerian two Divisions under the command of Murtala Mohammed were in a long convoy of about 300 military vehicles heading to Enugu to link up with the Nigerian first Division. On this occasion, Murtala Mohammed was baying for blood. He was blood thirsty and had perfected his plans to suck as much Igbo blood as possible. Apart from the 200 military vehicles bearing arms and ammunition, Murtala had in that convoy a trailer load of horse whips. Murtala's intention was to have every Igbo male child from the age of 6 whipped before being shot to death. Don't forget that on October 7, 1967 he lined up about a thousand Asaba male indigenes and had them executed and buried in mass graves. Some parents who came to the 'meeting' with their kids had the kids also shot on the orders of Murtala Muhammed, but God is never a 'bom boy'. Today Murtala Mohammed has had his generation and lineage closed. Ronke, the Yoruba woman he married gave him only one female child. He never heard the cry of a male child in his home before **Buka Dimka's** hot bullets rained on his body in a bloody coup as he headed from Dodan Barracks for Moslem Jumat prayers on 13th of February, 1976.

During that Abagana ambush, out of the 6,000 Nigerian troops only a very small number survived, this included Murtala Muhammed who was the commander of the second Division. He was said to have been pursued by Major Jonathan Uchendu to Nanka, but missed capturing the mass murderer by the whiskers as the helicopter in which he escaped took off as Uchendu was arriving there. Now I want to let us know that there's significance to the destruction of the Nigerian Army second Division. After that heroic ambush by Biafran soldiers, Gowon promptly relieved Murtala of the command of the second Division and he was never given any more roles till after the war. This was after Gowon learnt of Murtala's hideous intention to wipe out every

Igbo male, after horse whipping and being shot, and the women were to be given to the Hausa/Fulani and 'munchi' soldiers as sport. I want to reveal to you that it was in retaliation to that humiliation that Murtala overthrew Gowon in a palace coup d'état while he was away in Ethiopia, and it was in further retaliation that Middle Belt elements in the Army, led by Dimka, conspired and attempted to take back power and hand back over to Gowon who was then exiled in London.

If Murtala had had his way, the entire generations of the Igbo nation would have been wiped out, but thanks to gallant Biafran soldiers who inadvertently saved us from such fate. Who knows, perhaps the persons that gave birth to you and I would have suffered that fate as Murtala planned. Had that happened none of us would have been on the planet, earth today. This is one of the major reasons why those heroes that fought the Nigerian aggressors in different fronts must be honored. Biafra lost 3.5 million people in the genocide that can only be compared to the Jewish pogrom in the hands of Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler. The people of Biafra suffered the greatest deprivation ever witnessed in the history of man, and yet without help they fought the British, the Nigerians, and the Soviet Union, Egyptian pilots flying Soviet made MIG fighter jets, and strafing markets and hospitals. In fact it seemed then like Biafra fought the whole world. This is why those who fought to keep us alive must be honored, from Generals Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, Phillip Effiong, Madiebo, and others such as "Hanibal", Joe Achuzie who died recently, Kaduna Nzeogwu, Tim Onwuatuegwu, Jonathan Uchendu, the millions of children who Nigeria and the British caused their death through starvation and subsequently, kwashiorkor, the great Biafran scientists, like Dr. Roy Umenyi, Professor Godian Ezekwe, Professor Frank Ndili, Dr. Ezekiel Izuogu, Professor P.N Okeke, among others. We would not also forget the thousands of Biafran soldiers who fought gallantly with no other weapon but determination, anchored on self preservation. We owe them nothing but honor and we can only do that by sitting at home come every **May 30th, Biafra Heroes Day.** Sit at home and honor our fallen heroes! Indeed the Abagana victory was celebrated all over places or territories that still remained in Biafran hands and command. *I was among a few young Biafran youths who joined in Biafra army vehicle at the Military headquarters at Orlu to witness the Abagana disaster.* A good length of Abagana-Onitsha road was declared safe after a few days of the disaster, as

even villagers helped out in search of few scattered Nigerian soldiers. We saw the wreckages of war, burnt-out military trucks and bodies. Surely the vehicles transporting fuel did the rest of the job. That day was the feast of Our Blessed Mother Mary and our Irish parish priest was happy to announce in the church that our prayers and intercession through Mary helped Biafran commanders. It was reported that the special military helicopter that rescued Murtala Muhammad was supplied by either America or Russia.

Nigerian army disastrous defeat and humiliation at Oguta sector – The great Amphibious Operation - Ojukwu in the battlefield

Ojukwu won the admiration of most Igbos when it was learnt that the General of the people's army was ever-ready to fight alongside the ill-equipped 'ragtag' Biafra army at all sectors of the war, each time and where Biafra's defeat seemed imminent. The story circulated like wild fire that Ojukwu was taking position with the Biafra ground forces and marines at the Oguta sector of the war, where Nigerian forces, after failing to cross the Onitsha bridge had planned the famous so-called 'amphibious operation' to take Oguta by sea and land and march into the Biafra heartland. It took the mighty intervention and serious persuasion by some Igbo elders to prevent Ojukwu from joining personally in the successful Oguta counter-attack by the gallant Biafra forces. At Oguta, the Nigerian forces suffered their Waterloo similar to that of Abagana disaster. The Igbo elders, together with some top Biafran military officers warned Ojukwu to withdraw to the rear pleading with him: "If you die in the war front, like Nzeogwu did, who was killed early at the beginning of the war at the Nsukka sector, who will lead Biafra to victory?" Through that singular demonstration of patriotism, selfless service and commitment to the true course of Igbo aspirations Ojukwu scored a big mark on the test for selfless leadership when Igbos needed one desperately.

At a particular stage or moment of the war most Igbo youths joined the Biafra army voluntarily. Most of us joined the Ojukwu Vanguard (forefront movement and action youths). We became Ojukwu and Biafra fanatics till date! Most Igbo elders and youths were ready to stone anyone criticizing Ojukwu for whatever reasons and failures. Again Ojukwu's eloquence at peace conferences, interviews, together with his passionate

addresses made him a hero whose intelligence and academic stature dwarfed that of Yakubu Gowon and his supporters in Nigeria.

The battle for Owerri

The battle for the control of Owerri, some 38 kilometers to Orlu, the true Igbo heartland, was really fierce as Nigerians had advanced from Port Harcourt, through Elele. From Orlu we heart sounds of war ragging around Owerri! Although General Shuwa's 1st Division had successfully captured Okigwe and the Obiangwu Airstrip the operation resulted in disaster for Adekunle's 3rd Marine Division in which it was said Nigeria lost over 20,000 of its 35,000 soldiers, over 2/3 of the entire division, and found itself in short supply of both men and food. While Yakubu Gowon was distracted by the anti-tax riots in western Nigeria the Biafran Brigadier Alexander Madiebo encircled Owerri, trapping the 3,000 man Nigerian 16th Division inside the city. For the next several months attacks were launched by Biafran soldiers on Nigerian defensive positions around the city which allowed them no inch closer to Owerri with every battle. On December 5 the Biafrans launched a two-day offensive on Owerri in which it was said that thousands of rounds of ammunition, mortars, howitzer shells, and anti-tank weapons were fired by the Biafrans but the Nigerian 16th Division under Col. Etuk managed to stay put in their original positions. On January 15, 1969, the Biafran 60th Brigade entered Owerri and forced the Nigerians within the city to retreat across the Otamini Bridge.

Eyewitness reports confirmed the gallantry of the Biafran forces, but at the same time their sorry situation! Hungry and half-naked Biafran soldiers, stories circulated, discovered the Nigerian's food and clothing supplies and decided to stay and have their fill while the Nigerians regrouped and launched a counter-attack, causing the Biafrans to retreat. But By March 31, 1969, the Biafrans had control over 70% of Owerri while the remaining Nigerian soldiers fled the city on April 25.

The second battle for Owerri in 1968 and the aftermath

The following is an insider’s account of the detailed events that led to the fall of Owerri. The Nigerian army had underrated Biafran ability to counter-attack the federal military assault to capture Owerri, which was then in part the capital of Biafra. The

attack was conceptualized in 1968 by Colonel Benjamin Adekunle (aka "Black Scorpion") along three axes assigned to three brigades of Nigerian army under Majors George Innih, Yemi Alabi and E.A. Etuk, respectively. Etuk had previously been the successful Commanding Officer of the 8th Battalion along the Calabar-Itu-Ikot Ekpene axis before being redeployed to his new Brigade command for the push into Port Harcourt and dash to Owerri. Supported by mortars and artillery, Captain Isemede's 12th brigade was to protect the left flank of Major Shande's 17th brigade as he crossed the Imo River, ultimately taking the market town of Aba on September 4th. Meanwhile, Etuk's 16th brigade was to charge head on from Port-Harcourt in a 'penetration of the center' toward Owerri. Innih's 14th brigade was to protect Etuk's right flank by advancing on to Owerrinta, while Makanjuola's 15th brigade was to swing left of Owerri, bypassing Ohoba in an ambitious river-borne assault on Oguta. From here they hoped to simultaneously threaten Biafra's connection to the outside world at Uli-Ihiala airstrip six miles away, cut off Biafra's source of fuel at the Egbema oil field, and prevent Biafran reinforcements from reaching Owerri. Innih and Isemede would then swing north and left and later link up with Makanjuola, north of Owerri, securing the position of Etuk inside Owerri, effectively ending the war. Unfortunately, as is so often the case in war, the plan did not survive contact with opposing Biafran forces.

The Biafra Command – Ojukwu in the Battle field

Led by its 33rd Battalion, supported by armored vehicles, mortars and artillery, the 16th brigade of Nigerian army pushed into Owerri on September 16, a day after Makanjuola had to abandon his position at Oguta with heavy losses in the face of fierce Biafran counter-attacks led by Colonel Nwajei, Captain Anuku and ***Colonel Joe Achuzia***. Major Asoya subsequently dislodged Federal units of the 15th brigade from the Egbema oil field. Etuk, meanwhile, had advanced furiously against units of the Biafran 14th Division (then under Colonel Nwajei) from Port-Harcourt, through Elele, Awarra, Asa, Ohoba, Avu, Obinze, and finally to Owerri itself. Although unintended, what Colonel Nwajei achieved by default in failing to stop Etuk's advance (allegedly due to lack of ammunition) was to "retreat his base", thus setting Etuk up for the kill as the Biafran flanks on either side of Owerri moved forward against Innih and

Makanjuola. Nevertheless, Biafran leader Ojukwu replaced Nwajei, now suspected of "sabotage", as commander of the 14th Division. Colonel Ogbugo Kalu, a onetime Commandant of the Nigerian Military Training College, who had earlier been branded a "saboteur" after the fall of Port Harcourt, took Nwajei's place.

On Etuk's right flank, Innih's push against the Biafran 63 Brigade to Enyiogugu, along the Owerri-Umuahia road, north of Owerrinta, was bogged down one mile to Inyiogugu. Counter-attacks by Biafran commandos against Innih's units were led initially by the German mercenary, Colonel Steiner (until he fell out with his hosts), and later the reinvigorated 63 brigade under Major Lambert Ihenacho along with a battalion from the new "S" division led by Colonel Onwuategwu. (The "S" Division had been created after the fall of Aba). During the battle for Inyiogugu, Biafran home made "Ogbunigwe" mines were used with devastating effect and French weapons began to arrive in increasing quantity. The 14th brigade of the Nigerian army fell back southwards in disarray all the way to Elelem and Amala.

For a full 21 days, the 16th brigade of Nigerian army, now dug inside Owerri, could not make any contact with nor get information about the 14th and 15th brigades on either side of it. As noted above, the two sister brigades were supposed to protect its flanks and prevent Biafran counter-attacks. Instead they were concerned with their own very survival at that point, retreating in chaos, thus exposing the 16th to an uncertain fate inside the Owerri salient in the absence of an outright order to evacuate. Nevertheless, Etuk tried to relieve pressure on his sister brigades by attempting to use his momentum to puncture the outstretched Biafran base and create an opening to attack Biafran forces on his left and right from the rear. He did this by pushing along the Owerri-Okigwe road toward Mbieri and Orodo aiming at Orlu and Nkwerre. Another plan was pushing along the Ihiala road and exploiting beyond Ogbaku toward Oguta.

The 44th battalion of the 16th brigade then secured the Owerri-Aba and Owerri-Umuahia roads out to 12 kilometers. The 33rd battalion secured the Owerri-Okigwe, Owerri-Orlu and Owerri-Enugu roads, while the 2nd battalion was stretched out securing the western approaches to the town from Ohoba and Oguta. The 11 kilometer radius away from the Owerri city center of the defensive lines of responsibility allotted to the various battalions of the Brigade was allegedly influenced

by knowledge of the range (or lack thereof) of Biafran artillery. If true, it was an odd decision, considering that Biafra had a few 105-mm Artillery pieces in its inventory and Etuk's troops in the city center were clearly within sniper range. It is more likely that actual defensive positions were functionally related to the seriousness of Biafran pressure in various sectors. Importantly, though, supply and communication routes from Port-Harcourt were barely protected. Meanwhile, Biafran troops were slowly but gradually ensnaring the brigade in a noose, all the while monitoring federal radio communications.

The End of the War in Sight

Meanwhile lack of arms and ammunition had continued to hinder resistance to federal forces advance on almost all sectors of the war including Owerri, the true 'heartland' of what remained of the Biafra enclave. The famous Nigerian "Third Marine Commando" under the military command of General Olusegun Obasanjo was destined to bring the war to its final end. That sector of the war – Port Harcourt – Owerri – had throughout the conflict witnessed scenes of crazy blood-bathe as Biafra forces had in at least two occasions successively beaten back or repelled federal attacks and advance to Owerri. Under military command of one vicious Yoruba officer Major Benjamin Adekunle, the federal drive to Igbo heartland, like through Abagana or Oguta had witnessed a lot of casualties on both sides of the warring parties. But the following is a longer version of what looked like the end story of the war.

Umuahia Operation

The fall of Enugu was not the end of the civil war as Ojukwu had moved Biafran headquarters to Umuahia. The Nigerian military operations were concentrating on the capture of Umuahia. The military operation which the Nigerian military command called **"Operation Leopard"** (March 27 - April 22, 1969) was an operation conducted against strong Biafran troops defending Umuahia. No fighting took place inside Umuahia but the area surrounding it was heavily devastated by the Nigerian offensive. Umuahia was finally captured by Nigerian troops on April 22, 1969. But that was not the end of the war. Earlier on September 17, 1968, after the successful attacks on Aba and Owerri, the Nigerian 3rd Marine Division under Gen. Benjamin

Adekunle (the Black Scorpion) made their way towards the Biafran capital, Umuahia, only to be intercepted by a fierce Biafran defensive. A bloody battle between both sides lasted for 14 days before the 3rd Marine Division retreated to Owerri on October 1. Heavy casualties were reported on the Nigerian side.

With the 3rd Marine Division's failed attempt to capture Umuahia during **Operation OAU** the Nigerian Col. Mohammed Shuwa decided to give it a try. Col. Shuwa put Lt. Col. Theophilus Danjuma in charge of the 1st Division consisting of about 6 battalions and began moving towards the Biafran capital. At the time Umuahia was defended by the Biafran 13th Division consisting of the 54th and 55th brigades. On March 27, 1969, a company of the Biafran 15th Division and 55th Brigade were suddenly attacked by the invading Nigerians with overwhelming force. The 1st Division managed to break through a gap in the Biafran defenses and bulldozed their way even closer to the city. As a result of the swift Nigerian advance Biafran re-enforcements were being sent to Umuahia to defend the capital. Before re-enforcements arrived, the Nigerian 82nd Battalion under Maj. Ibrahim Babangida attacked and captured Uzuakoli.

On April 2 Biafran artillery began bombarding the Nigerian 82nd Battalion in Uzuakoli, which replied with fierce artillery fire. During the fierce fighting that ensued Maj. Babangida was wounded by a Biafran Ogbunigwe shell and was evacuated, being replaced by his second in command who counterattacked with armored cars and artillery. When the 82nd Battalion turned its guns on the Aba-Umuahia road the Biafrans replied with their Ogbunigwe mines and were able to recapture Uzuakoli. On April 3 the Nigerian Air Force began bombing the Aba-Umuahia road from Uzuakoli to Umuahia, which lasted for many days, turning the road into an impassable fire storm. On April 19 the Nigerian 21st and 44th battalions broke through the Biafran defenses around Uzuakoli and managed to get within 4 kilometers to Umuahia. Because the Aba-Umuahia road had been heavily mined and filled with obstacles Nigerian 1st Division troops decided to make their way to Umuahia across country roads with newly acquired trucks and tanks. The Biafran Gen. Timothy Onwuatuegwu was replaced as commander of the South Division with Maj. Azum Asoya, but it was discovered too late that there were no Biafran troops in place to stop the advancing Nigerians. On April 22 battalions of Nigerian army occupied Umuahia.

The aftermath of the fall of Umuahia was psychologically devastating. But like in the fall of Enugu, there was hope Biafran command would have moved to different location to continue defending what remained of Biafra. Umuahia stayed under Nigerian control for the rest of the war and served as the headquarters of the Nigerian 1st Division. On December 24, 1969, the Nigerian 3rd Marine Division under Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo launched a final attack on Biafra and managed to capture Owerri and the Uli airstrip within 2 weeks. On January 8, 1970, the new Biafran President Philip Effiong declared a ceasefire and surrendered to Nigeria on January

But as my short personal account of ***Biafra war – in retrospect*** is concerned, it seemed the story was drawing to an end. The rest will be commentaries and perhaps analysis of some other incidents and related features of the Biafra war. Otherwise the federal forces entry into Owerri capital city, right into the Mbaise towns and villages, Okigwe and so on meant to many beleaguered and out-gunned Biafra soldiers and civilians with virtually every individual still in areas or territories under Biafra military command becoming a 'refugee', it was foolhardy continuing any resistance. And to stop further bloodshed and bombardment we heard the area commander of Owerri sector that had moved its headquarters near Awomama and Orlu had ordered the retreating Biafra soldiers to stop further attacks or defense and to 'demobilize'. A few hours the first batch of the "Third Marine Commandos" landed in the city of ORLU and settled at the both campuses of Bishop Shanahan Colleges (BSC + BSTC).

Biafra Story by Tony Nnadi of the Lower Niger Congress

Tony Nnadi is an accomplished poet, dramatist, revisionist, cultured Igbo intellectual and not in the least a true Biafran, Nigerian, and world Historian that is widely respected by Igbos in Nigeria and in the Diaspora. **Igbos are found all over the East, West and Middle Belt regions of Nigeria.** IGBO race comprises the entire Old Eastern Nigerian and the territory BIAFRA which fought the war with Nigeria. Igbos enjoyed good relationships with their kit and kin and other major and minor ethnic groups in Biafra. It was only the Northern Nigeria under Yakubu Gowon that put a knife on the cord that linked Biafrans together **- Itsekiris, Ijaws, Ogonis, Urhobos, Calabaris, Edos, Efiks, Ibibios, Isokos and Opobos**. And it seemed

that things had fallen sport. No! It was only the Cabal's plot to disorganize the most intelligent and gifted people of Biafra by the creation of their so-called States. Their concept of "One Nigeria" has not worked and it is quite unlikely it will ever work.

In the most stunning dramatic fashion our revered Historian **Tony Nnadi** summarized the STORY OF BIAFRA for those who want to know the truth and record these truths in their History notebooks. Only an enemy and an ignoramus will doubt this 'STORY' which complements and adds more flesh; in short embellishes this part of "Post-War Nigerian History for Schools and Colleges". Those who have ears, please listen! I am creating sections simply to help students comprehend and store a lot in their memories.

Danjuma Theophilus – Soldier like Benjamin Adekunle

"He is a god. He is untouchable. He is beyond any approaches and reproaches. He opened his mouth and floodgates of sentiments and bottled up feelings broke. Those who know Theophilus are recoiling. He made Abdulsalam. He installed Obasanjo. He stood behind Yardua. In return, he controls more than 15% of the nation's oil well. He is arguably the richest Nigerian military officer. He is the most brutal, deadly, heartless and horrible. Danjuma has spoken. But he spoke late. He spoke as a victim. Now he is at the receiving end. The arrow is rebounding. He is tasting the spur he administered to the Igbo's many years ago. Danjuma is losing his people. The war is taking toll on his kinsmen. Body-bags are arriving. A man without emotion is crying. He is crying out. A cry too late

Danjuma – 'what one sows, one reaps'

The one Nigeria he built and sustained amidst opposition and disenchantment is consuming him. He butchered Aguiyi Ironsi in the street of Dodan Barracks. He led the assault that decimated Ngwo, Awgwu and Obollo Afor. He rode through the bellies of Biafran kids in Ihiala. He made thousands widows and fatherless. But the chicken is coming back to roost. I have no pity for those who supported the marauders. Those who empowered the monsters are held captive. Benue? Kogi? Taraba? These must not cry or shout. They must maintain peace. They must coexist with their allies, friends and kinsmen from the Sahel. Danjuma and Middle belt leaders are waking up very late. Good morning

to the good people of Nassarawa. Welcome to the Nigeria of your dream.

"We in South-East are admiring the love affair: Welcoming Theophilus Danjuma to the morning after one-Nigeria" - 24/03/18

The Federation of Nigeria had a terrible accident January 15, 1966 and got into trauma. By July 29, 1966, whilst still in the emergency ward being stabilized, it was attacked by those who insisted that the accident of January 1966 was orchestrated, and so Nigeria went into coma. The attempt to resuscitate Nigeria at Aburi January 4-5, 1967 was truncated in Nigeria a few days after it woke up momentarily from coma there in Aburi. May 27, 1967, Nigeria died.

Birth of Biafra as the war began at Gakem, Ogoja

May 30, 1967 the Soul of Eastern Nigeria departed to a distant land known as Biafra. Two months later, July 6, 1967, those who murdered Nigeria went to that distant land of safety and began the violent attempt to drag back the soul of Eastern Nigeria in a place called Gakem. The Soul of Eastern Nigeria refused to be dragged back into the body of Nigeria. The enforcers of One-Nigeria, aided massively by Britain and its friends, simply stayed put in Biafraland as an Occupation Force, pretending they had restored the dead Federation of Nigeria.

Victims of the brutal war

When the dust settled 30 Months after, January 15, 1970, the violence that began in Gakem July 6, 1967 had littered the Land of Safety with the dead bodies of 3.5 million of the Peoples of Eastern Nigeria, 2million of which were children deliberately starved to death by the murderers of Nigeria. The terminal stages of the disease of extreme hunger, inflicted on those children was called kwashiorkor and manifested in heavily swollen stomachs, dry skulls with sunken eyes and shriveled bony legs that could barely carry the body. At times, the totally unclad children become too weak to stand and simply fell to the ground and lay still until waiting vultures, taking them for dead, descended upon them, tearing them up for the festival of human meat that enforcers of One-Nigeria had provided.

International Aid Organizations come to rescue

The Red Cross struggled its very best in an unprecedented and yet to be paralleled magnitude of operations, frantically trying to get food and medicine to the dying children of Biafra but the Forces of One-Nigeria under the watch of one Yakubu Gowon, targeted and bombed Red Cross planes on desperate Humanitarian Mission, killing the Foreign Pilots and Crew.

Bruce Mayrock immolates himself in front of UN to protest Biafra Genocide

May 30th, 1969, in far away New York, a 20-year old College student named Bruce Mayrock, doused and set himself ablaze in the East Lawn of the United Nations Headquarters, protesting the complicity and indifference of the Global Community to the Genocide in Biafra, especially the mass starving of children to death. Security staff at the UN HQ chased the burning Bruce Mayrock around the field until he slumped at the base of the statue at the center of the garden. He died in Hospital same day from the burns, but it was his dramatic action which he strategically orchestrated right within full view of horrified Diplomats that forced the hands of the Global Community to bring an end to the ethnic cleansing Genocide in Biafra. I attended the 2017 Anniversary Memorial Event of Bruce Mayrock's Supreme Sacrifice for the dying Children of Biafra; my very Generation as a matter of fact. I was two years and a few months old, trapped with millions of others inside the totally blockaded Biafra when Bruce Mayrock gave his life to save the yet-to-to-killed Biafran Children. Even amidst the Vietnam misadventure, the 1968 US Presidential Election that brought in Republican President Richard Nixon in place of the Democratic incumbent, President Lyndon B Johnson, was basically shaped and decided by one major issue: **Biafra Genocide.**

Bitter fruits of the war 'to keep Nigeria one'

50 years after all these well documented atrocities, not only has Nigeria carried on as if nothing happened and that the lives of those millions of Biafrans it killed as it tried to restore the dead Federation by Force instead of the Agreement it freely reached in Aburi 1967, with the injured Eastern Region, that there will be no

resort to the use Force in seeking a resolution to the disputations emanating from the events of 1966, does not matter. Force was used to drag the East back to the defunct Federation of Nigeria, which since 1970 had progressively morphed into a Master-Servant Unitary State, unilaterally defined by the true procurers of the Military Violence deployed against the East between 1967 and 1970 Caliphate. That unilateral redefinition of the Union of Nigeria is encapsulated and codified in the fraudulent 1999 Constitution imposed by that Caliphate via Decree No.24 of 1999. *(sic)*

Conquest – Re-Colonization – Danjuma and Middle Belt

Now that the wider violent CONQUEST and COLONIZATION designs of that Caliphate, against the rest of Nigeria has become fully manifest, one of the Principal Actors on the side of One-Nigeria in the 52-year drama of Death, Attrition and Debilitation, Lieutenant-General Theophilus Danjuma, has confirmed to the whole World that the Armed Forces and Police of the inverted Federation of Nigeria, has been hijacked by that Caliphate and deployed to aid and advance an Ethnic Cleansing Agenda. Danjuma therefore called on the endangered rest of Nigeria to rise up a defend themselves and their Territories from Death and Conquest, instead of waiting to be defended by the "Armed Forces of Nigeria" which according to him, were in collusion with the marauding so-called "Fulani Herdsmen" sweeping Southwards in an undisguised conquest and colonization campaign.

"One Nigeria is not working "

If anyone is in doubt that the badly fractured Federation of Nigeria has collapsed and is now being taken over by a vicious Caliphate that has also seized the reins of power in Nigeria, as alerted by the Lower Niger Congress since 2016 in a Public Communication titled "Nigeria is a criminal enterprise now being taken over by a vicious caliphate", that doubt should now be removed by this loud Battlefield Cry from the Hills of Mambilla. To General T. Danjuma, I say: Welcome to the Morning after One-Nigeria**. *(Tony Nnadi – LNC – March 25, 2018)***

Conclusion: As the war drew to an end

One last dramatic shot from an elder was delivered. We got more insights from Bishop Mark O. Unegbu's autobiography. The bishop replaced Most Rev. J.B. Whelan, the last Irish missionary who served the Catholic diocese of Owerri until the end of the civil war. Bishop Whelan and all the Irish missionaries in the Biafran enclave did marvelous work to save most of the starving children from imminent death. Most Rev. Bishop Unegbu reported the last anxious moments that saw the end of the Biafran resistance and surrender.

"With the fall of Umuahia and Biafran headquarters moving into Okigwe zone, hope of Biafran survival was getting very bleak. But as long as the magic ***"Voice of Biafra"*** was in the air, there was still great confidence among the lovers of Biafra that some miracle would one day take place and the Nigerian government would be forced to sue for peace. Such was the power of its propaganda machinery. That was nearly the only means of communication with the common man in Biafra. But with the "Voice of Biafra" off the air, and no news of the expected miracle happening, it became clear to everyone that the doomsday was at hand. Everyone was prepared for the worst. No one expected mercy from "the vandals". The Nigerian soldiers were known in Biafra as *'vandals'* – just as Biafrans were called *"rebels"* by Nigerians. As we were deserted by former friends and enclosed in small territory left for us, the Igbo race sent up urgent supplication to heaven for salvation from utter extermination. Everything considered, one can say that the merciful Lord answered our prayers. It was quite obvious that more Biafrans died out of starvation and from the atrocities perpetrated by the enemy after the cessation of hostilities than from the battlefield. People, more conversant with the war, informed us that Nigerian loss of lives in open combat was far more than that of the Biafrans. But in spite of these calamities, the indomitable will of the Igbo man could not be broken. Surrender to the enemy was not surrender to chance. With courage and determination, he faced the ordeal. The destroyed houses and villages were quickly cleared and rebuilt. Crops were planted. Within few months, life was gradually returning to normal." **(*Cf Bishop Mark O. Unegbu, My Life, pp 94-97.*)**

CHAPTER 6

NIGERIA-BIAFRA WAR IN RETROSPECT (PART 2) - MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC INTERVENTIONS BY THE SUPERPOWERS AND THE OAU

Nigeria-Biafra war has its second part which recounts some other events intrinsically related to the accounts of the shooting war and battlefield activities. While the soldiers were fighting and dying in the battlefield, many other activities were taking place within the two parties – Nigeria and Biafra - at war, as well as in other parts of the world. Different groups of people and organizations got involved in negotiating for peace. Biafrans, young and the elderly did not fold their arms waiting for miracles to happen. Those young ones, not even participating in the **local defense corps, Red Cross activities, propaganda missions etc**, were 'forced' to join the armed struggle. All educational institutions remained closed as the war intensified. There was need for everyone to get involved and so those youths who were not participating in win-the-war efforts were conscripted into the Biafran army. Some of my friends and I joined the local Red Cross organization. I was the secretary of our local branch and was the coordinator or chairman of the Red Cross and Caritas relief distribution center at Orlu headquarters. Our supervisor was the Irish priest **Rev. Fr, Denis MacManus**. We were eyewitnesses to what many have described as **Genocide against the Igbo.** Our Red Cross group was driven from Orlu to Enugu to help out in the retrieval of hundreds of brutally mutilated and dismembered bodies brought in trains from the North to Enugu train station. It was awful.

Ojukwu, Constituent Assembly and Biafra

It must be noted as true and a matter of great importance regardless of prevailing differences and divides, before and after the Nigerian-Biafra war, that there was never a time that Igbos as a people had contemplated on breaking away from Nigeria and forming a separate state for whatever reasons. If other tribal groups in Nigeria had any such unions or assemblies, cultural, social, religious or political, that could easily rise and issue declarations on behalf of their people, Igbos had none. The Ohaneze Ndigbo we hear about today was not in existence in

those days. It was clear that it was in absence of such Igbo Forum that Ojukwu, the military leader of the Easter region after the 1966 coup decided to form and seek the directives of the forum he named **Consultative Assembly of Eastern Nigerian** elders, mostly traditional and intellectual leaders of the various ethnic groups – Igbos, Ikweres, Annangs, Efiks, Edos, Ijaws, Ibibios and others. The Consultative Assembly that advised Ojukwu on the various issues surrounding the secessionist movement or option and its manifesto documented in the Ahiara Declaration was not made up of Igbos alone. In fact most of the non-military members were non-Igbo career diplomats and civil servants, from most of the core South-South region of Nigeria as relevant records show.

Nigeria and Biafra - Search for Peace

Foremost in the minds of Igbo elders, right from the outbreak of hostilities and especially during the shooting war was how to achieve a lasting peace and Igbos would return to the North and other parts of the federation to retake their abandoned positions and properties, and places of work and businesses. Even after the first and second set of massacres of Igbos in the North, following the Hausa-Fulani counter-coup of July 1967, most Igbos were anxious and ready after Ojukwu's appeals to return to the North in spite of possible renewal of hostilities. Igbos were not keen on breaking up Nigeria. They are not the type of people or race that like squeezing themselves into a small enclave in the new vision of founding an autonomous state or nation of their own. And you may accept or believe the following assertion or suggestion that if Nigeria were to break-up or 'restructure' peacefully into 6 or more independent nations or 'Geo-political Regions' including Igbo-Biafra, they, the Igbos will be the first to register their overwhelming presence, establish relationships on ambassadorial and consulate levels, send trade-missions and keep open borders with their nearest neighbors! You don't need to doubt it. Not wanting really to severe relationships with Nigeria in spite of atrocities against them, Igbos knew too it would be hard to win the war against Nigeria. Therefore one must understand the reason for Biafra's readiness for peace negotiations with Nigeria, within and outside Nigeria and Biafra, including **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Dahomey, and Aburi-Ghana, and by any named mediator, Organization of**

African Unity (OAU), the United Nations Organization, (UNO) and others.

If one is fighting with a senior, or a stronger aggressor, it is common wisdom to wish for a separation or intervention by onlookers or sympathizers before the weaker victim is strangled to death. The point was not Nigeria's strength, size, and massive support from Britain, the Soviet Union and the Arab nations. No! Igbos were determined to fight back in self-defense; but for how long! The Nigeria aggression and determination to annihilate Igbos, in the same way that about 6 million Jews were slaughtered, was not questionable. The Igbos desperately fought back, as it would have been totally suicidal to fold arms and watch the rampaging enemies closing up for the final onslaught! It was a **Jihad** too!

Ojukwu, the trusted leader

For millions of Igbos and Biafrans Odimegwu Ojukwu offered the only possible option for survival. His numerous speeches and interviews granted to foreign and local newsmen exposed Nigeria's hypocrisy and of course insincerity in the pursuit of any peaceful resolution to the crisis. Many Nigerians have no idea how the war started, how it was fought and why, over 50 years later. But right before the amalgamation of North and South, Nigeria had remained a nation of irreconcilable ethnic, religious and cultural groups with little in common outside the British concept of a conquered Black African territory. The British experiment did now work in India and in most other territories it conquered and ruled. No one expected it either to work in what they eventually named Nigeria. Those who still think that after the civil war Nigeria will be a great nation without a permanent realistic resolution of the Igbo-Biafra question are merely deceiving themselves. Surely the 'Igbo question' is both a metaphor for the 'Nigerian question' and a mirror to the Nigerian nation. A successful resolution will establish a template for resolving all the other outstanding nationalities' questions if Nigeria will survive as a corporate entity or rather friendly separate entities in some type of new alliances. Self-determination is a God given right for any people who are pushed against the wall and Biafra had a right to secede, since Nigeria could not protect the safety of its citizens of the former Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Ojukwu was the 'Moses' of the persecuted Igbo race. As far as most Igbos were concerned he offered the most exemplary leadership at that moment and even today Igbos can find none one equal to Ojukwu. The confirmed news that General Emeka Ojukwu committed the entire or very large part of his father wealth to Biafra war of survival was enough motivation for Igbos to 'follow Ojukwu wherever he decided to lead Biafra and Ndigbo to. It was a rare gesture even today when corruption and looting of nations' treasury has become the order of the day for political leaders. Most Igbos became members of Ojukwu Vanguard. There was no doubt that Ojukwu's interview and stories were most enlightening and directly addressed the issues at stake. A people persecuted needed a place to go to and the only place they could find succor was in the East of Nigeria and anybody of Eastern Nigerian origin who was in Nigeria between July and September 1966, will tell you that it was not just a fairy-tale, how many innocent men and women were murdered in cold-blood. The scenarios were worse than the Rwandan atrocities or those of the ISSIS in Iraq and Syria. No person of Eastern Nigerian origin, including the South-South was spared of the vicious massacre of a people.

The Intervention of the Super Powers in African Politics and the Suppression of Biafra Self--Determination

Economic blockade looked like the last stroke that broke the camel's back. Having been blocked by Nigeria by air, sea and land, it was clear that arms-shipment from friendly countries to Biafra was no more possible. **The Soviet Union (Russia),** as we were told at the beginning of the war, was a willing ally and ready to support Biafra but later switched sides and embraced Nigeria because Ojukwu refused to sign an agreement with Russia. Russia wanted control of Biafra oil resources in exchange for military support. **Britain,** the ex-colonial master would under no circumstances support secessionist Biafra. **The United States government** claimed neutrality, but nevertheless leaned towards the British commitment for a victorious federal government in what they saw as a legitimate military action to crush the rebel Biafran forces led by a rebel secessionist leader named General Odumegwu Ojukwu. Worse still Nigeria's most effective propaganda weapon that the success of **Biafra secession would lead to Balkanization of African states really worked for Nigeria.**

The fear looked real as so many examples of loose fragile unions of strange ethnic or tribal groups like those of Nigeria existed in many African states. No one seemed to cast blames on the selfish colonial masters: The colonialists first planted the seeds of discord, hate, and disunity right from the period of the scramble for Africa. Many critics and writers have continued to wonder why the so-called independent African nations must fight and die before the European colonialists granted them self-rule. Why should military coups, disorder, chaos, anarchy and civil wars follow, just a few years after the declaration of self-rule in African countries? Look at all that happened in the former **Democratic Republic of the Congo (former Zaire, Congo Kinshasa), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), South-West Africa (Namibia), Uganda, Central African Republic (Capital Bangui), Republic of Congo (former Congo Brazzaville), Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Africa, Mozambique, and others – Eastern, Western , Northern, Central and Southern Africa**. Why the confusion? Why the state of instability, war and anarchy? Is it part of God's creation or simply man-made? Check the number of years and the magnitude of struggles involved before the blacks witnessed majority rule in South Africa!

The 'Diplomatic War'

Throughout the Nigerian-Biafra war only courageous Igbo radio listeners usually tuned to Voice of America (VOA) for update of Nigeria-Biafra war reports. Biafrans who didn't want risks of heart attack never tuned to VOA, which seemed to have given maximum support to the federal side and wished the collapse of Biafra the next day! British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was even better as it often featured reports from friendly and pro-Biafra British journalists and commentators like Frederick Forsyth and other foreign reporters quite sympathetic to the Biafra struggle. The *Deutsche Welle* (German International Radio) and the French Press in general were much better than the Americans in the civil war news reportage. As for her open support for Biafra, the French government under Charles de Gaulle as well as Portugal denied Biafra any diplomatic recognition. And the absence of any world power behind the Biafra struggle was demoralizing, as many Biafrans felt that without outside military support, there was little hope of the

survival of the young republic. The few diplomatic recognitions and support from few African states, **Tanzania, Zambia, Gabon and Ivory Coast, including the little Caribbean Island of Haiti** did not influence Biafra's prospects for victory in the battle or diplomatic fields. At the end of the war Ivory Coast was magnanimous in offering sanctuary to the Biafra leader, General Ojukwu, while Portugal and Gabon helped much especially in the airlift of relief materials for millions of Biafran starving children and refugees. Thanks in a special way to Gabon, which offered sanctuary to hundreds of air-lifted starving and dying Biafran children.

"British interests and the Nigerian tragedy" - Harold Wilson, David Hunt, and George Thomas

Most Biafrans during those dark months and years of economic blockade, starvation, and death would not easily forget the voice and wailings of Okokon Ndem, the famous Biafra Radio broadcaster and anchorman. A great number of special reports and news-talks centered most often on Harold Wilson, the British Prime Minister, during the Nigeria-Biafra war, David Hunt, the British ambassador in Lagos and George Thomas, Minister of State at the Commonwealth Office The decisions of the British government on the 'Nigerian civil' were greatly influenced naturally more by those two personalities. **The Biafran government labeled Harold Wilson and David Hunt the worst enemies of Biafra**. Britain instead of acting as the best peace-maker, took the wicked decision to support Nigeria with massive arms supply 'for quick-victory' for Nigeria. Confronted by various British politicians and journalists who opposed the British involvement and role in the civil war, the Prime minister was not ashamed to disclose and justify the British 'political and economic' reasons for intervention. He maintained that the presence of Russia, that had pledged unalloyed military support for Nigeria, was enough reason for Britain to take sides with Nigeria, too. "If Nigeria eventually won the war, as expected, and with Russian support alone, the Russian influence would outweigh that of the British in Nigeria!" It was therefore a 'competition with Communist Russia! The super-power, Britain or Russia, that supplied more arms and aids to the victorious Nigeria would gain more economically. It was once again the question of 'oil politics!' The fate of over a

million Biafra starved and dying Biafran children meant nothing to the British government.

In his account of the Nigeria-Biafra conflict, **Michael Leapman**, who often reported like Fredrick Forsyth, revealed more about British interest and complicity in the war. Leapman titled his account ***"British interests and the Nigerian tragedy."*** Michael Leapman exposed the cabinet papers that recall the starving children of the Biafran war, as well as British policies on the conflict. Here was how he began his account: "Biafra was one of the great emotive causes of the late sixties. The name still conjures up images of emaciated children, close to death, starved as a result of the blockade imposed by the Nigerian Federal Government to defeat the secession of the country's Eastern Region. "I was there, and the images do not fade," Leapman wrote.

British interest in backing the likely winner

"Britain, the former colonizer of Nigeria and its main supplier of arms, could not escape involvement. As the outcry over the famine grew, Harold Wilson's government came under attack at home and abroad for providing the weapons that tightened the noose on Biafra. The war began in 1967. Cabinet papers for that year, just released, show how the decision to continue arming Nigeria was not based on arguments for or against secession, or on the interests of its people, but on backing the likely winner. It is a case study in realpolitik. As one Commonwealth Office briefing document to the prime minister put it: "The sole immediate British interest is to bring the (Nigerian) economy back to a condition in which our substantial trade and investment can be further developed." "The Biafran secession was the culmination of a long period of tribal and regional unrest in Nigeria that had come to the boil with the assassination in January 1966 of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, in a coup led by General Johnson Ironsi. The new military ruler was an Ibo, the dominant tribal group of the Eastern Region. In May that year, thousands of Ibos were massacred in the Northern Region in riots against Ironsi's regime. A further coup in July was led by Major General Yakubu Gowon. Fearful of renewed massacres, the Ibos of the East sought autonomy under their military governor, Col Odumegwu Ojukwu. He declared the region's independence, as the state of Biafra, in May 1967."As more recent conflicts in Eastern Europe

show, it is hard to judge the rights and wrongs of other people's ethnic fears and hatreds. In any case, the cabinet papers make clear that right and wrong were the last considerations on anyone's mind. Oil, trade and the protection of British citizens dominated the decision-making process. If today's Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, really wants to introduce an ethical basis for policy-making, he should read the file to see how radically he needs to change the diplomatic mindset.

Shell-BP and oil politics

The bulk of Nigeria's foreign earnings derived from oil and most of it was in the Eastern Region. Shell-BP, then partly owned by the British government, was the largest producer. After secession, Col Ojukwu demanded that royalties for oil production should be paid to Biafra and not to the Federal Government. Shell agreed to make a "token payment" of pounds 250,000. The Commonwealth Office at first proposed to support this decision on the grounds that Col Ojukwu was in de facto control of the oilfields. Harold Wilson bridled (showed hostility and resentment) at that: The Prime Minister, saw that as a "Dangerous argument - cf Rhodesia" he scrawled in the margin of the policy paper. Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence in 1965 but Britain was urging that nobody should recognize it, despite the regime's de facto control. The Prime Minister's stand, citing the example of Rhodesia, was that it wouldn't change anything, whether Ojukwu, (Like **Ian Smith's** illegal declaration of independence – similar to Biafra's secessionist movement succeeded and controlled the oil fields). British government, as it were, would condone Biafra secession. Ian Smith farmer and fighter pilot who served as Prime Minister of Rhodesia (or Southern Rhodesia; today Zimbabwe) from 1964 to 1979, led the predominantly white government that unilaterally declared independence from the United Kingdom in 1965, following prolonged dispute over the terms. He remained Prime Minister for almost all of the fourteen years of international isolation that followed, and oversaw Rhodesia's security forces during most of the Bush War, which pitted the unrecognized administration against communist-backed black nationalist guerrilla groups. Smith, who has been described as personifying white Rhodesia, remained a highly controversial figure. His supporters venerated him as a man of integrity and vision while critics described him as an

unrepentant racist whose policies and actions caused the deaths of thousands and contributed to Zimbabwe's later crises, until Robert Mugabe wrestled power from his white supremacist regime.

Michael Leapman further clarified Harold Wilson's position on British's stand on the Nigerian-Biafra conflict. Since General Gowon had imposed a blockade on Biafra, which meant that no oil could be exported anywhere; a stand favorable to Britain would be the open option! He pointed out the consequences of the blockade already on the British economy. "This was a blow for the British economy, already floundering in the crisis that led to devaluation later in the year". Now the prime object of Whitehall was to get the blockade lifted. An important lever fell into British hands when Gen Gowon asked for more arms: 12 jet fighter- bombers, six fast patrol boats, 24 anti-aircraft guns**. George Thomas**, Minister of State at the Commonwealth Office, was sent to Lagos. The Commonwealth Office note to Wilson about the mission was explicit: "If Gowon is helpful on oil, Mr Thomas will offer a sale of anti-aircraft guns." The plan went awry. Gen Gowon would not lift the blockade but he got his guns anyway; planes and boats were refused, but the Nigerians were permitted to take delivery of two previously ordered patrol boats - which ironically helped enforce the ban on Shell-BP's oil shipments. In August the Biafrans scored a military success (their only one, as it turned out) when they marched into the Mid-West Region and occupied Benin. This provoked a rethink in Whitehall. The Commonwealth Office set out five choices. ('A') involved maintaining or ('B') increasing arms to Nigeria, ('C') was to stop all supplies, ('D') to promote a peace initiative and ('E') a combination of the last two; namely "to stop all supplies and promote peace initiatives". Thomas wrote to Wilson, holidaying in the Scillies, recommending **Option E.**

David Hunt – Biafra enemy and traitor 'Number One'

"That view might have prevailed had not Sir **David Hunt, British ambassador in Lagos** and a keen advocate of the Federal cause, flown to Britain and persuaded the government to continue providing arms" confirmed Leapman. With that many Biafrans declared David Hunt number one enemy of Biafra. Most Biafrans, who always tuned to Radio Biafra mightn't remember how many times, **"David Hunt"** featured in Biafra Radio news-

talks, when the news of Hunt's treachery became one of the worst 'Breaking News'. Gowon's 'Police Action' to crush Biafra, within a few days turned to a full Military Movement, Nigeria verses Secessionist Biafra, a war that then lasted 3 years! Soon the war turned in Gowon's favor and in November the flexible Thomas wrote to Wilson again, proposing this time that arms supplies be stepped up: "It seems to me that British interests would now be served by a quick Federal victory." That victory came, but not quickly. "During 1967 the words "famine" or "hunger" appeared nowhere in the hundreds of official documents devoted to the conflict. They would not emerge until 1968, when other reporters and I went to Biafra and witnessed the scenes for ourselves", affirmed Leapman. By then the policy was too set to be altered. Too many reputations depended on the war's outcome. The conflict went on for another two years. Millions of children starved. How many would still be alive if that one slim chance had been grabbed back in August 1967 and Option E, E for ethical, had prevailed? That was a tantalizing rhetorical question, Michael Leapman asked, thus ending his eye-opening revelations of British selfish economic interests in taking sides with Gowon's military: "It seems to me that British interests would now be served by a quick Federal victory" (George Thomas, Minister of State at the Commonwealth Office, to Harold Wilson, the British Prime Minister)

As Nigeria was drifting towards anarchy, "Politicians played the fiddle while Rome burned".

When the political crisis, was gathering like ominous cloud, a harbinger of death and impending disaster in Western Nigeria, the Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa showed little or no interest to intervene. According to the well-known expression, Rome's emperor, the decadent and unpopular Nero, fiddled while Rome burned." The expression has double meaning: Not only did Nero play music while his people suffered, he was an ineffectual leader in a time of crisis. Tafawa Balewa was busy attending to his foreign visitor, one-time **Prime Minister of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios,** feasting with his visitors, while the Western Region was in deep political crisis. It took everyone by surprise when the first military coup in Nigeria took the lives of prominent ministers and heads of regional governments, including those of the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa and others. Nigeria's neighbor, Ghana also struck and

removed the famous Ghanaian leader **Kwame Nkrumah** from the political scene. It seemed the military boys in Nigeria had endured enough of the corruption and ineptitude of the leaders. What took place in 1966 and only shortly and superficially changed how things were done in Nigeria cannot be summarized here. All we are doing here is to supply some tiny links to serve our purpose in writing our book. Ghanaians remember worthy leaders like Jerry Rawlings with joy for whatever he has done for Ghana today. Unfortunately Nigerians weep, when they remember military and civilian leaders like Babangida, Buhari, Sani Abacha, Abdulsalammi, Obasanjo, Yar'adua, Goodluck Jonathan, and others.

Looming Crisis in Western Nigeria

Nnamdi Azikiwe defeated Obafemi Awolowo to become the first Nigerian Premier of Western Nigeria (present Southwest plus Edo and Delta States). Awolowo instead of forming opposition, rather formed" Egbe Omo Yoruba", a tribal cultural Yoruba organization and used it to intimidate Yorubas that won election on NCNC platform to deter them from 'crossing the carpet' and thus joining Azikiwe and the NCNC (National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons), later (National Council of Nigerian Citizens). This was the first 'parliamentary coup' in Nigeria. The crisis began, it must be emphasized, with the struggle for leadership in the Western Region of Nigeria, the declaration of state of emergency in the West, the coup of January 1966, the counter coup of July 1966, the pogroms, the declaration of Biafra and the commencement of a police action that turned into a three years civil war. Awolowo right from time started the indoctrination of the Yorubas with false and unfounded fears of the "threat of Igbo domination". But earlier on, national unity was the norm. "An Igboman was a member of Northern Nigeria House of Chiefs. Igbos lived freely and invested in all parts of Nigeria. In Lagos Dr Azikiwe was elected leader of Government Business. Mbonu Ojike was elected Deputy Speaker. In Enugu Alhaji Umoru Altine, a Fulani man was elected Mayor of Enugu. Mr Willougby a Yoruba man was Accountant General." ***(Nwodo N. in 25th May 2017 Ohaneze Ndigbo' Speech).*** That is how the incurable seed of fear of Igbos has been sown almost perpetually in the psychic of Yorubas. This poisonous seed had continued to germinate among the Yorubas and gradually sold to other tribal groups in other regions of Nigeria. The Yoruba

controlled news media are among the effective weapons used to disseminate this falsehood for decades.

Alhaji Tafawa Balewa, Nigeria's first Prime minister could not tolerate Awolowo's treacherous and inordinate ambition of acquiring political power by all means and at any cost. So, he threw Awolowo into prison for treason. Samuel Ladoke Akintola who replaced Awolowo as Premier of Western Nigeria tried to destroy Awolowo's political grip on Yorubaland by forming a party to takeover Western Nigeria in alliance with the Hausa-Fulani oligarchy who Awolowo despised as a backward race. Consequently, 'Awolowo's Yorubaland' went ablaze in revolt against Akintola's plot. Law and order completely broke down in Western Nigeria. Wole Soyinka wore a mask and forced announcers at Western Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation to declare Akintola's government a fraud.

Awolowo – The "Best Politician" Nigeria never had.

I have heard remarks and comments like "Awolowo the best presidential candidate Nigeria never had" from some Nigerian authors during the disastrous years of military hegemony following the end of the Nigeria-Biafra war. Not only that ignorant, uneducated, and very corrupt, and incompetent men, whose only qualification for leadership position in a country like Nigeria, was that they were military leaders, they, too were really toying with the future of the country. Most embarrassing was that Nigerians of all grades were helplessly watching. Simple teenagers then were wondering why the "Best Leaders" could never fit Nigeria? But it seems this anomaly is not only peculiar to Nigeria. It looks like a world-wide phenomenon. Does the Bible contradict itself when it states that God chooses the personalities that look small or insignificant or unimportant to baffle those that think they are great? In selecting David to be the king of Israel God didn't consider his age, height or elegance among the required virtues and qualities of leadership? It was never a rumor.

Most of us who kept our Nigeria-Biafra War records got the news from BBC, VOA, local coup plotters', reports that the young officers had no intentions of holding to power after completing their coup assignments, overthrowing the Balewa's weak and incompetent government, getting rid of those political leaders who had been feasting while Rome was in flames. Their plan was to install Obafemi Awolowo as the Prime Minister of

the federal republic of Nigeria. Awolowo in the eyes of most Nigerians was an agitator seriously ready for political freedom from Britain. He was more aggressive than Nnamdi Azikiwe and others. As a constant critic of Balewa weak administration he was seen as a torn in the flesh of the First Republic. Awolowo had been very critical of Balewa government and in essence had called for its overthrow during an interview granted to newsmen in one of his visits to London. In an angry response to Awolowo's criticisms, Balewa ordered: *"You Traitor, Shut Up and Return Home to Nigeria!"* Back to Nigeria, Awolowo was accused of treasonable felony and jailed in Kirikiri Prison.

Both Coup plotters and most patriotic Nigerians truly regarded Awolowo as a true patriot, a great revolutionary, fit to instill discipline in the Nigerian political system which the British had wrongly and deliberately handed over to the Hausa-Fulani cabal for their selfish reasons and the detriment of development and progress in Nigeria. The "best and most radical politician" that could have best served the interest of Nigeria, perhaps like General Rawlings of Ghana, but was never given the chance or the opportunity, most Nigerians believed was Awolowo. The opportunity still eluded him when he contested during the elections for the return to civil rule. It seemed the gods too did not support Awolowo's candidacy! But the time he got the chance to perform on the stage in the Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon as Finance Minister, Awolowo clearly demonstrated the stuff he was made of. He became a monster whose decisions and policies as the most influential Nigerian non-military government minister changed the course of events in the most dramatic ways during and after the Nigeria-Biafra. The history of Igbos and the BIAFRA tragedy can never be complete without a short glance at Awolowo's three most important roles and contributions in the conflicts.

The OAU and the Nigerian-Biafran War (1967-1970)

The United Kingdom had all the means and political power to intervene in the Nigerian civil war to get the two parties to the conference table. But as we have already seen, the British economic interests compromised the ex-colonial master's neutrality in the search for peace in the conflict. The Organization of African Unity did not perform better either when it was its turn to play its role as a peace-maker. Already the super powers' military intervention, Britain, the Soviet Union, and

possibly United States of America had dwarfed the OAU's expected role. But there were other problems which hindered attempts by the OAU towards the resolution of the Nigerian-Biafra conflict at the conference table.

The OAU founded in May 1963, meant to bring African states together had, right from start shown some weaknesses in resolving regional conflicts, most of which were tribal and territorial conflicts. Most of those conflicts were not surprising since the 'Scramble for Africa' by foreign European powers was a factor to reckon with in the history of pre-colonial Africa. The six wars among the OAU members, including the **Algerian-Moroccan war, the Congo Uprising, the Sudanese Civil War, the Nigerian Civil War, the Angola Crisis and the Somali-Ethiopian War** had brought division among the already independent African states.

Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia surely must be remembered for his efforts and those of the founding fathers of the OAU, when African heads of state and government met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (May 23, 1963) to form, for the first time, an organization to unite Africa and portray African personality after many years of colonial exploitation. It must be remembered, howeve, that a significant meeting leading to the creation of the OAU was the first conference of Independent African states (CIAS) in Accra, in April 1958. At that time, only 8 African states from the upper third of Africa were independent. To many the Accra conference was an important step towards the birth of OAU, for the conference proclaimed the unity of African nations. The second conference of Independent African states was held in 1960. Whatever problems the organization must have encountered at the tooting stage, the role of important leaders like Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria (Zik of Africa) and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana may never be forgotten. The ideology of 'Pan-Africanism' traces its roots to these great African sons. Interested African patriots should remember that it was Nkrumah's so-called 'too much involvement' in Pan-Africanism, also referred to 'African Independency' that brought the first republic in Ghana, under Nkrumah to an end. The coup plotters that overthrew the government of Ghana, influenced by the Western propaganda and envy cited that as one of their reasons for the military intervention. (See our Chapter on "Ghana and Nigeria"). 'African Independency', the struggle to free Africa states from colonial domination contributed to the assassination,

the untimely death of a great African leader like Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, masterminded by the Western powers.

Of all those wars, the heads of African states had to deal with; the Nigerian Civil War exposed the weakness of the Organization of African Unity as a peace resolving organization and provided insight to the damage done to the organization which, right from its foundation, had maintained a conservative attitude in the handling of African problems. It was in the Nigerian civil war that the two main principles of the OAU Charter were put to test. (1) The principle of non-interference in internal affairs of a member nation. This was constantly referred to by Nigeria in efforts to bring the OAU to intervene in the conflict. Nigeria had insisted it was an 'internal affair' of the Nigerian government! (2) Respect for the inalienable right to independence or self-determination. This was insisted on by Biafra. Right from the time Biafra declared secession, Nigeria and her allies, including Britain had mounted the propaganda of '**Balkanization'** (division of regional bodies, states, ethnic groups into smaller hostile groups) of African states if Biafra Revolution or self-autonomy was allowed to succeed. This propaganda put fear into most African leaders who right from independence had to deal with warring groups in their countries. There is no doubt that the colonial masters created those ugly situations largely for political and economic gains.

But the war between Nigeria and secessionist Biafra, from all points of view was a catastrophic and protracted struggle. Clashes between the two factions had started on July 6, 1967, and Gowon thought it was a simple 'internal rebellion' he would crush in 6 days using the Nigerian police, hence "Police Action!". No one imagined that the conflict would ultimately result in a war of international dimension. In spite of the Federal government's efforts to treat the war against Biafra as an 'internal affair', at least some elements showed its 'international dimension' (1) The supply of arms, including aircraft and heavy artillery by the governments of United Kingdom, Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Egypt and the United Arab Republic as alleged by the Biafra government, which were never denied by the Nigerian government. Egyptian and Soviet pilots flew the Nigerian war planes. (2) The recognition of Biafra as an independent state, thus according it the status of a full member of the international community, by the governments of Tanzania (April 15, 1968), Gabon (May 8, 1968), Ivory Coast (May 14, 1968), Zambia (May 20, 1968), and the Caribbean nation of

Haiti. (3) The critical situation in the Biafra enclave, surrounded by Nigerian forces and blockade by land, sea and air, had attracted the attention of international bodies like the International Red Cross Society, the World Council of Churches, Caritas International and other local and world aid organizations. These showed great concern for the starving millions of Biafran children and women. (4) The presence of groups of foreign observers investigating Biafra's allegations of genocide.

The OAU Reactions

Unfortunately despite the global concern over the conflict in Nigeria, the OAU initially paid little or no attention to the deteriorating situation in Biafra. That the time was ripe for some sort of discussion was not perceived by the OAU. What role did OAU play then to resolve the Nigeria-Biafra conflict? We will be much better informed later, as we get further detailed information, from no other personality than Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Zik of Africa. There had been a lot of hard feelings on the part of the persecuted Igbos, that the OAU played no significant role in the resolution of the Biafra tragedy. However most Biafrans and friendly countries were still hopeful that the Organization of African Unity, would come out at last with some recommendations for the resolution of the conflict, before references could be made to the United Nations Organization (UNO). For record purposes, let us put down some attempts that were made by the OAU to resolve the Nigeria-Biafra conflict.

The Kampala Peace Talks

The Kampala peace talks arranged by Arnold Smith (Commonwealth Secretary-General serving from 1965-1975) were a abysmal failure. Even when Sekou Toure called for the summit meeting of the OAU to discuss African and Middle East problems, the Nigerian civil war was included in the agenda. But when later as a result of criticisms from some internationals organizations, the members only decided to send a six-man delegation to Nigeria for 4 months, and when they visited, the mission had discussions only with Yakubu Gowon, the Nigerian military president. In a conflict that had already by that period taken over one million lives, the African heads of state could not understand that it was necessary to bring the two parties

together at a conference table! The so called Article 3, paragraph 2 of the OAU Charter, which prohibits any intervention in the internal affairs of (member nation) Nigeria was the problem. For Biafrans at least, OAU had lost credibility. From then on, the OAU developed a naïve and inept approach towards resolution of the Nigerian conflict. It was with the same naiveté and ineptness that the OAU approached other African conflicts.

The Biafran government and the Africans countries that recognized Biafra's independence were disappointed that OAU could not intervene in the Nigeria's war of aggression against the youngest African nation. The following factors were responsible for OAU's failure and weakness. The first was that OAU is by design and institution a conservative organization, anti-secessionist, and anti-interventionist, and anti-border changes. Inability to recognize that change can be inevitable in certain situations and circumstances was the biggest sign of weakness. In such a situation, OAU became a toothless bulldog. The assembly of head of states of OAU made it clear that the organization was incapable of settling cases that even touched the lives of millions of African citizens, cases where the crime of genocide was involved. As reported by foreign international observers and journalists, the organization in its meeting in its Fourth Ordinary session at Kinshasa in September 1967, resolved to reaffirm "their adherence to the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member nations, and as well their condemnation of secession in any member states.

The next weakness of the OAU with reference to the Nigerian-Biafra situation was its inability to enforce its decisions on member states. The OAU could do nothing to prevent member states (Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Gabon) from recognizing Biafra. So the Nigerian situation divided Africa on the central issue of secession and it became an open field for interventions, diplomatic and military to both sides in the civil war. The principle of non-interference 'in internal affairs of member states', with no further qualifications or clauses, did not make any sense. It meant that African nations should fold their arms and watch their sister states burn in flames! "Respect for inalienable right to self-determination", which the Biafran side upheld firmly could have been carefully analyzed to find out its merits and demerits. It would be imperative for the organization to constitute a committee to make recommendations that could have led to peaceful settlement of similar types of conflict in the future.

The OAU, Ojukwu and Nnamdi Azikiwe

Excerpts from the interview Nnamdi Azikiwe granted to New Nigerian Newspapers, 1979, as Presidential aspirant under the platform of Nigerian People's Party certainly would throw more light on the following important points; namely (1) Zik's accounts and role in the resolution of the Nigerian-Biafra conflict (2) Zik's relationship with the Biafran leader. Certainly a lot of news had circulated about Zik's role in the Nigerian civil war. **Did Zik support secession?** As one of greatest elder-statesmen in African independency, which earned him the honorable 'title' – ***"Zik of Africa",*** could Nnamdi Azikiwe have folded his arms and watched the country he helped to build disintegrate?. There is no doubt that Nnamdi Azikiwe had featured well in Nigerian politics, before and after independence. It is wonderful to hear from the horse's mouth. This is why we are reproducing the interview with the *New Nigerian Newspaper*. His account of the role the OAU in the Nigerian civil war confirms our story, and perhaps throws further light on various issues.

Zik and the "The Unity of Nigeria"

"Yes. I played a prominent role in Biafra for the unity of the country in order to restore peace and bring about unity of the country. That's the role I played. I advised Ojukwu. I said, well look, you have declared secession. What we should do is to get the elder statesmen and women of the nation to reconcile you and Gowon. I said by declaring secession, you get so many people who do not believe you to remain there. You see all of us were interned. As we were interned then, we couldn't express our own views as we see it because, he made Decree Number 5 which vested absolute powers in himself and if you were against his views, it then constituted an act of subversion and the penalty was death by shooting. Well, it was a war-time measure and that is understandable. So, I advised him. I said go to the conference table and iron out your differences. Allow elder statesmen and elder stateswomen to bring the two of you to the conference table and settle this matter so that there will no more be civil war and the country may be united. He agreed. But Gowon was advised by the Ministry of External Affairs to insist on pre-conditions. That is that before he could negotiate with the secessionists, that they must accept certain terms; accept the 12-state structure and

all. So, it was quite obvious that the Federal Government wanted Biafra to come to the conference table with their hands tied and their feet tied. But they won't be free agents. That was the diplomatic mistake on the part of the Federal Government. So, when they did that, then Lt. Col. Ojukwu told me, "How can I go to the conference table based on these ultimatums?"

The OAU Intervention – Kinshasa Summit

"Still I advised Ojukwu to go to the OAU and ask them to use their good offices to settle the dispute, and that we should avoid loss of lives. He accepted my advice in good faith. Then he said, 'Now, you have some heads of state in Africa who are your friends, would you mind going to appeal to them to use their good offices so that the Nigerian civil war could be an item on the agenda for OAU summit in Kinshasa?' I said I would gladly go. So he sent me to Monrovia as a peace envoy. I went there and met my friend, President Tubman. Tubman expressed his willingness to use his good offices. He told me he would see another mutual friend, the late Haile Sellassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, and both of them would see that the civil war was placed as first item on the agenda of the Summit in Kinshasa.

I returned and broke the news to Ojukwu. He was very pleased. Then, when the OAU summit opened, Chief Awolowo, as Vice-Chairman of the Federal Executive Council and Commissioner for Finance, led a strong Nigerian delegation to Kinshasa and raised a very strong objection *(sic)* in the Nigerian civil war being placed as an item on the agenda on the grounds that according to the OAU Charter, this was a domestic affairs and member states were precluded from interfering in the domestic affairs of each other, which was really sound according to international law. But we wanted to solve it in the African way, to use mediation to bring two warring brothers together.

The OAU accepted the submission of Chief Awolowo and so it was not put into the agenda. Well, history will show now between Chief Awolowo and myself, who actually accentuated the war. I was trying to get the OAU to settle the dispute so they could go to the conference table and he was thinking of legalism, that it would amount to interference in the domestic affairs of a member-state. But meanwhile here you have two brothers killing each other. Well, Ojukwu told me, I have done my best. You see, Nigeria was relying on law and we are relying on humanity. What's next? I said why not try other

heads of states and see what could be done to bring about peace? He then said he left the initiative with me. I suggested going to some heads of state and see what can be done. But his advisers led by **Dr. Nwakama Okoro** suggested recognition. That if we can get other states to recognize Biafra, maybe the hands of Nigeria may be forced to go to the conference table.

Well, I thought that was a sound idea and I placed my services at their disposal so as to meet my friends. We had in mind *President Senghor of Senegal,* President *Houphouet Boigny of Ivory Coast, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, President Milton Obote of Uganda, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and of course Francois Bongo, Gabon,* he is now Omar. He now has become a Muslim. He was then a Christian. The long and short of it all was that I and these great African statesmen agreed that if Gowon persisted with pre-conditions, then they would accord recognition to force the hands of Gowon to go to the conference table and bring about peace. That was one. Two, Gowon had already predicted that the war would end on March 31 and as far as these African statesmen were concerned, these killings and atrocities did not do any credit to the image of Africa and as such what should be done was to stop it as soon as possible. Therefore, if the war didn't end by March 31, then the propaganda of 'Biafra' that it was an act of genocide would be justified. And they didn't want to accept that.

Recognition of Biafra bid and aftermath

"I went on this mission and succeeded in persuading these heads of state to agree to give recognition just to force the hands of Nigeria, diplomatically speaking, to the conference table. President Senghor said he couldn't because the majority of his supporters were Muslims and rightly or wrongly they felt it was a religious war. And he said well, if he granted recognition, then his government would fall. But he supported the idea of forcing the hands of Nigeria to the conference table. Houphouet Boigny was prepared, provided his people backed him. Ditto for the others except Milton Obote who told us that Prince Mutesa and the Bagandans wanted to secede and he couldn't support secession when his own state was confronted with similar problems. It left four of them. That is, President Nyerere, Houphouet Boigny, Kaunda and Bongo. They agreed on the understanding that the war did not end by March 31, 1968 and

pre-conditions would be removed to make it easy for both Ojukwu and Gowon to go to conference table.

So they granted recognition and it worked like magic because immediately after this, Dr. Okoi Arikpo, who must be presumed to be responsible for this diplomatic blunder (he was the Commissioner for External Affairs] - a good man no doubt, but he is a very poor diplomat in my own humble opinion - announced to the outside world that Nigeria would no longer insist on pre-conditions and that he was prepared for conference table as the war did not end on March 31. So they left the impression, you see, that Nigeria wanted to annihilate the Ibos. You noticed the Soviets gave Nigeria more arms and Nigeria used those arms to destroy the secessionists. Here, I came in again and I advised Ojukwu. I said look since Gowon has withdrawn the pre-conditions, go to the conference table and argue the points so as to pave way for a peace conference. It was agreed that they should meet in Niamey. I advised Ojukwu to go. Again Gowon was ill-advised so he couldn't come.

The OAU Niamey Summit

"At Niamey here was Ojukwu. I was on his side. Gowon wasn't there but Haile Sellassie, Hamani Diori, Tubman and General Ankra were there representing OAU. So, I told Ojukwu, I said now you have an upper hand. These respected leaders of the OAU were there. I had briefed Ojukwu. I said 'look your line of approach is to express appreciation for what the OAU was doing in order to maintain peace in Africa but you were prepared to co-operate and you are leaving the whole matter in the hands of the OAU to see what could be done to bring an earlier cessation of hostilities. I said just say that and thank them and sit down. **Now Gowon didn't attend**. He sent a junior man. I think Alhaji Femi Okunnu or so, to represent him. And they didn't even attend this conference at which the four heads of state presided. It was only the Biafran side. So Ojukwu won a diplomatic victory and you know Ojukwu is a very good speaker if you give him all the facts. He was a good public relations expert and he won. He said, 'well if Gowon was sincere why did he spite such great men and didn't attend?' That worked.

They agreed that Nigeria could be contacted so that we have a peace conference in Addis Ababa. It was a diplomatic victory for Biafra and so we returned to Biafra highly elated. And Ojukwu insisted that I should accompany him to Addis Ababa.

Then something happened. Some of his advisers felt that I was becoming a victim of compromise and that I was a bad influence. That all I was trying to do was to make Biafra impotent. They told Ojukwu that Biafra was holding its own militarily. And why should we want a peace conference? That he should be very, very careful with me, especially as an Onitsha man because they thought that I was using him as a means to give publicity for myself internationally and that time will come when people will look more to me than to himself. Well, as a young man, human, he fell for such flattery. I don't want to mention all the names, but particularly influential in swinging his opinion at that material time was Mr. **C. C. Mojekwu, who was based in Lisbon**. Then Mr. Matthew Mbu was our Commissioner for External Affairs and he himself did as much as possible, but then he realized that he was having someone who has power of life and death over everybody. So, we went to Addis Ababa and on the night before the conference, Matthew came to my bedroom at about 10 in the night. He said, "Do you know that all we have done, this man is going to undo them tomorrow?' I said 'No'. Then he brought out a printed version of a long speech. The world press said it lasted for 90 minutes.

OAU Summit at Kinshasa and the Aftermath

He (Ojukwu) went back on everything we discussed. He attacked the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union - all the nations of the world and the OAU, and said that they were misleading us and that the sovereignty of 'Biafra' was not negotiable. We went to the conference. I sat next to him. I thought that he was going to speak in accordance with the spirit of Niamey. But he spoke for 90 minutes and he just got the whole place upside down. Naturally **Tony Enahoro** - he led the Nigerian delegation - replied in kind and so we were back to square one. So, when we returned, I advised him. I told him that I was surprised at what he did but it was not late. He said, 'The sovereignty of Biafra is not negotiable and if anybody should try to compromise that sovereignty, then it will be an act of subversion.' Well, that was quite clear to me so I said, 'Your Excellency, you still have Port Harcourt and you can still bargain from position of strength - after all, the main issue in the civil war is oil and they say that in international politics, oil is combustible and as you have a combustible situation you can begin from the position of strength'. He said, 'No, Port Harcourt

is impregnable.' 'Very well, Your Excellency,' I said. I went back to Nekede where I had been in protective custody since February, 1968. Two weeks later, Port Harcourt fell.

OAU Summit at Algiers –Tunisia and Aftermath

"He sent for me. I said, 'Well, Your Excellency, I did warn you. You cannot now negotiate from a position of strength but having received recognition from four states; we can still use them to see what we can do to appeal to the outside world.' He said, 'Very well, I think you should go to the United Nations to seek for recognition.' I said, 'Your Excellency, let us wait until after OAU summit in Algiers and find out what Africa thinks.' In the meantime, I went to Tunisia to see my friend Habeeb Bourguiba of Tunisia. He wasn't quite well, so we moved from Carthage to Hermit where he stayed. Ojukwu had always said the civil war would be won on the battlefield and not on the conference table, and Bourguiba didn't take kindly to that. He said don't you people advise this young man? I explained to him that I have done everything I could to advise him, but he insists on going to the battle field.

So we crossed our fingers awaiting the verdict of Algiers. You know it was decided by 33 to 4 in favor of Nigeria. I advised Ojukwu that to go to the United Nations to seek recognition would be unrealistic since Africa had decided by 33 to 4 in favor of Nigeria. I said Nigerian envoys, the Nigerian delegations, would just percolate the membership of the United Nations and they would frown at the whole thing. He insisted. I was then in Paris. I wrote him a letter. I said, 'Since you refuse to go to the conference table to negotiate for peace, since you prefer that the civil war should end on the battle field and not on the conference table; since you said that the sovereignty of Biafra is not negotiable, I am afraid I cannot continue as a peace envoy because you have destroyed all the vestiges of any optimism for peace. Therefore I am relieving myself of my services as a peace envoy. I cannot continue as a peace envoy. I cannot continue as a peace envoy because you have let me down. You left me under the impression that if I succeeded in getting recognition you will go to the conference table. You got four recognitions; you did not go. I am therefore going to London on exile.'

I went to London in voluntary exile and the British government granted me asylum. I do not see how anybody could say that I ran away from my country. I crossed the Atlantic 46

times, trying to negotiate with various heads of state so that they could grant recognition or make OAU to settle the dispute. How could the head of state turn round now and accuse all those who were politicians in pre-1966 and post-1966 as being responsible for the downfall of the republic? I did my best to preserve the unity of Nigeria and also to preserve the lives of old men, able-bodied men and women and children but I failed. I went on free exile and they keep saying that I was among those responsible for the downfall of the republic. I plead not guilty".

Diplomatic Failure and Aftermath

Zik of Africa did what he was known for. He would not support the balkanization of Africa. Zik was a pan-Africanist. At home in Nigeria, Zik was much more Nigerian than any Hausa-Fulani or the Yoruba. Zik was never a tribalist but a true believer in 'One Nigeria'. **Zik was born in Zungeru, in the present Niger State, in Northern Nigeria.** Zik was the only Igbo politician we copied his short biography in our primary school history notebooks. He lived in Lagos and much more exposed to other cultures of the major Nigerian ethnic groups. He spoke Hausa from childhood, we learned in history lessons in Primary school. All his attempts at peace negotiations notwithstanding, the Nigeria Zik was defending its territorial integrity did not appreciate his gestures. What we did not get from the interview was Zik's 'private' efforts to influence the second party, Nigeria to consider his own in-put, peaceful settlement of the conflict.

In making any judgment as regards Zik's role and Ojukwu's stand, we must remember that the war was raging during these attempts at peaceful negotiations through the OAU, UNO or any other world body. There was no ceasefire, which usually is a sign of peaceful negotiations. Cessation of hostilities is usually necessary for any peace-maker to initiate actions. There was never a period during the 3-year Nigerian civil war Nigerians and Biafrans heard that there was a **ceasefire.** The blockade of Biafra, together with the resultant death by starvation, did not create any situation by which Biafra could have stopped fighting to repel the vicious enemy. OAU's in-put was very poor and It was not a surprise that Biafra lost diplomatically, as well as militarily. With heavy military support to Nigeria by Britain, Soviet Union, the Arabs and other nations, there was no way Biafra could have defeated Nigeria in the battlefield.

CHAPTER 7

HOW THE ALLEGED "IGBO COUP" AND COUNTER-COUP LED TO IGBO GENOCIDE - HOW NIGERIA DEALT WITH THE "REBELS"

> **"Igbos should have been wiped out during the Biafran war" – "I have always said Igbo is the problem of this nation. If they had been wiped out during the Biafran war, Nigerian would have gone far off. But isn't late. They are the most hated tribe in the world. I hate them with passion"** *(Alaba Ajibola -Babcock University Staff – August 18, 2018)*

It was a deliberate and systematic plot to destroy the Igbo people of Nigeria, as the Northern Nigerian military counter-coup of July 1966 offered the best opportunity for the Northerners and Igbophobists, soldiers and civilians, to expose their simmering hatred for the Igbos living peacefully in those parts of Nigeria Igbo citizens regarded, too, as their dear fatherland. Though not the first, second or the third time that Igbos living in Northern parts of Nigeria had suffered untold punishment, loss of lives and property in the hands of Hausa- Fulanis of Nigeria, however, at this point in time, the murderers went amok! It was an episode of sudden mass assault against the Igbos! Their leaders, soldiers and the killers called it a 'reprisal', but what a wicked allegation to hold the innocent Igbos responsible for the death of the corrupt and wicked political leaders in the hands of the coup plotters! The Igbos had to bear the brunt of the storm gathering over Nigeria almost immediately after the colonialists handed over power to the nationalists who had clamored for self-rule.

There were coups and counter coups in many African nations, including the neighboring country, Ghana, but no ethnic group was accused of masterminding the elimination of some of the key wicked and corrupt political leaders, who had messed up the new independent nation. But in the case of Nigeria an accusing finger must be pointed at the Igbo people as the coup plotters. The story had changed from **"what brought about the military intervention"** to **"who masterminded the coup!"** For the Northerners, all and sundry, it was a great and rare opportunity to deal with the 'arrogant and stubborn' Igbos once and for all, in a genocidal master plans they had hitherto

been carrying out in small bits. Unfortunately the destruction of innocent lives of adults and children of Igbo race was at this point in time on a massive scale that it attracted the attention of the international community and there was great outcry and lamentation. **Genocide** had taken place; and its 'signs and wonders' confirmed it was genocide.

We have no intention of trying to re-open old wounds, rehearsing old stories that increase bitterness, tension and hate among the various ethnic groups that make up the present Nigerian nation. No one argues that we should suddenly forget the past and let bygones be bygones just with a stroke of the pen. Igbos in their famous adage repeatedly remind us that 'a man who cannot tell where the rain began to beat him cannot know where he gets dried up.' In other words, there is nothing wrong in knowing where your sufferings started and how you came to overcome them. There are a lot of lessons to learn from the past events, bitter or sweet. Often it is best to hear from others; in our present discussion, to hear from non-Igbo writers and commentators. One may not naturally be a judge in one's own case. Truth and justice remain the basic foundation for peace, progress, development and reconciliation in a united Nigeria. I remember on several occasions I had the opportunity to narrate a very little portion of 'My Biafra Experiences' of the Nigerian civil war to some Igbo youths who were not born before the war or were simple toddlers. Most of their reactions used to shock me as they often exclaimed 'Wow! Really true! And these youths are mostly the ones who vow to spill their last drop of their blood in the renewed Biafra Movements like the IPOB and the MASSOB! They had little firsthand information about the conflict – how it all started and how it ended.

The point of what looks like a little 'digression' here, namely the issue of **Igbo grievances**, grudges, complaints of mistreatment, marginalization (an issue that will be widely discussed in this book), and continued persecution, can never be found missing in this history book. Other accusations of hate and rejection by the other Nigerian major and minor ethnic groups, mainly Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, the minority groups of the South-South, including the Ijaw, Urhobo, Ibibio, Ikwerre, and of course the present large ethnic group of the Middle Belt Region often referred to as 'Christian Minority' of the North, form an important part of post-war Nigerian history. In fact most Igbos have always lumped the whole Northern Nigeria into one ethnic group, namely 'Muslim'. The whole North is not Muslim that

practiced one religion said to have been founded by Mohammad, so-declared Messenger of Allah.

Verbatim Newspaper Reports of Igbo Genocide

As one of my major sources of Biafra War records I reported earlier, the Irish and American missionaries gathered and kept the most valuable documents some of which today can be referred to as "**Classified Documents".** Some of the documents they assembled and took along with them home to Europe and America are in the form of Newspaper reports. They contained independent reports of atrocities committed by Nigerian soldiers and Northern Hausa-Fulani vandals, reports of bombings of civilian populations of Biafra, hundreds of pictures of dying and starving children of Biafra and gory pictures of kwashiorkor victims of starving children. There will be no space for hundreds of such horrible pictures here. But we can reproduce some of the major Newspaper Headlines. I am very grateful to these Rev. Fathers we met in Europe and America who kindly handed over the various documents they kept with them at their various missionary headquarters, parish centers and convents. Most of commentaries, reports, and headlines are not new to most of us who were in Biafra before, during and after the war, from 1966 to 1972. I left for Europe for further studies in 1972 and returned to Nigeria in 1979 after studies in Europe. During my extended Sabbatical Leave in the United States (1996 – 2000), I continued working on my **"Biafra War Project".** During my second 'Missionary Journey' to the United States (2015 – 2019), I was nearing the completion of the project with little distraction.

Here are some verified headlines and Breaking News that captured the situation surrounding the Biafra War. The following are just a few samples, randomly selected from more than 250 headline news as reported in leading British, French, German and American newspapers and magazines. Some papers referred to the headlines as **"A Diary of Genocide in Nigeria".**

(1) The Asaba massacre: "Federal troops killed, or stood around while mobs killed, more than 5000 Ibos in Warri, Sapele, Agbor" **(New York Times, 10th January, 1968).**
(2) One word now describes the policy of the Nigerian military government towards secessionist Biafra: **Genocide.** It is ugly

and extreme but it is the only word which fits Nigeria's decision to stop international Red Cross and other relief agencies from flying food to Biafra**. (Washington Post editorial, July 2, 1969).**

(3) "I want to see no Red Cross, no Caritas, and no World Council of Churches, no Pope, no missionary, and no UN delegation. I want to prevent even one Ibo from having even one piece to eat before their capitulation. We shoot at everything that moves and when our troops march into the centre of Ibo territory, we shoot at everything, even things that do not move" (Benjamin Adekunle, (aka. "Black Scorpion"), Commander, 3rd Marine Commander Division: Nigerian Army commander to **(French Radio Reporter).**

(4) "All is fair in war, and starvation is one of the weapons of war. I don't see why we should feed our enemies fat in order for them to fight harder", **(Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Nigerian Minister of Finance, July 28, 1969)**

(5) "Until now efforts to relieve the Biafran people have been thwarted by the desire of the central government to pursue total and unconditional victory and by the fear of the Ibo people that surrender means wholesale atrocities and genocide. But genocide is what is taking place right now and starvation is the grim reaper. This is not the time to stand on ceremony, or go through channels or to observe diplomatic niceties. The destruction of an entire people is immoral objective, even in the most moral of wars. It can never be condoned", **(Richard Nixon, during the presidential campaign, September 9, 1968).**

(6) "Mass starvation is a legitimate aspect of war" (**Anthony Enahoro, Nigerian Commissioner for Information at a press conference in New York, July 1968)**

(7) "Starvation is a weapon of war, and we have every intention of using it against the rebels" **(Mr Alison Ayida, Head of Nigerian delegation, Niamey Peace talks, July 1968.)**

(8) "The Igbos must be considerably reduced in number", **Lagos Policeman quoted in New York Review 21 December, 1967).**

(9) "in some areas in the East, Igbos were killed by local people with at least the acquiescence of the Federal forces, 1000 Ibo civilians perished in Benin in this way" (Max Edward Reporter, reporter on the ground - **New York Review, 21 December 1967).**

(10) "As federal forces take over Benin, troops killed about 500 Igbo civilians after a house to house search with the aid of willing locals" **(Washington Morning Post, 27 September, 1967)**
(11) "The greatest single massacre occurred in the Ibo town of Asaba where 700 Ibo male were lined up and shot as terrified women/children were forced to watch" **(London Observer, 21 January,1968)**
(12) "There has been genocide on the occasion of the 1966 massacres, the region between the towns of Benin and Asaba where only widows and orphans remain, federal troops having, for unknown reasons, massacred all the men" **(Paris Le Monde, 5th April, 1968)**
(13) "In Calabar, federal forces shot at least 1000 and perhaps 2000 Igbos, most of them civilians" **(New York Times, 18th January, 1968)**
(14) Bestialities and indignities of all kinds were visited on the Biafrans in 1966. In Ikeja Barracks (Western Nigeria) Biafrans were forcibly fed on a mixture of human urine and feaces. In Northern Nigeria numerous housewives and nursing mothers were violated before their husbands and children. Young girls were abducted from their homes, walking places and schools and forced into intercourse with sick, demented and leprous men" **(Mr. Eric Spiff, German War Correspondent, eyewitness, 1967)**
(15) "650 refugee camps, contained about 700,000 haggard bundles of human flotsam waiting hopelessly for a meal, outside the camps, was the reminder of an estimated four and half to five million displaced Kwashiokor scourge, a million and half children, suffered from it during January; that put the forecast death toll at another 300,000 children. More than the pogroms of 1966, more than the war casualties, than the terror bombings, it was the experience of watching helplessly their children waste away and die that gave birth to, a deep and unrelenting loathing. It is a feeling that will one day reap bitter harvest unless" **(Frederick Forsyth, British Writer, January 21st 1969)**
(16) "The Nazis had resurrected just here as Nigerian forces" **(Washington Post, Editorial, July 2, 1969).**
(17) "The loss of life from starvation continues at more than 10,000 persons per day over 1,000,000 lives in recent months. Without emergency measures now, the number will climb to 25,000 per day, within a month and 2,000,000 deaths by the end of the year. The new year will only bring greater disaster to

people caught in the passion of fratricidal war, we can't allow this to continue or those responsible to go free" **(Senator Kennedy appeals to Americans, Sunday November 17, 1968)**

(18) Myself and the same UNICEF representatives went on to convey something of what lay behind this intransigence: Among the large majority hailing from that tribe who are the most vocal in inciting the complete extermination of the Ibos. I often heard remarks that all Nigeria's ills will be cured once the Ibos have been exterminated from the human map." **(Dr Conor Cruise O'Bien, 21 December, 1967, New York Review"**

(19) "And there, with the shift of power, the nation hoped that the bloodletting would cease -- but no. A progressive pogrom of the Igbo erupted in October the same year, a hunt for Easterners of all ages who were unfortunate enough to have heeded the call of the new regime to return to their places of work and residence in the North, reassured that all was well. They were gruesomely mistaken. Not merely from the North but from every corner of the nation, the Igbo fled homeward, wheeled contraptions every kind bearing their dismal remains and possessions into Igboland. The trainloads of refugees from the North bore pitiable cargoes of some survivors with physical mutilations. Some women were in such a state of shock that they clung to the severed heads of their spouses or sons, cradling them on their laps. Even within Lagos, the hunt for the Igbo continued unabated, in their homes and at roadblocks." **(Wole Soyinka from his memoir "*You Must Set Forth At Dawn.*" New York: 2006)**

(20) Africa's most expansive and devastating genocide of the 20th century: "Beginning on 29 May 1966 to 12 January 1970, the composite aggregation of the Nigeria state – military officers, the police, Hausa-Fulani emirs, Muslim clerics and intellectuals, students, civil servants, Almajiri, journalists, politicians, other public figures – planned and carried out the Igbo genocide. This is the foundational genocide of post-European conquest of Africa. It is also Africa's most expansive and devastating genocide of the 20th century. A total of 3.1 million Igbo people, a quarter of this nation's population at the time were murdered during those harrowing 44 months. Most Igbo were slaughtered in their homes, offices, businesses, schools, colleges, hospitals, markets, churches, shrines, farmlands, factories/industrial enterprises, children's playground, town halls, refugee centers, cars, lorries, and at bus stations, railway stations, airports and on buses, trains and planes and on foot, or starved to death – the openly propagated

regime - 'weapon' to achieve its heinous goal more speedily. In the end, the Igbo genocide was enforced, devastatingly, by Nigeria's simultaneously pursued land, aerial and naval blockade and bombardment of Igboland, Africa's highest population density region outside the Nile Delta. The organizers of genocide also destroyed, or looted the multibillion-dollar Igbo economy, one of the most advanced and enterprising conurbations in Africa of the era. Africa and the rest of the world largely stood by and watched as the perpetrators enacted this horror most relentlessly and ruthlessly. Africa and the world could have stopped this genocide; Africa and the world should have stopped this genocide..." (**LNC History Project-3 code-named: *"The lost Chapter of Nigeria's History* 1964-1970)"**

(21) The military coup of January 1966, which the Igbos were accused of initiating, Aguiyi Ironsi, an Igbo, became President and Supreme Commander of the armed forces. Tensions rose very high in the country resulting in the massacre of Igbos in May 1966. In July 1966, a Hausa/Fulani/Tiv inspired military coup overthrew Ironsi's regime and a terrible massacre of the Igbos began in earnest. This led to the secession of the former Eastern Nigeria and the declaration of the Republic of Biafra. "This eventually led to the civil war At least one million Igbos were to be killed in order to avenge the death of a man called Ahmadu Bello, who was the Sardauna of Sokoto-Prince of the Islamic Sokoto Caliphate. **(George Orick, an American businessman and consultant to UNICEF in Nigeria at the time)**

(22) "One could hear on Northern Nigerian radio the reading of long lists of Igbos who were targeted for extinction". The Igbos believe, and rightfully so, that had they not fought back, their fate would have been worse than that of the Tutsis in Rwanda. The same way Northern Nigerian radio was exhorting the Hausa/Fulanis to kill the Igbos, was the same way Radio Milles Collines was exhorting the Hutus to slaughter the Tutsis in Rwanda. **(Goddell team report, congressional Record of February 15, 1969)**

(23) Heinrich Jiggs, a Swiss businessman in Nigeria who later became the chief Red Cross delegate in Biafra, reports seeing one of the circular letters in Northern Nigeria which stated that every Igbo down to the age of six would be killed.

(24)Canadian Journalist, Alan Grossman, who had been West African Bureau Chief of Time Life News Service in Lagos from May 1966 to June 1968, testified before the External Affairs

Committee of the Canadian House of Commons on what he saw. He told the committee "many thousands of Igbos were slaughtered in towns and villages across the north, and hundreds of thousands of others were blinded, crippled or maimed or in majority of cases, simply left destitute as they attempted to flee to the Igbo homeland in Eastern Nigeria. Some of the fleeing refugees did not make it home. On one train that arrived in the East, there was the corpse of a male passenger whose head had been chopped off somewhere along the line. Another group of Igbo refugees men, women and children whom I happened to see; I would say 100 or more of them were waiting in the railway station in the city of Kano, the largest city in Northern Nigeria, for about three days, with no security guards, for the arrival of a refugee train, and a land rover full of government soldiers came and mowed them down with automatic weapons. Igbo shops and Igbo hotels were ransacked and looted, while blocks of non Igbo businesses were carefully left untouched". **(See Minutes of Canadian House of Commons proceeding, external Affairs Ref. 7 pp. 239-40).**

(25) In the final analysis, Dan Jacobs, in the Brutality of Nations, summarizes the plight of the Igbos in the following way, "to the other Nigerians, the Igbos were not only leaving Nigeria, they were departing with the oil under the lands with which they are seceding. Here lay the explanation of the paradox that the Nigerians had driven the Biafrans out, yet seemed to be fighting to keep them in the federation. What they actually wanted was the land the Igbos were on and what lay under it without the Igbos". **(Dan Jacobs, in the Brutality of Nations)**

Brutal, Senseless Massacre of a People

We saw with our naked eyes. We heard the stories told and re-told by real eye witnesses, news reporters - foreign and local. It was unbelievable. The following words or terms have been used to describe the horrific events that led to the declaration of secession, namely, **massacre, pogrom, genocide, reckless killings**, a type comparable to the Jewish **holocaust,** not even **Rwandan genocide or ISIS satanic project in Iraq and Syria.** The hate involved was total and the nature of the killings was barbaric, almost with little or no extra efforts at convincing anyone, most Igbos and non-Igbos living in South-East Nigeria during the civil war could vehemently assert "We can never go back to Nigeria! We will have nothing to do with Nigeria. We are

done with Nigeria! We will fight to the last man!" In the face of massacre and brutal intent at the extermination of a people, only Biafra and its leadership offered hope for survival. Everyone was ready, determined and courageous to face the consequences. Gory images of mutilated bodies, severed heads, butchered bodies, dangling legs and hands, arriving in trains heading to Eastern Region from the North were well documented in Illustrious Magazine produced by the **Mark Press-Swiss Press,** a foreign Biafra-friendly foreign news organization then with headquarters in Switzerland, told the rest of story of Biafra Genocidal war waged by the Northern Nigerian Islamic jihadists. I carefully hid a copy of the magazine given to me by one of the Irish missionaries among my most valuable literary materials in my family archives in the village. It wouldn't do any good reproducing those gory images in this book. Reproduction of such original images, which only few older generation of Igbos might have seen will surely rekindle hostilities, anger and hate!

"Nigeria: on the Highway to Rwanda"

The **Rwandan Genocide** was the one 'witnessed' (at least through the 'You Tube') by most Nigerian and Igbo youths: The Rwandan genocide, also known as the genocide against the **Tutsi,** was a genocidal mass slaughter of Tutsi in Rwanda by members of the Hutu majority government; death toll, about 1,000,000. The period was April 7, 1994 – July 1994. That was about **30 years ago** since the Nigeria- Biafra war (1967-1970)! In a nutshell **Hutu majority tribute can be compared to the Hausa-Fulani** of Nigeria. But it is interesting as well as shocking to read from the following write-up, the type of alarm the present generation of Nigerians and Igbos are raising as they compare the present situation in Nigeria, their fatherland, to that of Rwanda! The 'story' is worth re-producing here! What they were told about the Igbo genocide cannot be different from that of the Tutsi!

In the **Middle Belt region of Nigeria**, the present generation of Nigerians and the outside world are witnessing similar situations and atrocities, where the so-called Fulani-herdsmen are carrying out mass murder of innocent Nigerians as their fathers and forefathers did to the Igbos about 50 years ago. Watch out! In the **neighboring Cameroon, the French-speaking Northerners** are carrying out similar mass murders of the **English-speaking Southerners.** The world continues

to watch as a dictator called **Paul Biya,** president for-life, ordered his military forces to torture, subjugate and kill their very kit and kin joined in an unfortunate political union. Like the sad outcome of the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigerian protectorates by the British, the Cameroonians are reaping their own bitter fruits of the colonial masters' economic and political tragedies. It is rare type of 'lamentation' compiled, well delivered, and timely by a young Nigerian, Uche Ndubuisi Nwakamma. Should we expect the fulfillment of the prophecies?

"The clouds of war are gathering with blood sucking gods that follow the perching of vultures. Vultures from Eastern Europe, vultures from Europe, vultures from Asia, yes, vultures from America that deal on arms. With eyes constantly fixed on any troubled spot in the world. They are hopefully praying to extend their business from Tripoli to Abuja. This is because; Nigeria is fast descending to the very path that **Freetown** took; the path that ruined **Congo and Libya; the expressway to Rwanda**; that is the path Nigeria is fast speeding to. Yet, this path is not a new path to us. It's a similar terrain that we have taken before. In **1966,** long before even the Rwandan path was paved. It was **Biafra.** We wasted over 3 million people as hundreds of innocent souls were slaughtered before even the war started. Long before the Rwandan path was paved, religious differences and ethnic intolerance as being repeated today, **led to a civil war** that took our best, took our leaders, took innocent souls and took us backward. The backwardness is still hunting and hurting us till day. And, it's the wounds of the war that were not treated in a round table talk, an open, sincere discussion that is leading to another war. Yet, the leader of the nation insists that he's comfortable exactly the way things are.

"Do we learn from History? So, it's either history is unfair to us or our leaders are blind to it. Indeed, the death meant to kill a dog does not allow her to smell feces. It is an Igbo proverb. And, like the saying goes, those who do not understand history are bound to repeat its mistakes. Even if we hadn't experienced a civil war before, what happened in Free Town, Monrovia, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in recent history ought to have taught us a lesson. The way Libya-Tripoli was turned from a fast developing city into a slave town where war Lords reigned, should serve as a lesson. But no, we learnt nothing. Just 50 years after, when most of those that played major role in the last civil war were still alive, here the snowball of war goes rolling down from the snow mountain of stupid arrogance, gathering with it

all the ethnic intolerance and religious divide that paved the path of Rwandan. Where are you Gen. Gowon? Your silence is strongly becoming cowardice. Where art thou Alhaji Abudsalem Abubakar? Your silence is strongly becoming a tactical approval to the atrocities going on in the nation. Where you are Chief Emeka Anyaoku, for there is an error in your silence. Speak out Gen. IBB or else history will record it that you said nothing when your voice was needed most. Ochiagha Ndi Igbo Comrade Ebitu Ukiwe, your children are being slaughtered in their farms and you said nothing. You all said nothing as the young man who watched his pregnant mother gang-raped and her stomach ripped open bites his tongue and moan in revenge.

"Core Political Elite: You big men in power and in office, you felt secured and less concerned because you thought the evil is far off. When this Rwanda that is fast speeding to Nigeria will arrive, the distinguished **Senator** will be extinguished. The honorable house members will be dishonored. Some of you in executive offices will be executed. All by the way, war lords who will take over and parade the streets of Osun, Sokoto, Abuja, Calabar, Enugu etc. The war lords that took over the streets of Rwanda did the same. So, let each and every one of you wake up while it's day, let us collectively pursue the black sheep. Or else, when Rwanda will arrive, lizards will replace cows as major source of protein in our meals. Ask **Samuel Doe**; when Rwanda arrived in **Monrovia,** he hit the streets from the presidential palace in search of food after slaughtering his lions for meal. That was how he was captured and slaughtered. Rwanda does not respect big men and big office-holders. As there are no big men, **Libya** today, but war lords, these are the ones selling the children of even the rich into slavery.

"When Rwanda arrives there will be no strong man, no community leader, big men or small men. In Rwanda, there were not even religious leaders. Everyone will be to himself and God to all us. For the big men, aides will desert them and run to take their families into the bush for safety. Then, the high fences of the local almightiest will be climbed, their strong pad locks broken, their properties stolen, their wives and daughters violated before them; for they're always the first targets of the Rwanda mobs. Ask the former almighty of Congo, Zaire politics, ask Gaddafi, when Rwanda visited their palaces were the first target of attack of the Rwandan mob. So, no one should feel less concerned about this Rwanda breeze that is blowing towards Nigeria. Do whatever you can today to stop it by speaking out. Or

else, we all will live to regret our inactions. If the truth must be said, **the pathway to Rwanda** is being paved due to our Executive arms of government lackadaisical attitude in respect to the insecurity ravaging the country.

"The day of reckoning is near: Under this very regime that came for change, Nigeria our beloved country has unfortunately, become a lawless country, a country with no rules and regulations, a country where laws are not adhered to, a country where there is no consequence for killing of innocent citizens. Yet, we have paid **law-makers** and government in place that refuses to take responsibility and **security agen**ts that seem not to know what their work is. Yet, every year we budget and spend billions on security agencies and the citizens are taxed for this. That's how the path to Rwandan is being paved. On the expressway to Rwandan, citizens get killed, innocent girls are violated, mothers raped, farmers throat slit open, people going about their businesses are gunned down and nothing is done about it. From Enugu to South Kaduna to Bornu and Bauchi to Zamfara and Adamawa to Nasarawa and Taraba to Plateau down to Benue, the Rwandan experience is going on.

"You might feel secured today because you move around with escorts, but when Rwanda will arrive it will only be **war-lords** that will be escorted. There will be no senator, Federal or State House member, because each zone will be manned by war lords that legislate. When Rwanda will arrive there will be no governor, no minister, and no government officials because there was none in Rwanda. Each area will have a war lord that will be lord of the law. In Rwanda, there will be no middle class, industrialist, banks etc, so there will be no ATM. The war lords controlling the areas you fall into might decide to print a new currency with his head as the logo. So, stop counting on what you have acquired now, for all may be lost. On the path to Rwanda men of God that speak out and speak the truth to the government of the day were arrested and detained, just as it is happening now. On the path to Rwanda the government of the day favored one ethnic group against the other, and those that felt neglected took to self-defense. That was what paved the way to Rwanda. The Rwandan highway is being paved in Kaduna South, Jos, Taraba, Zamfara, Nasarawa and Benue. Communities that felt neglected by the federal government are going into self-defense.

"Evil is normal": In Rwanda, babies were born with no future. As soon as they grew up they picked up an AK 47 and

started killing fellow human beings. That Rwandan path is being paved in the **Boko Haram** controlled areas in Northern Nigeria. In Rwanda, bodies of dead people littered everywhere and the government of the day felt less concerned, just as dead bodies mean nothing anymore in Nigeria. Nigeria is just as if we are in **Liberia or Afghanistan.** Nigeria has become a barbaric nation with no respect for human life. Like Rwanda, Nigeria has become a place where we wake up every day and hear that people are being slaughtered and we feel like it is normal. In fact, like Rwanda, Nigeria has become a place where we hear 6 killed, 24 injured and we are like it is small. Like Rwanda, schools have closed in so many villages due to the attack of war lords struggling for territories and the government of the day is helpless about it. Nigeria is seriously drifting towards Rwanda, but some people instead of speaking out and saying the truth are urging the president to go on as if nothing is happening. But, when Rwanda will come there will be no oil money to share, no nation to govern and all the major oil fields will be controlled by Niger Delta war lords. So keep on clapping and praising the government while people are being slaughtered.

"Keep on talking about **elections** while innocent children are being murdered. Keep on pretending that all is well with Nigeria when a foreign army of occupation has taken over most villages in Nigeria and our military are doing nothing about it. Keep on feeling less concerned when our national territory has been invaded by foreign mercenaries and we keep on pretending like all is at peace. The truth is, we cannot continue like this and expect Nigeria not to hit the Rwandan path. Nigerians are being slaughtered like cattle, and their cries are hitting the ground. Hearts are hurting, souls are ravaging for revenge and they're gathering storms of war. Nigeria will not survive a second civil war and the next war will be so shapeless because people are being hit from all angles."

Organized aggression against the Igbos

There are many confirmed news items, which have circulated widely and which Igbo youths even born only after the war have committed to memory like nursery rhymes that would be hard to suppress or erase. The Yorubas of the then Western region were responsible for the chaotic political situation that led to the first military coup of 1966. The massacre of Igbo officers and the disgraceful murder of General Aguiyi Ironsi (Igbo), the

Commander-in-chief of Nigerian armed forces in the counter-coup by Hausa-Fulani soldiers, followed by the organized pogrom and genocide against the Igbo all over Nigeria became the last straw that broke the camel's back. One reporter gave a firsthand report of the mayhem that took place in various parts of the North and the West. It was through such detailed reports of man's inhumanity to man that most Igbos came to understand why the Hausa-Fulani mock the Igbos when they refer to us as **"Nyamiri"** a corrupt Igbo expression which simply means "Nyem mmiri" (give me water to drink!)

Ethnic Igbo Cleansing is Sheer Barbarism

Aguiyi Ironsi had just been murdered in Ibadan by a horde of blood thirsty officers led by one **Theophilus Danjuma, (a Christian, like Yakubu Gowon from the Middle belt region of Nigeria).** The Northern military had sized most barracks in the country and were performing the **ethnic "Igbo" cleansing** that had been planned all along. Ethnic cleansing is the systematic removal of racial groups or a particular racial group, as in this situation, the Igbo, or Middle Belters from a given territory, by a more powerful ethnic group, here, the Hausa-Fulani. The intent was the physical elimination of the Igbos through mass murder and genocide. From the eve of July 29, 1966 over 370 senior military officers of eastern extraction were reportedly killed in Abeokuta, Ibadan, Lagos, Zaria etc. As this butchery of human beings were going on in what was tagged a **retaliatory coup,** the northern officers declared **'Araba'**. In his essay ***"Araba: Let's Separate: The Story of the Nigerian Civil War*,** Olaywola Abegunrin, a Nigerian writer informs us that "The people were separated into two groups, those who pronounced these Hausa words, as they should be, without accents, were moved to the right, and those who pronounced them with accent were moved to the left. This was in line with the general mood of the people of the North, whose clarion call during the May 29 disturbances in the North, which claimed many Igbo lives, was **Araba** (Hausa word meaning, meaning **to secede)**

They ferried their families and properties home getting ready to secede from the rest of British Nigeria. Their thirst or hunger for Igbo blood had been satisfied. But this plan was discarded when the **Britain sold the idea of oil** to them and how they will profit from taking control of the oil. As the killing

of military officers of Eastern origin was getting to a climax, the Northern civilians unleashed their clubs and machetes on innocent civilians all through the North. People were cut into pieces. In 30 days, over 20,000 easterners' lives were mowed down by this sheer barbarism. In those days, rail transportation was the major means of traveling to the East from the North. So when the train departed, one will have to wait for its return before another set of Igbo could depart the North for the East.

"Nyamiri" (Nye m mmiri – give me water to drink)

"Nyamiri" - 'give me water' – the ugliest nickname of hate which the Hausa-Fulani apply to Igbo person – "Nyamiri" connotes too, death! "You must die!" Even Jesus demanded water to quench his taste while on the cross. But they gave him 'vinegar. In the case of the beleaguered Igbos in the hands of wicked and heartless enemies, excruciating death was the offer, in place of water! Just like in Syria and Iraq, it is like the last word the hordes of ISIS executioners pronounce each time, before cutting off the heads of their captives. The 'Nyamiri' report was too bad to imagine: The orgy for violence by the Northern civilians was without limits. Students killed their Eastern teachers. Colleagues at work killed their fellow Eastern colleagues. House owners killed their Eastern tenants. It was in this frenzy and death orgy that the Easterners devised a plan of survival. The plan was to run to the emirate and seek refuge until the train that left for the East returned. Many Easterners ran to emirs' palaces in the north seeking refuge, not knowing that the emirate was planning the final "Igbo solution". As they ran into the palace, they were all welcomed. So this encouraged other Easterners who were hiding to run to the palace.

Then the final solution set in when the number of Easterners seeking refuge increased. They will be allowed to die slowly. No food. No water must be offered to them. For days, the Igbo fleeing refuge from the Northern pogrom were denied food and water. They started crying, begging the palace guards to give them water in their local Igbo dialect **"Nye m mmiri"** but the northern civilians heard **'nyamiri!** So that was the origin of the offensive name, which the Northerners used to increase the pains and agonies of the Igbos trapped in the North. Whenever they call you "nyamiri", they are trying to remind you of the ordeals of Igbo predecessors whom they denied food and water until they were starved to death.

Was it by any means an "Igbo Coup?"

Rubbish! "Igbo Coup Saga" was a simple alibi, an excuse, a justification for the organized massacre and genocide perpetrated by the Hausa-Fulani against the Igbos. Igbos didn't know much about the military and cared less about recruitment into the Nigerian army or its constitution by tribes or ethnic groups. But for the sake of arguments many of those who knew what was happening or later what happened, Igbos and non-Igbos had continued to debunk those allegations of 'Igbo complicity' in the coup. Here we find what they said or were saying about that issue, and as important as it had been in re-shaping of the Nigerian history and Igbo genocide. What could the un-informed, the younger generation of Igbos and Nigerians learn about this episode? We have heard about the intentions of the young army officers that carried out the coup. We can't confirm or deny but there is nothing bad in listening to the coup plotters' stories. Unfortunately as if to confirm their contention that it was definitely an Igbo Coup, planned and well executed, to eliminate key Muslim leaders and install an Igbo leadership, it was by "accident", an Igbo General, Johnson, Umunna Aguiyi Ironsi, highest in rank in the army that became the new military leader of government! Wow! Could the devil tell the truth! Ironsi was not among the coup plotters nor did he support the coup, but only accepted to lead the country as the highest in rank in the Nigerian army after the coup.

Whatever the case may be, the title of the much quoted "write-up", **"1966 Coup – Not Igbo Coup', The Igbos now vindicated and exonerated"** partly attributed to (General Olusegun-Obasanjo) may be misleading, but however serves our purpose. It serves as an important 'document' which we have severally referred to as a major part of **"Igbo grievances"** against the persecution, rejection of its people before, during and after the civil war. We are given the names the leaders of the coup plotters and 'ethnic groups'. Their acclaimed reasons for carrying out the coup have equally been widely disclosed and as well discussed.

The key figures involved in the 1966 Military Coup in Nigeria were said to be the following:

1. Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu (Midwest Region Igbo)

2. Major Adewale Ademoyega (Western Region – Yoruba), author of "Why we struck"
3. Capt. G. Adeleke (Western Region – Yoruba).
4. Maj. Ifeajuna (Midwestern Region – Igbo).
5. Lt. Fola Oyewole (Western Region – Yoruba),
6. Lt. R. Egbiko (Midwestern Region – Ishan).
7. Lt. Tijani Katsina (Northern Region – Hausa/Fulani).
8. Lt. O. Olafemiyan (Western Region – Yoruba).
9. Capt. Gibson Jalo (Northern Region – Bachama).
10. Capt. Swanton (Northern Region – Middle Belt).
11. Lt. Hope Harris Eghagha (Midwest – Urhobo).
12. Lt. Dag Warribor (Midwest – Ijaw)
13. 2nd Lt. Saleh Dambo (Northern Nigeria -Hausa)
14. 2nd Lt. John Atom Kpera (Northern Nigeria-Tiv).

Like their counterparts what commentators found important were: (i) their youthful age and ranks. Established Army Generals, Brigadiers, Lieutenant colonels, and other high ranking army officers don't usually carry out violent military revolutions. (ii) All the Nigerian ethnic groups were involved in the planning and execution. (iii) The senior military leaders who did not participate or were consulted later never supported the military intervention. (iv) By accident of history the most senior military officer who took over the leadership of the military was Igbo.

"No Basis for Unity" – And the "Aburi Accord"

Truly in the eyes of the Igbos and the rest of Nigerians and world bodies that got interested in the Nigerian debacle, there was truly **'no more basis for unity'**. The Igbos were ready to go, to be left alone in peace no matter the amount of injustice perpetrated against its people, hence the need to search for durable and honorable peace with the 'rest of Nigeria'. There was hope for an agreement, possible mode of unity and co-existence within the Nigerian polity. After series of meetings, conferences and talks held at Aburi, Ghana, Nigerians and Igbos were made to understand that a deal had been struck by both parties, Igbo-Biafra (Ojukwu) and 'rest of Nigeria' (Gowon). The outcome of the Aburi Accord was recorded on tapes and publicly relayed on television and other news media. The bottom line, in a nut shell, a **'Con-federal'** system of union could still link Biafra to the 'rest of Nigeria.' The details have been widely publicized.

But after a series of consultations with his people, the Nigerian local and foreign allies, particularly Britain blamed the Gowon delegation to the Aburi peace talks for accepting that accord. Perhaps Gowon and Nigerian delegation did not understand or appreciate the importance and the strategic position of the Igbo in the Nigerian federation. The Igbo in this context is not a vicious, selfish, obstinate and devilish race that pushed Nigeria into a civil war. No! The Igbos are neither nasty people that dominate, grab and always want to be the sole leaders whom others must follow. This Igbo that must not be allowed to separate and build its own state and nation is a powerful, hardworking and intelligent person whose contributions are still vital for the development, growth and survival of Nigeria. Hence the civil war must be fought to its bitterest end, to keep the Igbo, politically and economically within the Nigerian federation! The table had been turned upside down, by the last minute rejection by the Nigeria side, the entire Aburi package. It was clear call for disaster. Igbos had been pushed to the walls! Gowon and Nigerian government had betrayed their trust and were calling on the Igbos to take up arms and fight for self-determination.

"Igbos should have been wiped out during the Biafra war" (Alaba Ajibola) (forwarded as received with extra editorial stuff)

Up to 2019, there were no signs that Nigerians had done with Igbo genocide or ethnic cleansing. Things had gotten worse! No doubt, some non-Igbo intellectuals, authors, politicians, traditional and religious leaders have acknowledged the facts, that the Igbos had been mistreated and misunderstood by other Nigerian ethnic groups. Many more have since the end of the war have spoken out and condemned the marginalization of the Igbos by the past and present Nigerian government. Nevertheless, now and again one finds individuals and groups that still nurse grievances against the Igbo. We have identified them as **"Igbophobians, "Igbophobic".** Like the great Jewish race, Igbos or Biafrans are still being chased around by 'enemies'. The reasons they offer for their attitude are very shameful, childish and ridiculous.

Here we meet a Yoruba young man who has posted ridiculous thoughts and hate speeches about Igbo on social media. A staff of Babcock University identified as **Alaba Ajibola**

has said on social media that the Igbos should have been wiped out during the Biafran war. According to him, if this happened, Nigeria would have **'gone far off'** as the most hated tribe in the world. Many very hurt Igbo students and Face book users naturally reacted angrily to Ajibola hate statements. For many Nigerians the phrase "gone far off" is hard to comprehend. However, one Amara Nwoko, who shared screenshots of the comment by the Babcock University staff, wrote:

"You see this fool. This mad man who works with Babcock University! Read what he said about the Igbos. Coming to social media to say a whole nation should be wiped out because you hate them is the craziest thing ever. You're happy the war happened and another will happen again. It's high time we use this one to teach him you don't spill murder on everyone. He wants popularity and we surely will give him." The life of Igbos in Babcock university is seriously under threat as we speak and this is no joke.. Babcock University you must as a matter of urgency call this your staff who threatened to wipe out a whole tribe because he hates them. He said there's a meeting going on to effect the extermination of igbos. He should tell us what meeting exactly? This was how **Hitler** started in Germany, **ISIS** and other groups that have wasted lives of people. Babcock University is a private university where you find students live in hostels. Now, if someone with such bile is given to take care of students imagine the threat to life of students at Babcock University? if there are things we should never joke with is when someone comes up openly to threaten the life of another.. and even affirmed it again and again when told to stop. Save the lives of students who hail from Igbo land schooling at Babcock University today by calling out this tribal bigot who threatened that all Igbos should be wiped out. One of the screenshots below is Babcock university hotlines and contact. Every Igbo on my list who loves our land and will not be glad to watch any of our children in that university die since a bile filled exterminator is a member of their staff should call. If you attend Seven days Adventist Church do us the favor and call them too. This bigot and murderer in waiting ans shouldn't be let free like that! This was how most killings started. He said there's a meeting going on and it will happen soon. He should tell us why he feels Igbos should be wiped out.

Another student **Daniel IG Obasi**, reacted this way " Alaba, your hatred is like Mess. It does nothing to the person

that smells it but it demeans the person that releases it and shows the world how daft and moronic the person is. Apart from that, your hatred only shows that you had rotten egg for breakfast and it will only end up turning your stomach. So while you are busy hating Igbos, your stomach will keep turning, making you release smelly farts."

There were many other reactions to the worrisome utterances by a Yoruba member of staff of Babcock University. Surely **'Seventh Day Adventist Congregationists,** are not known to be much different from **Islamic Jihadists**. Such utterances can provoke dissension and war in college campuses. It is on record that Igbos have suffered a lot in the past in the hands of fellow Nigerians. It is worrisome that the present should still look gloomy for the Igbo race. The Igbo genocide may not be over. Everyone should remember the PYTHON DANCE and stay vigilant.

We learn that Babcock **University** is a private 'Christian' co-educational Nigerian university owned and operated by the **Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria**. The university is located at Ilishan-Remo, equidistant between Ibadan and Lagos. Enrolment was about 6,000 as of 2009. In 2017, the university had its first set of graduates from the Ben Carson School of Medicine. It is a part of the **Seventh-day Adventist education system**, the world's second largest Christian school system. Babcock University was named after an American missionary by the name of **David C. Babcock**, who pioneered the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria in 1914. He was based in **Erunmu in Oyo State, Nigeria.** The university was established as the Adventist College of West Africa (ACWA) in 1959, initially with seven students. In 1975, it changed its name to Adventist Seminary of West Africa (ASWA). The university was officially inaugurated on April 1999.

CHAPTER 8

"NO VICTOR NO VANQUISHED" – ILLUSIONS AND THE FATE OF A CONQUERED RACE

Not many Igbos, young and the elderly were happy when the 'Breaking News' was announced by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Fidelis Uzochukwu Okafor, of the university named after the Late Biafran leader Odumegwu Ojukwu, that Yakubu Gowon would deliver a lecture on the topic: **"No Victor, No Vanquished: Healing the Nigerian Nation"** at the 6th convocation ceremony of the Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), (formerly Anambra State University), Igbariam Campus Anambra state, 25 March 2015. Reactions were too many. Some youths asked: "What is Gowon coming to Igboland to do?" "Is Gowon coming to Igboland to apologize to the Igbos for the atrocities he and his people committed against the Igbos?" "Is Gowon coming to Igboland to add insult to the injury, he and the Hausa-Fulani cabal inflicted on the Igbo race?" "Is Yakubu Gowon coming to Igboland to convince the nation that his 'No victor, No vanquished Credo' has actually healed the Igbo and the nation's wounds?" There was no excitement outside the Anambra state university about Gowon's visit or over whatever he would preach. There were rumors that the former head of state had converted to what some called 'Pentecostal Christianity'. During the war, Biafrans were told that Gowon and the people of his Middle Belt were predominantly Christian. But no one knew whether Gowon was a practicing Christian or about his Christian denomination. Perhaps, after his retirement from the military, Gowon might have become a Pastor of a Church; and there are too many pastors in Nigeria today. Each has a large number of followers. Perhaps he was coming on a evangelist mission or crusade.

However Prof. Fidelis Okafor confirmed in his announcement that Yakubu Gowon would deliver a lecture on the topic: **`No Victor, No Vanquished: Healing the Nigerian Nation'** at the unique occasion. Okafor noted that it would be the first time that Gowon would speak publicly about the Nigerian civil war that happened over 45 years ago. The former Head of State, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, would be preaching a gospel of 'healing' Nigeria at the 6th convocation ceremony of the Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), Uli, Anambra state. **COOU,** formerly called the Anambra State

University, was renamed after the late Biafran hero by the Anambra House of Assembly on the Thursday, September 11, 2014. Student Pulse learnt that 14 PhDs.' 54 Masters' degrees, 97 postgraduate diplomas and 2,800 first degrees will be awarded. President of the Nigerian Senate, David Mark and the late Ojukwu will be honored at the convocation, which is the first since the university was renamed.

"Some 45 years ago at the end of the Civil War, Gowon made an epoch-making speech and he is going to speak on that," Okafor said. "Gowon has never made any public statement on the event of between 1967 and 1970." The Vice Chancellor also observed that COOU is named after Ojukwu, leader of the Biafra people and Gowon's adversary in the war. "It is also an opportunity for this General to come to a university named after his rival during the war. "I think also that he wishes to use the opportunity to speak to the Igbo people before he exits from this earth." Truly Nigerians, including his people have not heard from Gowon talk much about any of the problems facing the nation today. Perhaps, he cherishes the adage that tells us that 'silence is golden'. This is the nation Gowon led to victory in the war with the secessionist Biafra and for 9 good years before he was overthrown by Murtala Muhammed, Gowon at the time of the completion of this chapter of our book was known to be healthy. Why has he decided to keep quiet while his own people were being slaughtered by the Hausa-Fulani military herdsmen? Why has Gowon remained silent while the country he fought so hard to 'keep one' was disintegrating! Surely if Ojukwu was still alive during these chaotic days, he wouldn't have remained silent! God forbid! Professor Okafor gave Gowon an 'opportunity to speak to the Igbo people before 'he exits from this earth!' No! That's not enough. Gowon should have also seized several opportunities to 'speak to all Nigerians, especially the currents political leaders and the Hausa-Fulani cabal, that gave him maximum support he needed to 'keep Nigeria one!' Gowon could have played a great role, much bigger and more important that the type he played during the civil war. Something must have gone wrong somewhere, and no one was clearing the air!

"GOWON" – "GO-ON-WITH-ONE-NIGERIA"

There is no doubt that Gowon, as the leader of the counter-coup of July 1966, was a tough stubborn young military officer whose toughness in decision-making and negotiations had both

commendable and adverse effects on the outcome of the Nigerian conflicts, during and after the civil war. Perhaps, without Gowon's folly, and tragically imprudent actions and lack of foresight, and those of his advisers, Nigeria would not have been in the deeper crisis, it finds herself today. At least many Nigerians from all ethnic groups agree that Gowon and his team of negotiators fumbled at Aburi Ghana. That failure to rescue Nigeria from the political mess and economic yoke of Britain and other foreign colonial masters through the Aburi Accord, remains a national calamity today.

However, as we were made to know from other sources, for the first time Nigerians came to hear about the 'full meaning of **'Gowon',** the acronym 'GOWON'. Acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of words and pronounced as a word. So, we learnt that Gowon relived the turbulent days of the civil war in the country in which he was a principal actor and stated that he would not have achieved the victory of keeping the country together between 1966 and 1975 without the support of Nigerians, including those on the opposing side. Who were those of the 'opposing side?' He didn't let Nigerians and the world to know. Gowon was said to be speaking at the Leadership Newspapers' annual conference and awards to mark its 10th anniversary, where he was recognized as the Leadership Man of the Year. Gowon said he was further spurred to defend the unity of the country through newspaper interpretation of the full meaning of his name, **Gowon**, written as "**GO-ON-WITH-ONE-NIGERIA**." "To keep Nigeria one, is a task that must be done", was a very familiar Radio Nigeria and Radio/Television, Kaduna war slogan throughout the 30 month-old civil war.

The former head of state noted that the interpretation of his name by the media had a serious impact on him, saying that it was then he realized what Nigerians wanted him to do and was determined to fight for the unity of the country with their support. He said: "So, I said if this was what Nigerians wanted me to do (keeping the country one), I would do my best. But I will not do it alone, I need the support and I need the cooperation of every Nigerian, and when I say every Nigerian at the time, it meant even those who were opposing the federal side. And in the end we received that support." Gowon, further, reliving his experiences in the war days, stated that Nigerians gave him the needed support, saying that it was the overwhelming support he received that moved him to declare "no victor no vanquished" at the end of the war. The former leader

said the essence was to give hope to the teeming Nigerian children who had lined up on the streets waving the Nigerian flag, stating that his determination not to punish the young people but to give them his best was burning in his mind. Gowon expressed gratitude to all Nigerians past and present who gave him the support to keep Nigeria one, adding that it was part of his contribution for his 80th birthday. The management of *Leadership newspapers* said it gave Gowon the award for keeping the country together as a head of state and for keeping a peaceful disposition in the count. Critics have continuously demanded explanations for Gowon's war 'to keep Nigeria one', a country that right from the amalgamation had never shown signs of surviving as a united nation, a country in which the Hausa-Fulani were the first to oppose its unification and had often threatened to withdraw from the 'union'. Gowon failed to explain why the unity of Nigeria was uppermost in his mind as the head of state. However, without doubt, most Nigerians are aware that the British interest, right from the beginning determined what shape Nigeria should assume. Practically there was no strong reason to fight, to lose millions of lives to preserve Nigeria's unity.

Reconciliation, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation

It will be remembered that the phrase **"no victor, no vanquished**" was made famous by General Yakubu Gowon after Nigeria's civil war. At a ceremony to receive the instrument of surrender from Biafra's General Philip Effiong following Biafra's Head of State, Lt. General Emeka Ojukwu's departure to Ivory Coast, Gen Gowon declared that the civil war which lasted for 30 months, had ended with **no victors nor vanquished.** For the then youthful Gowon, the war, bitterly fought, between 'brothers', had ended with a 'victory for common sense'. In order to demonstrate that he really meant what he said; Gowon announced the **three Rs Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation**. Some Gowon loyalists believed that Gowon had started the processes of achieving the first two R's before his regime's overthrow by Murtala Mohammed in 1975.

Unfortunately Nigerians witnessed no **'Reconciliation'** attempts to bring the leaders of the two factors together for discussions and 'hugs'. There was no known 'Reconciliation Committee/Commission' appointed to realize the goals or dreams of the policy. Reconciliation would have embraced a

complete **Reintegration** of the displaced persons in the mainstream of Nigerian community. There would be no signs of reminders that the 'vanquished' faction should remain at the periphery of ongoing development projects and progress of the rest of the sections of the Nigerian communities. The 'vanquished victims' of the civil war should not have been threaded as second-class citizens, or made to feel like unwanted 'foreigners'. The absolute rejection of the 'vanquished' Igbos was the climax of the negative outcome of the reconciliation policy. Anyone bearing the identity of the defeated Igbos became a victim of persecution and isolation among the rest of Nigerian ethnic groups. Surely the identity crisis was overwhelming! What of **Reconstruction and Rehabilitation**!!

There is no argument about it. Yes, after the surrender, General Gowon instituted a policy of "No victor, No vanquished." Winning this civil war was the high point of Gowon's regime. His attempt to enforce his 3-Rs-program of Reconciliation Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and across the country failed. While the idea was laudable, its implementation was flawed and thus most of Nigeria, regardless of the side they were on during the civil war, lost faith in Gowon and his administration. His promise to return Nigeria back to civil rule by 1976 was broken and the rapid growth of corruption in his administration further eroded the country's confidence in him. General Yakubu Gowon was overthrown in a bloodless coup on July 29, 1975 and replaced by General Murtala Muhammed. He left immediately for Great Britain. While there, he studied at the University of Warwick and graduated with a doctoral degree in political science. Yakubu Gowon returned to Nigeria in 1983.

No illusions, please!

For many Biafrans there was no room for illusions. It was an intellectual deceit for anyone to be misled into believing that in the Nigerian-Biafra war, there was 'No victor. No vanquished! To General Effiong and the rest of Biafra, there was no illusion that they had clearly lost the war; they were the vanquished; while Gowon and the Federal forces were the victors. Gowon's declaration was aimed, surely to achieve one or two purposes. One was to give the impression that it was pointless to jubilate after a triumph over one's 'brother' and secondly to calm frayed nerves and perhaps the third, to underscore the senselessness of the war, in the first place. Lastly, for Gowon, he engaged the

Biafrans for only one reason – keeping Nigeria one. Nigeria could have remained one, its unity unhampered, if the two parties had adhered to the Aburi Accord. There would be no need to fight to keep Nigeria one. Nigeria had remained strong, one, and united before the coup of 1966. The 4 Regions North, West, East and Mid-West were united in one Nigeria.

A trick by Nigeria to subjugate Biafra

Many Igbos, especially the youths simply dismissed Gowon's 'No victor, No vanquished' rhetoric as a 'trick to subjugate Biafra' the more. They didn't see any sincerity in that expression. Someone reacted this way; "Whenever the word ' No victor, No vanquish' is used in a conflict, it simply means (Nobody won and nobody lost)". To the present generation, questions have been raised that why 'No victor No vanquished', when the aftermath of 'victory' and 'defeat' could be read and seen everywhere in Nigeria? The youths have not been able to figure out why there is a constant usage of this word especially by **Yakubu Gowon**, whom young angry Biafrans compare with Hitler, the Nazi leader, under whose leadership about 6 million Jews were slaughtered. Gowon, they insist has continued to make the above statement in a bid to placate Biafrans, knowing quite well that although there was No 'Victor' but there was the 'Vanquished'. There was the vanquished because the Igbos were slaughtered like beasts in Northern Nigeria. Mothers were raped, pregnant mothers had their wombs gutted with knives and their babies brought out and killed, children faced the most horrendous death; they died of **Kwashiokor** as a result of **Awolowo's food blockade and 20-pound policy**. 'No vanquished', they maintained but Biafra lost more than 3 million people? Yakubu Gowon after perpetrating such evil still expected Biafrans to pretend as if nothing happened. Perhaps he should allow terrorists and herdsmen or Boko Haram to wipe out half of his people or more, so as to keep Nigeria one, or rather so that the herdsmen would have their 'colonies! One would have expected the Nigerian government to give everybody a level playground after the war, at least to erase the horrible memory of past events. But alas, the reasons why Odumegwu Ojukwu declared secession still remain a 'constant', nothing has really changed. Who said there was no victor and no vanquished", Igbo properties were seized by the same people. Even after the war ended, Igbo properties were still not returned to their rightful owners.

"Rehabilitation" in Action

No 'Vanquished'! Yet Gowon and Awolowo gave our people only £20 (twenty pounds) out of their confiscated thousands and millions of pounds in the bank to survive on. Does Awolowo's action call for 'Reconciliation', 'Rehabilitation', or 'Reconstruction?" If Igbos were to accomplish their individual or collective 'rehabilitation' project (without any Nigerian in-put), how could they, the defeated Igbos, have accomplished such a big task with no money in their hands? What was the purpose of letting a hitherto rich Igbo businessman with thousands of pounds in his bank accounts go with only a miserable sum of 20 pounds? What would that accomplish? Should Awolowo's measure be seen as part of the federal government's efforts at 'Rehabilitation?' If there was any sense in the 'No victor, No vanquished' credo, should the federal government not have come to the aid of the penniless Igbos with bank loans to begin their businesses again? Would that not make a real sense? But instead of offering aid or relief, it was a complete 'dispossession'. "So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away" **(Matthew; 25.29ff)**

Even after the war, the Biafran veterans were denied their **pension** as many of them were formerly in the Nigerian army. While their Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani counterparts got paid, Biafrans did not receive anything from the federal government that had wanted the world to sing praises of their magnanimity in not slaughtering what remained alive in Biafra at the end of the war. Surely such a gesture could have given some meaning to the 'Rehabilitation' slogan. The discriminatory attitude exhibited by the federal government clearly proved to the world the hypocrisy of the 'No victor, No vanquished' policy.

"No Victor, No Vanquished" – There was only a 'Truce'

Not one true Igbo took the Gowon's assurances' to heart, though Igbos valued their lives and the lives of the younger generation, that would continue the struggle. The defeat of Biafra in the battlefield was not an enviable accomplishment by the Nigerian armed forces. Biafra was defeated by the superpowers that armed Nigeria and their foreign mercenaries, the 'Gwodogwodos'

from Mali, Niger, Chad and other Islamic nations. Without outside intervention, Nigeria would have quickly requested for peace negotiations at the earliest part of the conflict. No wonder Gowon's **'Police Action'** to crush Biafra 'rebellion' turned to full military action. Many Biafrans never believed in 'No Victor. No vanquished' declaration. The war had not ended. There was only **a truce,** a temporary suspension of hostilities. Biafrans knew that with the Hausa-Fulani cabal in power, Nigeria will not have any peace, as the Islamic conquest of the nation was the goal of the Jihadist. About bout 48 years after the Nigeria-Biafra war, nothing is working in the nation; rather the situation has continued to deteriorate.

Second Biafran Revolution and IPOB

Forty-eight years or more lately, Nigeria has not settled her numerous problems. It is not only Biafra that must be crushed. It is not only the Igbos that are trouble-makers. It is not only the citizens of the South-East or South-South that a receiving their own ill-treatment. It has not been long; the people of the Middle Belt started crying out. Is it genocide, ethnic-cleansing going on there? In a nation bereft of ethnic unity, calls for secession have been stirred up in various communities of the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. Many Christians of the Middle Belt have been massacred by the Hausa-Fulani herdsmen, armed militias being supported by the government in power. As reports confirm, the Fulani herdsmen want land and the owners of the land must evacuate of lose their lands. They want 'colonies' a well-known strategy for Islamization of the nation. Who says Nigeria is not in big trouble?

The kidnapping and continued imprisonment of Nnamdi Kanu, the Biafran activist and the leader of **the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)** is like pouring more fuel into the burning fire. Many young Igbos taking to the streets of the South-East do so, convinced that their woes are caused by the Federal Government and an entrenched Northern bias against Igbo prosperity, a belief they consider validated by the marginalization of Igbos in the current Buhari administration. Prejudice against Igbos is spreading to other ethnic groups today. In the past such utterances are numerous to come by, namely "Nigerians of all other ethnic groups will probably achieve consensus on no other matter than their common resentment of the Igbo. They would all describe them as aggressive, arrogant

and clannish. Most would add grasping and greedy". Rubbish! Today many other ethnic groups, who joined in the persecution of Igbos accusing Igbos of outlandish 'crimes' are today reaping their own fruits. They are stretching their hand to the Igbos for succor. In which part of the world (Nigeria being number one), would one not find 'greedy', 'arrogant', 'aggressive', 'clannish' ('racist') people? How do Nigerians and Africans describe Europeans and Americans, who 'dispossessed', 'rejected', 'enslaved', 'discriminated against' the peoples of the world they colonized? Is history not repeating itself, when Nigerians (not only Igbos) are enslaved, imprisoned, deported, or killed overseas? Do Africans call the British good names? Are they not racists, oppressors, 'thieves', and 'plunderers'?

Time and time again, the Igbo nation has been viewed as a secessionist group determined to take their own from Nigeria; a threat to unity. But this story is incomplete. The Igbos of the South-East are well known for their hard work, perseverance, business acumen, and ability to survive harshest conditions of life. If anything, they represent the spirit of survival that has kept the nation together despite trying times under the most brutal military dictatorships. Secession is not the Igbo story. Arguably, secession is a recurrent state of Nigerian tribal identity.

Nigerian Revolution

History shows that the nation has always been plagued with attempts to break away. Fuelled by a belief that corruption is the result of our centralized government, there is a cooperation of the regional governments that once existed in the Nation. Had the Igbos been successful with their demands for Biafra, the **Oduduwa Republic** may have become a reality for those in support of Ganiyu Adams' **Oudua People's Congress.** And long before the Yorubas started clamoring for independence, the July 1966 counter-coup, code-named "**Operation Araba",** was initially plotted as a secessionist move by the North in reaction to the January Boys 1966 coup. Self-determination has always been a potent theme for all other parts of the nation. It is as if people believe that if a Yoruba man ruled and controlled the Yoruba region – and likewise for the other regions, our problems would disappear. This counterfactual remains doubtful, if for no other reason that under the current federal structure, states are ruled by 'indigenes'. We already rule ourselves. Nevertheless, the idea reflects a strong socio-political theme in modern Nigeria;

ethnic sovereignty. Since Nigeria's amalgamation in 1914, some regions continuously fuel the drive for a return to ethnic groups. At its most extreme, some believe that the only true identity is tribal identity, and therefore grievances against the state are manifested by calls for national identities built along ethnic lines.

No one would blame agitators for autonomy, as was the case, and is still the case with Biafra. The idea of 'sharing of the national cake' reigns supreme and gains credence among various ethnic groups, since one group tries to dominate the other. The Hausa-Fulani group, which has little to contribute to the national economy and growth seems to dominate and in a way dictates the way forward. The oil is in the Niger Delta and the North benefits more. And since the Buhari administration the policy of 'One Nigeria' which General Gowon claimed he patriotically fought has continued to fade. The president claimed he would favor only the 97% that voted for him, and in practice has not failed to fulfill his promises to the North, thereby earning the title "**President of Northern Nigeria!** Is it sensible to fight any further war 'to keep Nigeria one?

The Niger Delta and Biafra

The propaganda of Nigerians from the South-South who still suffer from **Igbophobia** should be countered and dismissed as irresponsible. Take, for example, the belief by some supporters in the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and IPOB that in the Second Biafra Revolution, as in the first, there still remains ready carved out nation, representing the **Eleven Provinces of Biafra,** is not a dream. What remains is its **'actualization'.** It is not simply an Igbo vision. It is the vision of the South-South states, as the wounds of the civil war continue to heal. But where each 6-geo-political region or the 4 old pre-war regions decide to go their separate ways, there should be no cause for alarm. But, at last the Igbo vision of self-determination is seen as a point of departure. Surely the oil resources of the Niger Delta have always been the basis of the economic viability of the Nigerian state. The Niger Delta has benefitted little or nothing from the resources under the federal control for long. This has been the primary sources of disaffection, war, and call for Niger Delta independency. Then the question for Igbophobists or Biafraphobists; are the South-South minorities of today; **Itsekiris, Ijaws, Ogonis, Urhobos, Calabaris, Edos,**

Efiks, Ibibios, Isokos and Opobos, driven up by a much stronger ethnic identity and belief in the Niger Delta as its own region, more comfortable with the federal government of Nigeria that has exploited them for long, than with Biafra, their nearest neighbor and kit and kin. Why are they unlikely to fit back so compactly in the Biafran map that once claimed them, and still identifies with them?

Yes! Once upon a time, some major leaders of the Niger Delta movement such as Isaac Boro of the Ijaws and Ken Saro Wiwa of the Ogonis did not support the Biafran state. Most famously, Isaac Boro, the man credited with the revitalization of the Ijaw movement and subsequently all other Niger Delta groups which have crippled the Nigerian economy, died as a Federal soldier fighting Biafran troops. Ken Saro-Wiwa, the writer whose death triggered Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth, cast his lot with the Nigerian state when a decision needed to be made between Nigeria and Biafra. It appears that for the minorities in the region, the feeling Igbos had about being second class citizens in Nigeria, also resonate with them as second class citizens in a Biafran state.

True citations and 'sound' arguments by **Biafraphobists!** They should also remember that thousands of Niger Deltans fought on the side of Biafra throughout the war. But what did the Ijaws, the Ogonis and other Niger Delta minorities achieve by their rejection of association with Biafra? What was the fate of Isaac Boro? What was the achievement of Ken Saro-Wiwa in their struggle with the federal government to compensate their oil rich region as a result of oil pollution, devastation of their environment? Biafra fought better, showed more determination to repel the federal government exploitation of the Niger Delta. It would perhaps have been a different and more joyful story for the South-South states **if Biafra had won the war.** Surely all Niger Deltans would have identified with Biafra, instead of the denial of Biafra identity!

Yakubu Gowon's Convocation Lecture - No victory No vanquished: Healing the Nigerian Nation

It is important to hear from the horse's mouth, as we continue examining the 'No victor, No vanquished' policy of Gowon's regime issued at the end of the civil war. There is need for us to examine the text of the convocation lecture delivered by Dr. Yakubu Gowon, former head of state and Commander-in-chief of

the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (formerly Anambra state university), Igbariam campus (**Wednesday, 25 March, 2015)**

In a 32-long and short paragraphs of his lecture Yakubu Gowon delivered addressed his audience, recalling the relevance his discourse to the younger generation of Nigerian students. He remarked: "Let's not forget that I started out speaking about the 'redemption of ignorance' and probable mis-education of our youth. I say this because we cannot meaningfully discuss the concept of 'No Victory No Vanquished' and its import for healing our nation without being properly and historically guided to understand where we are coming from and where we are headed. For this reason, I have decided to structure this short lecture into four easy-to-follow parts, namely: **(1) Nigeria before the Civil War (2) Nigeria during the Civil War' (3) Nigeria immediately after the Civil War, and (4) Nigeria in a democratic dispensation.** Naturally, what would interest us here is largely the role Yakubu Gowon played in the civil war, which history can really confirm and not necessarily his own side of the story. Nigerians have heard the stories over and over again. Gowon and Ojukwu had been interviewed by world and local press several times and interested researchers can still retrieve such interviews from the social media. He divided his interesting lecture into 4 parts; namely

Nigeria before the civil war

On Nigeria before the civil war, Gowon had the following to say: "Our various publications and history books are replete with explanations and clarifications of the way we were before the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, Evidence abound of the milestones attained and the shreds (small pieces, parts) of broken dreams that littered the road that we travelled to achieve Independence in 1960, If we diligently search the several pages of our history between October 1, 1960 and July 6, 1967, when the Civil War broke out, we will find enough lessons on what we did right or did wrong and adapt these for current and future use to avoid falling into the errors of the past".

That was a good beginning for Gowon, surely; "We will find enough lessons on what we did right or did wrong and adapt these for current and future use to avoid falling into the errors of the past". In other words, Nigerians will not like 'history to

repeat itself'. This is part of what we set out to do in this project; **"Post-war Nigerian History for schools and colleges"** We are bent on finding out truths of certain matters that throw light to many heated arguments and correct records of events about various topics we are discussing in our project. We will be contented with that. What would interest us the more is what Gowon told his audience in the second part of his lecture, namely; Nigeria during the civil war?

Nigeria during the civil war

He went on: "The history of Nigeria's Civil War is fairly familiar to everyone. But several grey areas still exist regarding the cause and course of the War. I have read several accounts of the War with some degree of amusement but often times with critical concern. The more I read of these stories, the more I am convinced that the writing of our history must never be left in the hands of revisionists, especially of the foreign type, most of whom do not understand our narrative; do not understand our pains and, therefore cannot truly be expected to be bothered with why Nigeria needs to continue to stand strong as one undivided nation. This is an important statement by Gowon, especially the areas we have highlighted. Here we stop and try to understand him. Who is a 'revisionist?' A revisionist is a supporter of a policy of a revision or modification of themes, ideologies, beliefs and concepts. This means that if one describes a people or their views as 'revisionist', one means that they reject traditionally held beliefs about particular historical events. So Gowon was saying that only those who held strongly to (his accepted views) of **'One Nigeria'**, '**Undivided nation' were the ones capable of writing Nigerian history that will be acceptable to Nigerians.** Wow! It all means that those who talk about '**Restructuring'** of the nation are excluded from this discussion? As well they do not 'qualify' to write a Post-War Nigerian History! Unbelievable! Such a view or position is too far away from the truth.

Gowon and Aburi Accord

This is the most interesting part of Gowon's lecture that interests us a lot here. Though Gowon had been confronted with questions arising from his failure to implement the Aburi Accord, and he had quibbled, there is nothing wrong in hearing from him again.

He said in his address to the students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University; "One of the critically misunderstood and misjudged part of our story as a nation pertains to the place of the Aburi Accord and its failure to stop the Civil War. "For the avoidance of doubt, the Aburi Accord was meant to enable the principal parties break the ice and to get back together as officers and gentlemen: discuss and solve our problems in our homeland, at home, in our land. The spirit of 'The True Aburi Accord' was ultimately encapsulated in **Decree No. 8 of 1967.** The only addition outside the spirit of the Accord was my insistence on **a clause barring any part of Nigeria from seceding.** This perhaps was what made Ojukwu to reject the Decree, otherwise what we agreed to in Aburi was enshrined in that Decree and we were to **implement them to the letter,** having given Ojukwu almost all that he wanted. We did that in order to achieve peace and return normalcy to Nigeria. Unfortunately, Ojukwu was the one to **renege** (go back on a promise or commitment) on our agreement. In fact he did not attend our meeting at NIFOR in Benin City".

So, this means that it was Ojukwu, not Gowon who did **renege** on the Aburi Accord! Wow! This looked strange. It was not what Nigerians and the world had been hearing about the Aburi Accord tragedy. The truth must be stated bluntly without any added 'color'. It was Gowon together with his party, the Hausa-Fulani cabal who messed up the Aburi Accord. The British added insult to injury, when they advised that the Aburi Accord should be **re-written** as Nigerian would be the loser if the accord was implemented as it was recorded! We continue to listen to Gowon:

"Before we left Ghana, we had agreed that on return to Nigeria, l, as Nigeria's Head of State should make the first broadcast after which the other Regional Governors would make theirs. Unfortunately, I was **down with serious malaria** that I could not make my broadcast but Ojukwu went on air as soon as he got back and claimed that **we agreed to a Confederation to which I had always strongly objected.** That and other actions taken by him and his government made us to carefully review the Aburi Agreement. I got the Secretary to the Government and some Nigerian Senior Civil Servants to review it. They did and pointed out some serious ramifications of it. Those points were carefully considered and taken into account in drafting the **Decree No 8** mentioned earlier, Whoever said that the Aburi Accord failed as a result of pressure mounted on the

Federal side (i.e. me and the Federal Government team) to repudiate it was absolutely mistaken.

So what Gowon was saying was that after he recovered from the malarial fever that it dawned on him that what they agreed in Aburi Ghana was in fact 'a **Confederation'** or something similar to that. Then it was time to 'review' or 're-write' the agreement which was recorded on a tape or present Compact Disc (CD) and played for the world to listen to! What a big joke! What should prevent any of the military governors from letting their people know the outcome of the meeting at Aburi? What crime did Ojukwu commit by letting his people know the outcome of the Aburi meeting? What the first prson to reveal the contents of the Accord, part of the written agreements? Let us continue listening.

"But the Civil War itself was a direct result of the **Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI)** and secession of the Eastern Region from Nigeria. If there was no secession, there would not have been civil war. Please note and remember that Ojukwu had taken a number of illegal actions against the country. Among these were the hijacking of Nigeria Airways plane, the confiscation of railways rolling stock; the annexation of branches of the Central Bank and post offices in the Eastern Region as well as the approbation of Federal revenue in the Region; all these in order to buttress the secession. The secession, more than anything else, left me with no other option than to take **'Police Action"** that was later upgraded to full "**Military Action" after** the Biafran Army ventured into and overran the hitherto 'neutral' **Mid- West Region.** Even with the outbreak of hostilities, we never referred to our Eastern compatriots as "enemy not minding the fact that they used that and similar other terms e.g. 'Northern Vandals' to describe the Nigerian side. The worst description we came up with was to refer to them as "rebels". This was a deliberate action on our pan, as we were determined to fight a humane war; a war of unity with a view to bringing our brothers and sisters in the East back to the mainstream of a **United Nigerian nation.** Surely Gowon failed to remember that Igbos were massacred in the North, and Ojukwu, without any help from the federal government was heavily engaged in resettling millions of displaced Igbos in the East. Everyone remembers the slogan **"On Aburi we stand"** was a familiar slogan**!** Surely it was the 'mutilation' of the Aburi Accord by Gowon that triggered off the

drums of war. Who should be held responsible, Gowon or Ojukwu? Gowon introduced the ***3-Rs*** to calm the situation.

Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

This section of Gowon's lecture is very important as his policy of 'No victor, No vanquished' must naturally be put to serious test. What actions did Gowon and his administration put into operation to prove the sincerity of the declaration. Nigeria immediately after the civil war was the most critical period of the 30-month war. Let's again hear from the horse's mouth: "When, mercifully, the Nigerian Civil War ended on 12 January and officially on 15, January 1970 with my acceptance of the Instrument of Surrender from Col. Phillip Effiong who then headed the rebel enclave in the absence of its de facto leader, Col. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, who had earlier travelled out of his territory in search of the peace, I knew that our nation's proverbial journey of a thousand miles was just about to commence, I knew that our first tentative steps on that journey would count for much, not just amongst us Nigerians but in the comity of nations. I was mindful that my place in history would be determined by how well or badly we tackled the immediate challenges of a young nation that had just emerged from the ravages of war. Let us not forget that the officers and men who conducted the war on both sides of the divide were young with average age range of between 27 and 36, hence it would have been understandable if any rash decisions were taken in the heat of the moment."

"We began our effort at self-purification by ensuring that our solution to the healing process was home-grown. **We devised our game plan without external help; we rejected emergency assistance for help** from nations that did not help our cause at the time of our greatest need and we extended an olive branch, to hand of reconciliation, especially African nations that hid under the cloak of recognizing the rebellion. There were no reprisals against any group or individuals just as soldiers quickly dropped their guns to render helping hands to the civilian populace. Against all odds, Nigeria survived an uncommon experience, we were able to resolve our problems and avoided foreign outside interference, and has remained a reference point in the healing of post-war trauma across the world."

"In order to further cement our commitment to the unity of Nigeria, my government initiated the compulsory one-year National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme. The raison d'être for the founding of the NYSC is multifarious but the most critical of the objectives was the cultural integration of our Youths, young graduates who were posted to communities outside their home States to know their country, to serve and help!. Today, the result of this initiative is apparent, for there is hardly any household in this country that is in its purest form. Inter-ethnic marriages have created a new Nigeria that is a lot more difficult to break up without severing blood ties. Although the circumstances and realities of modern day Nigeria have conspired to dilute the essence of inaugurating the NYSC scheme, the spirit of the programme remains alive and well, contrary to the views being canvassed in certain quarters that the NYSC has outlived its usefulness."

Flaws of Gowon's 3-Rs

Generally speaking, only few critics may fail to give credit to Gowon's efforts to implement the government policy of the 3-Rs-Reconciliation, (Reintegration) Rehabilitation and Reconstruction. Definitely Gowon must be commended for declaring that there was no victor and no vanquished in the civil war. Biafrans who witnessed the behavior of the 3rd Marine Commandos that eventually stormed the Igbo heartland and brought the war to an end must confirm that there was minimum molestation of the conquered Biafran civilians. And Biafran soldiers having pulled of their army uniform could no more be separated from the 'civilians' There were no reports of violence or atrocities by the victorious Nigerian army as they took over strategic positions around Uli airport and abandoned Biafra military barracks right in Igbo heartland, mostly all around the old Orlu provincial cities. We didn't hear of hunts after Biafra ex-Generals or political officials within Igboland and environs. Within a few days most of the Marine Commandos were replaced by the 'Occupation Army', mostly from the Middle-Belt Region of Nigeria.

Whatever good impressions the 'No victor, No vanquished' declarations made on the psyche of the defeated people, one must equally accept that there were many flaws. As for widely publicized 'Asaba massacre', Gowon was quick those days to distance himself from the atrocities as foreign and local

journalists, as well as some humanitarian bodies were insisting that Gowon should be summoned to the international court in The Hague and be prosecuted for having committed genocide in Biafra, Gowon would not be blamed so much for the war atrocities some of the army commanders committed, as he rightly pointed out in his lecture, that most of the commanders were still young, between the ages of 27 and 30. We have already pointed out the flaws of the implementation of the three Rs, especially 'Reintegration and 'Rehabilitation'. There was little or no 'Re-integration' as Igbos were denied access to their 'abandoned properties', especially in the Rivers State. The three Rs existed more in theory than in practice. There was equally the tragedy of **government take-over-of-mission schools in Biafra.** Punishment of the 'rebels' was also a federal government priority agenda in the economic sector. But it looked like a miracle, when Igbo 'bounce-back' into the mainstream of Nigerian economic sector surprised a lot of Nigerians, as Igbos were left with just with 20 pounds to begin life again. They were able to rebuild their markets, educational institutions and other vital sectors of the economy with absolutely no help from the federal government.

CHAPTER 9

MASS REJECTION OF THE CONQUERED IGBOS AND CRISIS OF IDENTITY IN THE POST-WAR NIGERIA

How much respect do you show Igbos? I am not Igbo. I am proud of my Urhobo. However, as a student of history, I wish to show just what these great people came and come against and yet thrive. *(Ena Ofugara)*

The worst thing that can happen to a man is to deny his root, out of fear, cowardice, and intimidation. When you do that, on the long run, you pay dearly for it, if you are not careful; your genealogy disappears from the face of the earth." *(Uchechukwu Okwukwu)*

IGBO GRIEVANCES AGAINST NIGERIA

On the part of the West – The Yorubas

- Awolowo betrayed Ojukwu and the Igbos.
- Abiola betrayed and distanced himself from the Igbos.
- The Yoruba leaders including the Oba have not been fair to the Igbos in Lagos and the West.

On the part of the South-South region

- Igbos have suffered untold hardship, hate, humiliation, rejection, and dispossession, inflicted by the most intimate brothers and sisters.
- Massive rejection of Igbo identity and mutilation of Igbo names

On the part of Mid-West Igbo kit and kin:

- Igbos have suffered humiliation and insults as former brothers and sisters rejected any further political, social, religious and cultural associations with their kit and kin after the civil war.
- Rejection of Igbo identity and relationships; including sharing borders.

On the part of the Northerners, Hausa-Fulani and Middle-Belt Region

- Marginalization, continued rejection, isolation and persecution of Igbos in the North
- Middle-Belt, like the rest of the North contributed a lot to the Igbo genocide and Biafra defeat in the battlefield.
- Alienation and complete exclusion of Igbos from federal government appointments.

Bird's eye view of 'Igbophobia'

'Phobia' is a persistent, abnormal or irrational fear of a specific thing or people, that compels one to avoid, hate, dislike the feared subject or object. In our case here, the 'subject' is the Igbo race or ethnic group. We have seen this in the expression 'IBO' or "IGBO'. The phobia, dislike or aversion for 'Igbo' is real in Nigeria. A bird's eye-view here is simply a cursory or hasty glance at what transpired between the Igbos and the rest of the other regions or tribes of Nigeria that led to the secessionist moves by the Igbos in the **first Biafran Revolution**. The Biafra Movement is still on course because the issues at the center of the Nigerian crisis are far from being resolved. The situation has continued to deteriorate. Certainly, Igbos have suffered untold hardship in history, short of total annihilation, in the genocidal war against Biafra. The People of the **Middle Belt Region,** General Yakubu Gowon's ethnic group, though predominantly Christian, together with the Yorubas joined the Muslim North in the war of aggression against Biafra. There is no way the bad treatment of Igbos by the various groups of fellow Nigerians, before, during and after the war, can be justified. Nevertheless, the Igbos have continued to unveil their grievances and bad treatments to the federal government and fellow citizens since the end of the civil war.

The Igbo and Yoruba - Historical Perspective of hate and distrust - Awolowo's Capital Sins

(1) Failing to carry out his threat – "If East secedes – the West goes too".
(2) Accepting political office to fight the Igbos alongside Hausa-Fulani oligarchy.
(3) Instituting the policy of federal government, using starvation as instrument of warfare.

(4) Monetary policy of £20 in exchange for any amount of cash in Igbo bank account at the end of the civil war.

Obafemi Awolowo, the Yoruba political stalwart, betrayed the Igbo-Biafran leader, Emeka Odimegwu Ojukwu, and contributed immensely to the conquest, humiliation, and impoverishment of the Igbo. He struck a heavy blow on the relationship that had hitherto held the Igbo and the rest of Nigeria together. The Awolowo deceit and betrayal had almost permanently alienated the Igbo from the Yoruba. Any further experiment in Igbo-Yoruba political alliance would henceforth remain an illusion and a day-dream. The bitterness is deep-rooted and here we need the interventions of some writers and commentators, who throw more light to some historical details in our present investigations.

Why the Young Army Officers Struck

In spite of alarms being raised by concerned Nigerians, Tafawa Balewa refused to declare a state of emergency in the Western Nigeria, simply to keep Akintola as a proxy for Hausa-Fulani interest. That was the main reason Yoruba graduates in the army became the brains behind the coup led by Chukwuma Nzeogwu, who happened to be Igbo. As Wole Soyinka and Obasanjo acknowledged, Nzeogwu's coup was widely accepted by a vast majority of Nigerians across the regional, religious and ethnic divides. But the dissatisfied Hausa-Fulanis who were in the majority in the Nigerian army used their puppets, including **Yakubu Gowon, Theophilus Danjuma** and other officers to overthrow General Aguiyi Ironsi, the installed military head of state. In order to win support of the Yorubas, Gowon readily secured the support of Awolowo in Nigeria's plans to unleash attack and suppression of the Igbo revolt against oppression and subjugation. The Hausa-Fulanis knew Awolowo's fear of the Igbos, the group he presumed that resisted his ambition for power. Gowon therefore quickly made a deal with Awolowo which in effect was that power would rotate between the North and the West (Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba) in the post war Nigeria, if Awolowo could convince the Yorubas to join the North in the war against Biafra. The Nigerian Army was consequently split into two divisions: the northern sector, commanded by Hausa-Fulani and the southern sector by the Yorubas. Prominent Yoruba field commanders featured, including **Benjamin**

Adekunle, and **Olusegun Obasanjo**. Lagos, a city largely built by Igbos and where Igbos invested heavily was ceded to the Yorubas as a state.

Obafemi Awolowo - the 'Machiavellian'

Awolowo was made **Vice Chairman of Federal Executive Council and Finance Minister**. All federal government owned banks in Nigeria at the time which included the Central Bank and First Bank, were under Awolowo and Yoruba management. It was a deal Awolowo could not resist. The man was an unscrupulous ***Machiavellian*** (cunning, devious, crafty, scheming, and unscrupulous person, especially in politics, or in advancing one's career)

Who is 'Machiavelli?' What is 'Machiavellianism?'

Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli (3 May 1469 – 21 June 1527), very familiar to students of Philosophy, Theology and Political Science, was an Italian diplomat, politician, historian, philosopher, humanist, writer, playwright and poet of the Renaissance period. He has often been called **the father of modern political science**. For many years he was a senior official in the Florentine Republic, with responsibilities in diplomatic and military affairs. He also wrote comedies, carnival songs, and poetry. His personal correspondence is renowned by Italian scholars. He was secretary to the Second Chancery of the Republic of Florence from 1498 to 1512, when the Medici were out of power. He wrote his most well-known work ***The Prince (Il Principe)*** in 1513, having been exiled from city affairs.

The word "Machiavellianism", often adopted in writing by young and old philosophers, theologians and politicians, is widely used as a **negative term** to characterize **unscrupulous politicians** of the sort Machiavelli described most famously in *The Prince*. Machiavelli described ***immoral behavior, such as dishonesty and the killing of innocents, as being normal and effective in politics.*** He even seemed to encourage it in some situations. The book gained notoriety due to claims that it **teaches "evil recommendations to tyrants to help them maintain their power".**

The term ***"Machiavellian"*** is therefore, often associated with ***political deceit, deviousness, and realpolitik*** *(politics based on practical and material factors, rather than on theoretical or ethical objectives).* On the other hand, many commentators, such as Baruch Spinoza, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Denis Diderot, have argued that Machiavelli was actually a republican, even when writing *The Prince,* and his writings were an inspiration to Enlightenment proponents of modern democratic political philosophy. In one place, for example, he noted his admiration for the selfless Roman dictator **Cincinnatus** (a Roman Patrician, statesman and military leader, who became a legendary figure of Roman virtues, particularly Roman manliness and civic virtues).

The Awolowo deal - How the Igbos got punished

The Igbos were eventually defeated in the civil war, and Yorubas became champions of nationalism. Awolowo tried to make sure every Igbo man or woman became a destitute and therefore could no more pose any threat to Yoruba supremacy in 'one Nigeria! To achieve his objective of permanent Yoruba supremacy, Awolowo insisted that each amount deposited in the Nigerian bank by any Igbo before the civil war, regardless of the quantity, could only be replaced with a paltry sum of twenty pounds! He instructed Yoruba Permanent Secretaries who took over the Federal Civil service when Igbos left to make sure that Igbo senior civil servants were not reinstated. The Igbos (the 'rebels') should either be retired or dismissed. The same policy was adopted in the armed forces of Nigeria and police. The Igbos were not only made **pariahs** (hated, despised, and rejected people), but also should become destitute financially. Every house and industry in Igbo cities was destroyed during the war. Schools were closed for 3 years and many were razed to the ground. Awolowo masterminded the 'indigenization policy' by which Yorubas bought over all companies in Nigeria using money readily made available to them by the banks under their control. The Igbos were excluded.

The North-West Alliance: Nigeria in deeper crisis

The Yorubas and the Northerners rejoiced and relaxed and complaisantly asked: "How could Igbos ever rear their ugly heads up again"? Sure, if that had happened to Yorubas or any other

ethnic group, that would be their end. But as Awolowo rightly feared, it happened to be Ndigbo! The shooting war ended about 50 years ago and the Igbo spirit has not been extinguished. Igbos are still everywhere. They have survived all policy shenanigans (mischievous, treacherous, and devious tricks) enacted by Yoruba masterminds and executed by their Hausa-Fulani allies. In frustration, they have realized that Igbos can't easily be beaten. One can imagine their frustration! There is no doubt that the Federal government policy has made them the tycoons of oil and gas trade, ministers in telecommunications, insurance and manufacturing companies. The Hausa-Fulani leaders too, gave Nigeria to Obasanjo for 8 years in keeping faith with their alliance! Lately **Bola Tinubu** appeared, struggling to capture the 'Awolowo mantle' by trying to form an ethno-politico-religious alliance (similar to that with Akintola), to ensure power keeps rotating between Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani. What is the position of the Igbos in a united Nigeria?

The Igbo and MKO Abiola!

Another Yoruba betrayal, after Awolowo grand show of hate for the Igbos, before, during and after the civil war was accomplished by MKO Abiola. Had Abiola and his tribesmen taken the expected action, perhaps the Igbos would have been vindicated. Another struggle for Biafra under Uwazurike or Nnamdi Kanu would not have been necessary! Many Nigerians, together with Igbos saw the botched transition to civilian rule, the annulment of the democratic election of 1993, (return to civilian rule), by Babangida as another opportunity for the Yorubas, then under the leadership of MKO Abiola to vindicate the Igbos in the struggle for self-determination! Another missed opportunity to break up Nigeria failed! Now, not Awolowo, but another Yoruba son had not lived up to expectations, and Igbos were disappointed and felt deeply betrayed.

In **1989, Babangida** legalized the formation of political parties, and after a census was carried out in November 1991, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) announced on 24 January 1992 that both legislative elections to a bicameral National Assembly and a presidential election would be held later that year. A process of voting was adopted, referred to as Option A-4. This process advocated that any candidate needed to pass through adoption from the local level to any height of governance. Babangida had banned all political parties and

formed two political parties himself, namely the **SDP** (Social Democratic Party) and **NRC** (National Republican Convention) and urged all Nigerians to join either of the two parties. The two-party state had been a recommendation of the 17-member Political Bureau. Government lavished billions of naira in the construction of the two party headquarters or secretariats in each local government areas of the nation. It was a useless venture, an 'investment' that set the clock many years back for Nigeria's recovery from the evils of military dictatorship and slavery.

The legislative elections went ahead as planned, with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) winning majorities in both houses of National Assembly, but on 7 August 1992, the INEC annulled the first round of presidential primaries, alleging widespread 'irregularities'. On January 4, 1993, Babangida announced a National Defense and Security Council (NDSC), of which he was president, while in April 1993, the SDP nominated MKO Abiola as its presidential candidate, with the National Republican Convention (NRC) choosing **Bashir Tofa** to run for the same position. On **12 June 1993,** a presidential election was finally held, but no results were announced because Babangida annulled the elections. It was however announced in some states that Abiola had in fact won 19 of the 30 states and therefore should become the president.

Rather than allow announcement of the results to proceed, Babangida had decided to annul the election. He then issued a decree banning the presidential candidates of both the NRC and the SDP from running in new presidential elections that he planned to hold 'in the 'interest of the country'. Widespread acts of civil disobedience began, particularly in the south-west region from which Abiola hailed, resulting in killings, mostly of people from the south-eastern parts of the country. Was that not a similar political scenario and turmoil that began in Yorubaland in **1966 t**hat brought the military intervention and the end of the life span of the first republic? This time the players were not Tafawa Balewa and Akintola on one side and Awolowo and tribal Yoruba militias on the other. It was the flamboyant Yoruba politician MKO Abiola and his tribesmen on one side and Babangida and his military boys on the other side of the political spectrum! What another opportunity a **Yoruba Oduduwa-land** missed! Another lost opportunity for the resurgence of New Biafra! But Abiola hadn't the heart of Ojukwu or that of the Igbos!

Once again the Igbos of the South-East were caught up in the ensuing imbroglio of political uncertainty in Nigeria. Igbos who were settling down after the civil war in the 'rest parts of Nigeria' were forced to flee Lagos and most other parts of the disturbed regions. Once again Igbos became refugees in what was called **'Oso Abiola'** (Abiola Flight)! Flight to Egypt or to where again? However, on 6 July 1993, the NDSC issued an ultimatum to the SDP and NRC to either join an interim government to be headed by **Ernest Shonekan,** or face yet another round of elections, with Babangida then announcing that the interim government would be inaugurated on 27 August 1993. On 26 August, amidst a new round of strikes and protests that brought all economic activities in the country to a halt, Babangida announced that he was stepping aside as head of the military regime, and handed over the reins of government to Ernest Shonekan. Within three months of the handover, General **Sani Abacha** seized control of the government, while Babangida was on a visit to Egypt. Was it how they planned another coup? Nigeria fell into another dark ditch, a more frustrating period of uncertainties, misrule, massive looting of public funds, and anarchy.

The Igbo and Yoruba contentious shifting alliances

Reminiscences of Yoruba-Igbo accusations and counter-accusations of betrayal, and distrust are easy to come by. The younger generation of both major tribes and ethnic groups in Nigerian federation may find old stories of political encounters between Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikiwe camps on the social media as reported by old Nigerian newspapers. But one such story told about a particular event that many easily remember is the reported and repeated story of Awolowo's betrayal of Ojukwu and Biafra. If the Yoruba politicians after Awolowo would deny that allegation, namely that Awolowo did back out at the last minute to declare a **Republic of Oduduwa,** as Ojukwu did declare **Biafra,** what explanations have they for the magnitude of punishment, which Awolowo's role and decisions as Vice-President of Gowon's government and the finance minister did inflict on Igbos and their Biafra? Why did Awolowo, who had fought the North so fiercely than any other Nigerian politician decide at last to join forces with the Hausa-Fulani cabal to decimate the Igbo race from the face of the earth? Why was Awolowo still so hard on the Igbos who survived the

war, that as result of his decision to render the Igbos absolutely bankrupt, only **20 pounds** could be given to any Igbo in exchange for thousands and even millions of pounds in his bank account before the Nigeria-Biafra war?

The Tunes have not changed

I think we are ready now to share with our readers the views of some of our friends who sympathize with the Igbos in their plight especially since the end of the civil war. I chose this title cautiously, knowing very well that the grievances, bitterness and grudges in the hearts of the post-war Igbos towards the **"Rest of Nigerians"** are equally real and deep-rooted. Fortunately the Igbos are more 'forgiving' than the rest of the ethnic groups. But it doesn't seem that the rest of Nigerians are ready to let go the past prejudices! Being forced back into Nigerian Federation, after the loss of Biafra, to 'build a nation where truth, peace, justice and unity' will abound became a bitter pill to swallow.

Pre-war Igbo grievances against Nigeria are not different from the present. An Igbo aphorism expresses the reality and seriousness of the situation: **"Ihe n'ebe nu n'ebekwa"** (The sound of the old music has not changed). The crying bird is still singing that same old tune, that same melody!) In short, not much has changed. The ugly situation remains virtually the same! The 'pre-war' Igbo grievances against Nigerian government include all the events and actions of the Northerners that clearly showed up in systematic attempts at the annihilation of Igbo ethnic stock. The Northern ruling class, the Hausa-Fulani Cabal is not relenting in their efforts to enslave or eject the Igbo nation from Nigeria. In thought, word and deed, it seems the past administrations may not be different from the present. The scenario is very scary! In no way has the 'No victor', no vanquished' post-war policy seen the light of the day.

"Yoruba Igbophobia" – "How sad for the Yoruba nation!" (By Lawal Ade Adeyemi)

"How sad for the Yoruba nation", by Lawal Ade Adeyemi, is a stunning indictment of Yoruba Igbophobia, a strong disapproval of Yoruba unfriendly attitude towards Igbos, which we have continued to expose in all our investigations? Instead of embracing Igbos in Yorubaland, especially Lagos, Igbos have been suffering untold 'discrimination', hate, 'racism'

'rejection and 'abuses' in the hands of the Yorubas right from Awolowo times. Though not all Yorubas hate Igbos; in fact many love and admire the Igbos ingenuity, hard work and patriotism. Lawal Ade Adeyemi must be honored for his courage and boldness to blame his people, the Yorubas for their present backwardness, result of their inability to compete with the Igbos in their midst; equally, their main reason for their Igbophobia. Lawal's write-up is a good material for reflection;, surely for his Yoruba people. At the same time it is a "pass mark' for the Igbo race. Igbos should not as a result of Igbophobia and rejection by some of the other ethnic groups in Nigeria stop their hard work. But stop! Igbos may never stop to read the 'signs of the time', no matter how 'progressive' they may claim to be, there is need for the Igbos, home and in the Diaspora to watch, to look behind and ask themselves a lot of questions. Whatever the case may be Lawal has raised a lot of questions, which his country men and women must answer:

"Did the **Igbos** put guns on anybody's head before buying up Alaba, Ajegunle, isolo and Oshodi in Lagos?" "Did they use juju before the Ibadan surrendered Iwo Road to them?" "And what were we looking at before the **Igbos** took over Isida and Adeti in Ilesa?" "Where were the YORUBAS when the **Igbos** thrived and built 90% of the Hotels in Abuja. Was there a law that excluded the YORUBAS from selling building materials? The building materials market in Abuja is 90 % **Igbo** owned.

"What is going on?" Lawal asks his people"

"So the more we point one finger at the **Igbos**, the more we have the other four fingers pointing at our laziness and lack of initiative as a society. The **Yorubas** should have been better with all our education, but we may be worse than the **Fulanis** who just roam around the bush."Why? It is because we lack the entrepreneurship spirit. We just want salaries from doing 8 am to 5 pm job. We proceed in foolishness and we persist in hoping to reap plenty without sowing hard. **The Igbos are different, hence we are now jealous and envious."** We love wasteful parties and Aso Ebi. Just a little business without even making any profit yet, we usually call musicians to spray money like confetti". "Where are all the Board Members of Ebenezer Obey today? Where is lawyer Omoyinmi and Lanre Badmus? Where is Oroki Social Club of Osogbo? Where is Felates of Ilesa and the

likes whose trade mark was to bring Sunny Ade to Ilesa every Xmas, to waste all income gathered for the year?" "The Yoruba society wasted their leading lights on excessive consumption and wasteful attitudes. We wasted our capital on frivolous social gatherings."

Where have the Yorubas invested?

"We took religion to ridiculous levels, such that the wealthiest pastors and churches are now Yorubas. But all the wealth extracted by the churches from the **Yoruba nation** is also merely flaunted to show whose God is the most miraculous. So we have become paupers and the destitute, as the Yoruba nation cannot now pay salaries. Pensions are owed for years. Tell me, is Osun State filled with human beings or goats to have tolerated Aregbesola, when they rejected Akande. Say it loud, is the Constituted Authority of Ibadan sane to just bring about 21 Obas from nowhere to receive salaries, where there is no money to reopen Ladoja Akintola University? Are the Ondos so wise to have allowed Mimiko to devastate their terrain as to be now saddled with 12 months salary arrears? What of Ekiti with rabble rousing Fayose and the intellectually arrogant Fayemi?"

Igbos invest! Whither the Oduduwa Republic?

"But the **Igbos are hard workers**. Let us not continue to deceive ourselves. Twenty (20) of their young boys can live in the shop from where they sell goods. There is no place too dirty or remote for them to hibernate and incubate their ideas. **Give them 5 years, you will see them buy and take over all shops and lands.** True, some of them are criminals, but majority of the Igbo youths build and build physical structures always, while the **Yorubas** are content with looking for salaried jobs, so that they can have siesta in the afternoons and then attend parties on Saturdays. Then spend Sundays in church wishing and praying for divine miracles. How foolish! As the **Igbo youths** are meeting and strategizing on Sundays, so that they can gather money and buy the houses and lands owned by our Yoruba fathers, the **Yorubas youths** are busy in churches on Sundays praying for miracles. Whether we like it or not, Obokungbusi Town Hall will soon be on concessional PPP sale. The **Igbos** will buy it. The proceeds will be used to pay backlog of salaries owed to impoverished Ijeshas. It will come willy-nilly

(whether one likes it or not). It will happen even in a declared **Oduduwa Republic**. After all, the Chinese**, the Lebanese and the South Africans** are buying us out with reckless abandon. See how ShopRite is buying up everywhere. I heard that they bought Owena Motel estate in Akure. How come we did not sell it to the **Igbos?"**

Stop the hate

"We shall continue to **grumble and hate the Igbos until eternity**. Unless we spy on them, **copy** their ways and **imbibe** their 'can do' attitude. The Yoruba nation and society have been pauperized and made destitute. In desperation, we shall soon start to behave like the *Almajiris in the North*. In grinding poverty and out of jealousy, the Almajiris of the North regularly **loot Igbo shops** and businesses. Very soon **Yoruba** urchins will start looting too to show that they **hate the Igbos.** Even some of us here will defend it to show our hatred for the **Igbos**; whereas, the looting is as a result of hunger and uselessness of our society. *("How sad for the Yoruba Nation!" Reported By 'The Republican News'.)*

"For those who don't appreciate where Igbos were coming from" (By Ena Ofugara)

It was a pathetic opening statement by Ena Ofugara: ***"How much respect do you show Igbos?*** I am not Igbo. I am proud of my **Urhobo.** However, as a student of history, I wish to show just what these great people came and come against and yet thrive" Post-War Igbo Frustrations are many to recount. As the Igbo rejection and mistreatment continued to rage, there are not a few 'sympathizers and honest Nigerians of non-Igbo extraction that rose in condemnation of the tragedy. A non-Igbo 'sympathizer, an Urhobo, assesses the 'Igbo post-war tragedy". **Ena Ofugara** supplies important missing points in the post-war Nigeria history records: **"For those who don't appreciate where Igbos were coming from".** The Post-War mistreatment of the Igbo was really hurting! Listen to Ena Ofugara: "How much respect do you show Igbos? I am not Igbo. I am proud of my Urhobo. However, as a student of history, I wish to show just what these great people came and come against and yet thrive.

Just to mention a few areas where the Igbos have been mistreated, for our present author the stories of injustice against the Igbo including the genocide are too many too many to rehearse. He could however not fail to remind people how the banks gave people of other tribes, predominantly Hausas and Yorubas loans to buy up companies owned by foreigners. Now imagine the Federal government forced Chevron to sell 51 percent of its shares and that Access Bank will give you loans to buy the shares. How rich will you be in a year? 5 Years? That is how many Yorubas and Hausas got to own UAC, all those Dunlop, Leventis, Cadbury etc. Now while this was ongoing, Awolowo/Gowon told the Nigerian banks to give TOPS twenty naira (pounds) to any Igbo man that had money in the bank before the war. That is, if you had 5 naira before the war, you will be given the 5 naira. But if you had one million naira, you get just twenty naira in full fulfillment of the banks duty to give you your money. Ask yourselves, why would the banks give Igbos only twenty naira? Did the banks collapse? So why pay less than you were given?

So while the banks were giving loans to Hausa and Yorubas to buy Oyibo companies, they did not build, Igbos were being cheated out of their rightful moneys. Now note also that these people lost Houses and business across the land. It is safe to say that as at 1970/71, the richest Igbo had 20 naira that may be the equivalent of maybe one million naira. Let us look at how Dangote made his money. He**, Dangote** (a great man and pride to Nigeria) had an uncle called Dantata who owned huge chunks of the groundnut pyramids of the 50's and 60's. He gave **Dangote** a loan and Dangote paid it back in a record time. An applaus!! Then add that Dangote has had his "brothers" in government, from Shagari, Buhari, IBB, Abacha, Abdulsalami to Yar'Adua.

When they now agreed to democracy, he was rich enough to have funded Obasanjo and so government policies, be it monopoly afforded him for rice, sugar flour and of course a large share of subsidy etc ensures he is the wealthiest Nigerian. Note that many had same opportunity but did not use it. We kowtow to Dangote's investment capabilities. However, for the Igbo man, where will he see an uncle that will loan him money? The richest man in their family has how much as at then? So while **Fani Kayode** can inherit property of his father and grandfather and great grandfather, a Chidi Kalu cannot inherit anything from his grandfather who had business in Kano or even

Port Harcourt. Neighbors have made his dad's storey building theirs, and even someone as educated as **Ken Saro-Wiwa** lived in an Igbo war emigrant house as his. (a sore point of the Niger Delta and Igbo Unity). WAEC building was Ojukwu's dad's building and like that building, thousands and the lands with it....lands worth billions today were taken from Igbos and each and every Igbo had tops 20 naira, destroyed homeland, stolen and destroyed wealth away from the East. Also his brother is never president that will give him oil block or fuel lifting. Of 33, only one Igbo man owned one block, and that materialized because he was in Obasanjo good graces.

The Astonishing Igbo Bounce Back!

Yet look how proud they stand today! Look what they have achieved for themselves; First general wealth tops top second generation! From being unable to send their first sons to school so he could help look after the shop, to producing first class brains in all departments of modern learning. So today, as you accuse Igbos of wanting their Biafra or of Baby Factory, or liking money and ready to do anything for money, remember that just forty years ago, while the banks were dashing your uncles loans to buy all the companies of Nigeria, it stole from the Igbos. Know that appointments have not favored them. Note that they remain persecuted and many speak such ill and hate towards a people forced by need to survive to be extra-aggressive towards their sustenance. Maybe if you took their **history** into consideration, you will not be so critical of them, but instead say "what a resilient people!" To God be the glory.

Some Igbos denied 'Igbo Identify!'

The first Biafra revolution was crushed truly and the aftermath and the ugly consequences of loss and humiliation had been unbearable and in fact quite embarrassing, as Igbos everywhere were openly being rejected by their former 'kit and kin'. Not only that Igbos were being seen as second class citizens in a once-again United Nigeria, they were made to look like like **'lepers'** whose public presence anywhere in Nigeria was usually not tolerated, was ignored or simply not recognized. The simple reason for the action of the present leaders was the calumnious propaganda of 'liberation from so-called "Igbo dominance". Had

Igbos really been a 'torn in the flesh' of the 'newly liberated regions of the former South-Eastern Nigeria'? Perhaps not!

Most Igbos however were not upset, seeing those actions of their brothers and sisters as one of the aftermaths, aftereffects of the unpleasant civil war. But most embarrassing and truly funny was people of Igbo origin or ethnic groups denying their **identity** simply to ally with triumphant federal government and the 'rest of Nigeria' to continue with the marginalization of a conquered 'rebels' of Igbo extraction who could have been exterminated, for attempting to break up Nigeria! But behold the prompt intervention of some groups of Human Right Activists and world leaders, who had witnessed the 3-year Nigeria-Biafra war, a genocide, pogrom waged by Nigeria and fully supported by the British colonial masters!

Why should people deny their ethnic origins or refuse to identify with Igbos after the civil war? Could their actions be based simply on selfish interest and political and economic gains? Perhaps their actions could find roots in long deep-rooted hate, petty jealousies, and prejudices. There was need to trace the roots. Why should an Igbo man, with completely Igbo 'first', 'middle' and 'last/surnames' names, and as well speaking perfect Igbo language as his primary language, question his identity as an Igbo? According to generally accepted definition and local understanding, "an ethnic group or ethnicity is a category of people who identify with each other based on **common language, ancestral, social, cultural, or national experiences.** Unlike most other social groups, ethnicity is primarily an inherited status. Membership of an ethnic group tends to be defined by a shared cultural heritage, ancestry, origin myth, history, homeland, language and/or dialect, symbolic systems such as religion, mythology and ritual, cuisine, dressing style, art, and physical appearance.

There is no argument about the fact that Nigeria has many ethnic groups or tribes. Some Nigerian historians put the number of such groups at 370. Some, in summary say Nigeria is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups and in Elementary School Civic- Education classes, Nigerian children have learnt that major, most populous and politically influential tribes or ethnic groups are the following:: Hausa and the Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 20%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%,Tiv 2.5%. And without going into details of actual figures or percentages, Nigerian school children have recognized the three major tribes as Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. For a long

period of time, most Southerners had grouped the whole Northern Nigeria into one ethnic group and referred to them as 'Hausa Moslems'. That there are small minorities of Christian or traditional religionist groups in the 'Middle Belt Regions of Nigeria, including the so-called Southern Kaduna Christian groups was a later identification.

Again that the Yoruba tribe comes second in population after Hausa-Fulani and Igbo third has been disputed by Igbo people. Possibly no reliable census figures based on tribal identities could resolve this problem, because like most election figures in Nigeria's political history most census figures, old and new, organized by the British colonial masters or Nigerian federal government had been 'rigged'. But the Igbos claim that they come second after Hausa-Fulani in population may become clear also from the **Igbo- Biafra** perspective. Looking at the map of old Biafra territory, it becomes clear to the "Rest of Nigerians", what the **Biafra Movement** was meant to achieve, perhaps, something like the old Eastern Nigeria! Look at the Map of Biafra and its 25 Provinces: (1) Agbor (2) Asaba (3) Aba (4) Owerri (5) Umuahia (6) Orlu (7) Ikot-ekpene (8) Uyo (9) Eket (10) Ogoja (11) Calabar (12) Enugu (13) Oji-River (14) Awka (15) Onitsha (16) Nnewi (17) Okigwe (18) Annang (19) Abakaliki (20) Yenegoa (21) Warri (22) Ahoada (23) Ugheli (24) Degema (25) Port-Harcourt.

As for Igbo leaders, the **old Eastern Nigeria**, although dominated by the Igbos was Igbo-Biafra territory. In civil service and political alignments the whole South-East had enjoyed undisrupted long cordial relationship with their Igbo partners. But the federal government's action in the creation of 12-states to replace the old four regions was primarily to destabilize the Igbo-Biafran agenda. The assignment of their own states to their so-called 'minority groups' in the South-Eastern Nigeria worked for both the federal government and the 'minority groups' **(Rivers, Balyesa, Cross River, Akwa-Ibom)**. It was type of 'construction', an agenda, a 'token' to allay, eliminate fears and concerns of long held 'Igbo domination' in 'all sectors of life' even in the context of One Nigeria. It was an offer minority groups could not forfeit! Hence their rejection of Igbo in most areas of the economy, including ethnic and cultural ties and identities! But reality together with sense of that rejection has been questioned by both Igbos themselves and fellow Igbos of Mid-Western and South-South states and constitutes an interesting part of our investigation, History of Biafra.

A Rejection by Igbo kit and kin of the South-South

On their own side, the so-called South-South region of the present Nigeria can no longer constitute a trustworthy ally of the Igbo. Stories of betrayal, persecution and hate that emanated from Rivers people and local communities of these areas formerly and largely populated by the Igbo, developed by the Igbo, even before the so-called amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria were devastating. Like the Yorubas, it must be acknowledged that the hateful activities of the South-South region of Nigeria during and after the war contributed to the alienation of the Igbos and almost finally broke the links with these former brothers and sisters, cousins and nephews. The Igbo brothers and sisters of the South-South sought in every way to totally severe links with their kits and kin of Igbo-Biafra blood. Not only cultural and political affinities were virtually severed, in Church matters a lot of damage was done, as Church leaders in this part of the country declared their pre-war Igbo counterparts *"persona-non-grata"* . The amount of hate generated has been enormous and may take long to erase.

Not only that the former Igbo allies and natives or claimed 'owners of the land' declared Igbo property 'abandoned', they confiscated Igbo possessions and properties thus rendering millions of Igbo poor, dispossessed and miserable. Not only that; the severance of the only possible link or ground for association was done in the *"Operation mutilate Igbo names"*. For Igbo people there is something in name. The unique identity of Igbo is in the name. To make sure that culturally and linguistically and religiously Igbo presence in the South-South and Rivers areas of Nigeria was completely erased, a linguistic conspiracy was invented whereby a simple insertion of the letter 'r' before or within an Igbo common or personal name, that of a town, village or street tells the rest of the story, a complete rejection of everything Igbo in that region of Nigeria. The former Igbo names were mutilated to confirm total rejection and even persecution of the core Igbos of South-East Nigeria.

"Operation mutilate Igbo names!" – There is something in (Igbo) name!

- **Obigbo** (the heart or center of Igbo habitation), became **Oyirgbo.**

- **Umuibekwe**,(the children or **Ibekwe** clan), became **Rumibekwe**
- **Omanelu,** turned to **Omerelu**
- **Igirinta,** became **Igwuruta**
- **Diobu,** the main city at Port Harcourt suburb however retained its old name **Diobu**
- **Iriebe** (big framing region at the outskirts of PH retained its old name **Iriebe**

Many more examples abound. Some common Igbo proper names changed their spelling structure, simply to camouflage their Igbo identities and origins: The common Igbo name for 'son' or 'daughter' – **Nwa,** was mutilated to read **Wa** (a meaningless entity). '**Nwachukwu'** must change to '**Wachuku'; 'Nwanodi', to 'Wanodi'** '**Onyeso'** now is **Oyiso!'** There are numerous examples of such changes in names, invented simply to promote hate and aversion for Igbo and what they stand for in 'the rest of Nigeria!'

"Abandoned Properties" Saga

The issue of "abandoned properties" constitutes longer disgusting stories available in records of court litigations, including Supreme Court enquiries, decisions and declarations. Nigerian government at a stage established various 'Commissions of Enquiries" to look into allegations of false claims by natives, who had decided to steal, and grab Igbo possessions. The Igbo owners had fled the war zones to safer areas of Igboland during the course of the Nigeria-Biafra war. At the end of the war, the natives who denied Igbo landlords and families entry into South-South regions, especially Port Harcourt had taken over houses, estates, lands and possessions belonging to the Igbos and declared them 'abandoned'. It took time and great resources for Igbos to recover some of their properties and re-settle lawfully in the land of their birth or lands they bought with their money and settled on them for many years.

Igbo Men of God disowned by former compatriots

On the religious sector, persecution and rejection of Igbo-Biafran religious leaders, including Catholic bishops, priests and men and women religious after the war was quite shocking,

embarrassing, shameful, and cruel. Most of the stories are on records as former Bishops, priests and religious men and women, formerly carrying out their mission apostolate in the South-South regions were relocated to South-Eastern dioceses and parishes, as hate and rejection of their services intensified. Majority of priests, bishops, religious men and women working in the 'rest of Nigeria', including South-West and South-South, up till date, are Igbos. But they were forced to relocate to the South-East states, their own 'homes'. Stories of rejection and expulsion of Igbo bishops and priests from non-Igbo-speaking regions of Nigeria are too many to recount. It was only with passage of time and as a result of massive vacuums created by Igbo absence in church circles in these regions that solutions were sought to stop the embarrassment to the universal church.

Having lost the war and thoroughly worn out by litigations in reclaiming their lands and properties, Igbo-Biafrans were never violent or aggressive, but never gave up in efforts to see justice done to their grievances. Where no justice or peace was in sight, the younger generation of Igbo youths would start a struggle to regain their status and rightful position in a "United Nigeria". But where such is not forth coming they would begin again the agitation for a New Biafra, some, confronted by Nigerian police and army, might resort to stone-throwing, like the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Israel.

Rejection by Mid-West Igbos

That may be the most painful of all! The former Mid-West Nigeria, or Bendel, the present states of Edo and Delta, with center at the old Benin City had been carved out of the old Western region to settle peacefully the political crisis of the old West. The Nigerian political map before the civil war looked like the following: Eastern Region, with the capital at Enugu, Western Region, with the capital at Ibadan, the Northern Region, with the capital at Kaduna and the Mid-West, with the capital at Benin City. The Mid-West was dominated by the Igbos, referred to as 'Mid-Western Igbos'. It was not a surprise therefore that the Secessionist Biafra found very friendly allies with the Mid-west region which, following the Biafra secessionist spirit also declared secession from the rest of Nigeria and took the name **Independent Republic of Benin**. From the city of Benin, the new capital of the Republic of Benin, Biafran forces were able to launch fierce attacks against the federal forces, breaking through

federal defenses in that sector of the war. In a few weeks if not days Biafran forces were on their march to Lagos, having overrun cities like **Ore, Okitipupa, Owo** and other areas large and small towns and villages in Western Nigeria. Though unlike Biafra, the new Republic had short life span as massive military sabotage turned the events of the civil war to the advantage of the Nigerian military forces aided by Britain and the west. The post war events in the Mid-west region were similar to those of the South-South as the Igbos, wherever they were found in Nigeria became victims of untold hate, atrocities and rejection.

In many other areas of Mid-Western Nigeria where the presence of Igbo people had for long, before the British showed up, brought civilization and development, the resentment of **Igbo** and anything associated with the race became a permanent feature of rejection. The expression was written everywhere **"Igbo and the rest of Nigeria."** Well-known traditional rulers, athletes, musicians, politicians and even men of God embarrassingly, openly and shamefully tried to deny their Igbo roots. How can **Ikenna Okonkwo**, (not true name), a popular Igbo soccer star from Igbo speaking region of **Edo State** deny his Igbo roots? What is really distasteful about the Igbo? What is offensive about the name? **Igbo and the rest of Nigeria!** But come what may, the strong Igbo presence can never be denied in this region of Nigeria today. The influential political and entrepreneurial juggernauts did not fail to make Asaba (predominantly Igbo populated city) the capital or headquarters of their new state. But still in complete rejection of their kit and kin over the Niger-Bridge (Onitsha-Igbo), they voted in a referendum not to include Onitsha-Igbo in their new state, Edo!

The Igboland (of Nigeria), now physically, economically, socially and possibly politically limited to or squeezed into the dejected 'Biafra Territory', the area that can still be designated as the 'Igbo Heartland' of the present **Anambra, Imo, Abia, Enugu and Ebonyi states** became a sort of desolate land and people that must look for new ways of survival. Realistically any further or new quest for Biafra may no more include all the areas or territories formerly referred to as Eastern Region of Nigeria. The new map of Nigeria has been re-drawn, in the structure of state or possible 'non-federal' system of co-existence. The Igbo nation has shrunk to abysmal level, which was the real intention of the federal government, namely to cut the wings and tail of the former Igbo giant. If the Igbo will engage in any further

'rebellion', 'secession', or self-determination, they may no more reckon with the support of their former brothers and neighbors!

A prominent Mid-West Igbo elder, **Obi Modestus Emeka Nwaka**, a prince of Ibusa and president Ohaneze Ndigbo, Delta State, also executive member of Anioma State Movement told his people denying **Igbo identity** in clear terms calling the blunder of Igbo rejection by some of their people a "Political Suicide" ***(In Biafra Africa Died, op. cit.)*** He asserted "Anioma People cannot deny being Igbo. We will be irrelevant politically if we do". He went on to lecture his dissident people on the identity of Igbos of the West Niger: "Chief Mike Okwechime, the national president of Izu Anioma earlier has told a local publication, quote; "We may speak a dialect of Igbo but we are not culturally and socially Igbos by Ohaneze's definition." In response Obi Nwaka had the following in response:

"This is nothing but falsehood and a damaging betrayal of our Igbo brothers from South-East who found our son His Excellency Ambassador Raph Uwechue worthy to head the very Ohaneze which he tried to ridicule. That will tell you that what Chief (Col.) Mike Nduka Okwuechime (Rtd) said is absolute fallacy of what Ohaneze stands for. I intentionally pronounced his names in full in order to show you that he is totally and entirely an Igbo. It is a pity that Okwuechime and his likes are allowing themselves to be used to subvert the Ohaneze and what the Igbo nation stands for in all ramifications. This unfortunate behavior is unexpected of a man of his age and caliber. For us to deny our Igboness is to stab our brothers across the river on the back, knowing fully well that they had to endure a 30 months of near hellish suffering as a result of the revolutionary tendency of one of our own, **Col. Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu.** I am not trying to bring back the sad historical moment or playing on emotion to score a cheap political point. But, I think it's wise and necessary to reflect on what transpired before, during and after the Nigerian civil war, in order to disclose the unity of purpose of Igbo people worldwide." **Obi Nwaka continued:**

"Our Igbo origin has never been in doubt before and after the civil war. Anioma people were known as Mid-western Igbos before and after the Amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914. And in 1939, the Obi of Agbor, Obi of Idumuje-Ugboko and the Obi of Aboh, for themselves and the entire Western Igbo people, petitioned the Colonial Administration for carving out the Western Igbos from their Kit and Kin East of the Niger. Consequently, in 1956, Western Igbo leaders organized the

AMA1 conferences where it was resolved that the answer to the political problems of the Western Igbos was to create a West Niger Igbo State with the Headquarters at **Alidinma.** The agitation for the creation of the West Niger Igbo State assumed the name **Anioma** after the civil war". **He continued:** "It is pertinent at this point to look back and critically outline the roles of the Delta Igbos during the most critical period in the life and history of our brothers across the Niger. A significant officers and men of Mid-western origin, Delta-Igbos fought on the side of the Biafran Army. Col. Mike Ndukwe Okweuechime was the Chief of Linguistics, Defence headquarters, Biafran Army till the end of the civil war on January 12, 1970. Navy Commander Frank Anukwu from Ika was in charge of Biafran Navy till the end of the war. Brigadier Nwawo from Aniocha North was General Officer who commanded 4th Command (Special) Division of Biafran Army. **Col. Joe Achuzie** from Oshimili South was General Officer Commanding the 16th division."

"Late Col. B.S.A. Nwajei from Oshimili North was at a time, the Commander 14th division. Col. Ochei from Oshimili South was Commandant of School of Infantry Biafran Army. Col. Morah and Col. Henry Igboba from Aniocha North and Oshimili North respectively fought gallantly for the survival of Igbo people during the war. Late **Major Albert Okonkwo** from Oshimili North was the **Administrator of the defunct Republic of Benin.** Mr. George Nwanze from Oshimili North was the secretary to Odumegwu Ojukwu, Head of State defunct Republic of Biafra, to mention but a few. It is important to mention that the above top military Officers and highly respected men of substance from the then Midwestern region, did not fight as mercenaries. I want to state that as a matter of historical fact, I too fought gallantly on the side of Biafra. In fact, I came back from my studies overseas and was confronted with the war, as Igbo people were being slaughtered all across the North, we had to run from Jos to Ibusa where I joined force with the Biafran Army. Most importantly, it should not be forgotten that late **Chukwuma Nzeogwu** of Okpanam in Oshimili North died at **Oboleke** fighting on the side of Biafran Army. It is paramount to mention that late Col. Okonweze from Asaba was killed at Abeokuta during the counter Coup of July 29, 1966. Late Col. Henry Igboba from Ibusa suffered the same fate in Benin City in 1967. Late Mr. Ogwude from Ogwashiuku, a Parmanent Secretary was killed in Benin City the same 1967. The Benin City, Sapele Warri, Isheagu, Ogwashiuku and Ogbeke-Asaba

massacres, to mention but a few, were reprisals against Ndigbo on both sides of the Niger. Ndigbo east and west of the Niger shared a common fate during the Civil War as a direct consequence of the January 1966 Military Coup which was **purportedly described as Igbo Coup."**

"The truth is that Ohaneze Ndigbo and the World Igbo Assembly (WIA) have created solid sense of belonging everywhere Igbo people reside. To buttress this fact, the brotherly relationship between Igbo South-East and Anioma people is based on mutual love and respect manifesting in the election of Late Ogbueshi Dr. J.B. Azinge of Asaba as Deputy president General of Ohaneze Ndigbo before the tenure of **Col. Joe Achuzia as** Secretary General. The incumbent President General of Ohaneze Ndigbo is his Excellency Ambassador Raph Uwaechue of Ogwashi-Uka in Aniocha South of Delta State. As it stands now what is the most important or if I may ask critical support the delta Igbo people need from their brothers across the Niger? Very good! Very good question! I wanted to make the appeal even if you did not come up with the question. We want our brothers to see reason why they should come together to support Anioma State as the Sixth State to be carved out for the Igbo nation. Justice equity and fair-play demands this, the reason being in a memorandum signed by Chief Sam O. Mbakwe, Chief C.C. Onoh, Dr. Okigbo, Chief S.G. Ikoku to mention among others, that was forwarded to the then President and Commander-in-Chief, President Ibrahim Babangida and to all members of Armed forces Ruling Council, as was published (bring out document to quote date and paper) on Daily Times of Wednesday, April 17, 1991, on page 17. These great Igbo leaders after many years of Deliberation and consultation all across Igbo land jointly requested for the creation of Enugu or Wawa state from Anambra, Abia out of the old Imo and Anioma from old Bendel State. It is on record that Enugu and Abia has sealed through, so as you can see justice equity and fair-play demands that the next state to be carved out for Ndigbo should be Anioma State.

Igbo and the neighbors of South-South (1)

As most of the 'rest of Nigeria' disowned, rejected, denounced the Igbo of the post-war Biafra, it is consoling to put it down on records that the Igbo former compatriots and neighbors, now part of the so-called South-South region of Nigeria, and formerly

referred to as **Calabar, Efiks, Annang and Ibibios** acknowledge the good relationship they enjoyed with Igbos during the old Southern Nigerian regional administration. Prominent sons and daughters of the Southern tribes of Nigeria played prominent roles in the then Igbo "dominated" **Eastern Nigeria**, which included the present **Rivers and Delta states**. Some of these neighbors, before, during and after the Biafra war, which most of them never witnessed, have seen the Igbos (or at least been told), as great 'separatists', 'agitators', 'tribalists', 'discriminators', 'power-drunk' and 'persecutors of minority groups' among them.

While it was clear that the creation of the Mid-West region from the old Western Nigeria was as a result of protests against the domination of the Yorubas, the majority tribe over the minorities, the Binis, Edos and Igbos of that region; there were no complaints of discrimination and suppression in Eastern regional administration. Most of us even as young boys and students those days recall greats names in Eastern regional government administration like 'Akpan', 'Nsikak', 'Akpabio', 'Umorem', Asuquo, Udo, among many others showing their "tribal marks". Most of the well-known District Officers (D.Os), District Commissioners (D.Cs) were from Calabar areas of Eastern Nigeria. Nigerians from that part of the old nation identified with their Igbo counterparts during the Biafra war.

They suffered the Nigerian genocide that came with the war. In effect most of their people, young and old fought side by side with the Igbos during the Biafra war and they saw themselves part and parcel of the Biafra nation. Great names like **Colonel Phillip Offiong** (Emeka Ojukwu's deputy and second-in-command), and **Okokon Ndem**, the renowned Radio Biafra news reader and broadcaster, may not be easily forgotten as the history of Nigeria and Biafra is being re-written or updated. Colonel Phillip Offiong, together with other Biafran army generals, at the end of the war, finally signed the surrender agreement with the Nigerian government.

Another Igbo vindication – "Why distance yourself from Igbo?"

> **"If the Igbo did not marginalize her minorities during the analogue years, why will they do so in this digital age?"** *(A testimony by Efa-Iwa Rex Egbe; a Cross Riverine, Calabar man)*

At this stage, it is good to introduce one of the citizens of this South-South region who spoke out and presented a very important testimony for truth to prevail; truth that must be recorded.

Efa-Ewa Rex on his own part boldly made a rebuttal about the erroneous and mischievous rants of some of his misinformed Niger-Delta brothers. He told his listeners he was from the **Agbo ethnic group in Cross River State** located in Abi Local Government Area which is a coastal settlement and unarguably the smallest local government area in Cross River State in terms of landmass and to a large extent population - slightly a few thousands ahead of Bakassi LGA. His fore-bearers both on his maternal and paternal sides were given the opportunity to serve in the then Eastern Nigeria regional government. I must tell my readers, right from the beginning of this important discussion that I, personally can testify that Efa-Ewa Rex is in fact 'reciting' a story of what most elementary and secondary school students in Eastern Nigeria knew as part of 'history' among school subjects those good olden days.

His grand uncle, **Dr. S. E. Imoke** of blessed memory was an all influential cabinet minister in the regime of Dr M I Okpara. He held the Trade portfolio and was also Finance minister at the time until the unfortunate incident of January 1966. He was the longest serving Education minister. His son the **Urbane Liyel Imoke** is the immediate past Governor of "Cross River" state. During the outbreak of the war, Imoke was the Biafran Commissioner for Refugees and Humanitarian affairs. One of his maternal uncles also served as Permanent Secretary in the ministry of health at Enugu. His maternal grandfather was also a frontline member of the Eastern Nigeria regional house of Chiefs.

Outside Efa-Ewa Rex family circles, another great Cross Riverian, **MT Mbu** was nominated a Federal Minister for Transport and Navy by the Igbo controlled NCNC. It's on record that **Matthew Mbu** was Nigeria's first Ambassador to the UK,

UN and the USA. He was from Boki in Cross River state. Boki is another minority ethnic group just like Rex native Agboland. The Igbos gave him the opportunity to excel ahead of their worthy sons at that time. He was the father to a **Senator MT Mbu (Jr.).** Another person who was noteworthy was the late Chief **Michael Eta-Ogon** who was the Administrator of the oil rich Port Harcourt province in the first republic. He was also from the same Boki with Mbu. **Thomas Weir Ikpeme** an Efik man from Odukpani in the native Cross River was the longest serving Permanent Secretary in the Eastern Regional Ministry of Education.

The key point Rex was making, in fact was that the Igbos were comfortable with "the minorities". That was why they entrusted, for example, education solely in their hands. Not only education but other critical ministries like Public Works and Transport and foreign affairs. **Mr. N. U. Akpan,** an Ibibio man from Akwa Ibom state was the technocrat behind the eastern regional public service. He was the Secretary to the regional government. Thompson **Akpabio,** an Annang man from Ukana in present day Akwa Ibom state was the regional minister of health. The former Governor of Akwa Ibom state Godswill Akpabio is his nephew. There were other high ranking cabinet ministers of minority origin like HRH Amanyanabo E. P. Okoya, Agada III, the Ibenanowei of Ekpetiama in Bayelsa State, Chief. Erekosinma of Rivers, and a whole lot of others, who are too many to mention. During the secessionist struggle, an Ogoni from Rivers state, Chief **Ignatius Kogbara** was Biafra's Ambassador to Britain. Chief Lekam Okoi, from Idomi in present day Yakurr LGA of Cross River state was one of Ojukwu's trusted drivers. He is today a successful lawyer and a former commissioner in the Federal Character Commission. Captain Akpet a minority from Cross River was also Ojukwu's dependable aide on intelligence.

Secondly for the avoidance of doubt, aside these political appointments, Rex noted, their people enjoyed immense goodwill from the Igbo dominated region by way of social security. Rex informs us that his dad's immediate elder brother received a scholarship from the regional government that enabled him study for a PhD in soil science. He is the first man "arguably" in Africa to obtain a doctorate in Soil science. Rex insists he had friends across the Niger Delta whose parents, uncles, aunties and relatives also benefited from the benevolence of the Eastern regional government. In fact Rex noted that the

Niger Delta region received their last major facelift in terms of infrastructure when they were under the Eastern region. Till the abolition of the regional system of government, the Eastern region was the most united region; there was never a recorded case of ethnic skirmish or blood-letting between the Igbos and other minority groups.

During the pogrom of 1966 everyone carried the same cross to "Golgotha", both Igbos and Eastern minorities were maimed in their thousands across Northern Nigeria by the blood thirsty Hausa-Fulani-Northern folks without blinking an eye. It didn't really matter if you were Igbo, Ijaw, Efik or a miniature Agbo person; Rex Egbe passionately confesses: "I never really wanted to bore you with listening or reading this lengthy essay but it's my moral responsibility to tell the truth at all times. I was taught by my fore- bearers never to distort **history** and to always separate facts from fictions. If we were not marginalized by the Igbos during the "analogue" age, how then can the Igbos marginalize us in this digital age?" (unquote)

It is bad to distort history. This is what we are striving to correct, to present the raw facts that will help shape our children's future, Nigerians students and teachers, and as well sharpen their academic acumen, to be able to make valid judgments, to widen their **world view.** Worldview includes natural philosophy, fundamental, existential, and normative postulates; or themes, values, emotions and ethics. It is important for young Nigerians to grow up rightly to be able to effect the right change expected in society of today. Additionally the worldview, we are referring to includes the framework of ideas and beliefs, forming a global description through which an individual, group or culture watches and interprets the world and interacts with it. We must thank **Efa-Iwa Rex Egbe** for his testimonies**.** He tried so much to the great surprise of many Igbo admirers in reporting the truth, in the midst of malicious propaganda and accusations of domination, discrimination and selfishness being leveled against Igbo race by their former brothers, friends and compatriots. I have added few more key figures our author forgot, some names like Colonel Phillip Offiong and Okokon Ndem! In Primary school, from Standard 1 to Standard 6 we memorized the names of the regional ministers and commissioners in history lessons and I still remember most names that are non-Igbo. For record purposes, it is good to put down the names of key non-Igbo officials that remained loyal

and fully participated in the Biafra campaign. It was not completely Igbo affair.

In Memories of Biafra's Non-Igbo Top Officials

Major General Philip Effiong –Biafra's Chief of General Staff and Ojukwu's deputy. **(2)** Brigadier Willie Archibong – Commander Biafra's 58th Brigade – Major Battle –Ikot Ekpene **(3)** Colonel Nsudoh – Commander 18th Battalion and 53rd brigade : Major Battle – Onitsha with Col. Achuzia. **(4)** Lt. Col. Frank Okilo – Commander 14th Battalion and 63rd Brigade – Major Battle – Igrita, 15 miles to Port Harcourt till the war ended. **(5)** Col. Adigio – Commander Biafra's 7th Battalion. – Major Battle – Calabar with Lt. Col Okafor. **(6)** Mr. N.U. Akpan – Secretary to the Eastern Region and Biafran Government. **(7)** Mr. Okon Okon Ndem – Communications officer and Broadcaster Radio Biafra **(8)** Mr. Frank Opigo – Introduced the name "Biafra". Former principal of Okrika Grammar School; Commissioner for Rural Development and Biafra's administrator of Yenegoa Province. **(9)** Mr. Ekukinam Bassey – Annang Province Administrator **(10)** Mr. Ignatius Kogbara – Biafra's representative in London **(11)** Dr. Gary Leyton – Deputy head of the Research and Production Department **(12)** Mr. Sam Inyang – Communications expert with Biafra's Directorate of Military Intelligence. **(13)** Mr. S.E. Imoke – Chairman Rehabilitation Commission. **(14)** Dr. S.E. Cookey – Biafra's Relief Co-ordinator. **(15)** Prof. Eyo Bassey Ndem – Biafra's Calabar Province administrator. **(16)** Mr. S. N. Dikibo – Biafra's Degema Province Administrator. **(17)** Mr. S. J. Edoho – Province Administrator, Eket. **(18)** Mr. Frank Ugbut – Province Administrator, Ogoja. **(19)** Dr. S. J. Cookey – Province Administrator, Opobo. **(20)** Chief J. Udo-Affiah – Province Administrator, Uyo.

The Pacification of the Bruised Igbos

Another important historical source, from no other contributor, than a son of South-South region of Nigeria appeared to have pacified most aggrieved Igbos who have been maligned and bruised by vicious propagandists from the "rest of Nigeria", discredited and painted evil especially since the Biafra war. In his own testimony, as we have seen above, **Ifa-Ewa,** showed that the Igbos are not vicious, unfriendly and untrustworthy citizens. In the following contribution, **Barrister Uchechukwu**

Okwukwu, simply stated the truth about the **Ikwerre Igbos.** Because of its **historical content** and the sacredness of the truth exposed, I decided to reproduce parts of the write-up. When a friend called my attention to it, I did not hesitate giving it my own title: ***"The Pacification of the Bruised Igbos of the Post-War Nigeria"***

"Ikwerre are Igbo"

> **"The worst thing that can happen to a man is to deny his root, out of fear, cowardice, and intimidation".**
> *(Uchechukwu Okwukwu)*

While every white and black American clings tenaciously to American identity card, the 'Green Card' or the nation's passport and goes to any length to defend his or her right to American citizenship, even well known Igbo citizens in Nigeria fight fiercely to break every link or bond with the Igbo race or nation in Nigeria! It is one of the most shameful consequences of Igbo defeat in the Nigerian civil war. Barrister Uche Okwukwu, a well known Igbo of Ikwerre clan, near the Rivers State capital of the present Nigeria, exposes the shameful realities of people or groups of people for selfish motives, who attempt to deny the citizenship of their fatherland for ridiculous reasons. He reiterates.

"My name is Uchechukwu Okwukwu. I am an Igbo man. I have said it in different fora, the Wilkinson report is available, the PhD work of Late Chief Aguma in University of Ibadan 1977 is available, and other reports are also available. There is a fundamental difference between a nation and a tribe. A tribe speaks a dialect, a Nation speaks a language. Some Ikwerre people agreed that they are from Igbo, some say they are from Benin heritage. Scientifically, there are parameters we use to determine things, the sociological, spiritual, geographical and historical. If you say you are from Benin, come with your proof and show us how you came from Benin. There is no common thing that traces Ikwerre lineage to Benin. There is no single common Edo language in the Ikwerre land. None! So, those who, in falsification of languages, say otherwise should come forward with their proofs. In a study carried out by the Niger Delta group in 1976, under the Niger Delta spirit, edited by Prof Alagoa, the

Ikwerre was clearly pointed out as Igbos. See, to lose a war is bad!" Uche continues:

"The post-war Nigeria saw the two groups, the Igbos and Niger Delta as conquered people and the victorious North and the West clearly, unequal partners in a new relationship that eventually emerged and in that unequal relationship, like the law of Osmosis, weaker solution is naturally drawn by the stronger solution. What happened was that if you said then, you're an Igbo, you are discriminated against because you' re a Biafran you committed a crime, your master is in Cote de Ivoire you raised up arms against the Federal Government, forgetting that according to Gabriel Onyekea's Commission of inquiry 30,000 Easterners were massacred. So everybody said I am not Igbo purely as a survival syndrome. Why would you say you are Igbo, when you were not wanted? Of course, my name is Uche Okwukwu, so you can ask me my name and I will say am not Igbo, because if I say I was Igbo, I will be punished, but you would agree with me in this state that the great and mighty of Ikwerre land agreed that they were all Igbos.

"They include late Francis Ellah, former Secretary to the Rivers State government who said he was an Igbo man, the late Okugbule Wonodi, former registrar of the University of Port Harcourt said the same. Chief C. C. Nwuche said he is an Igboman, so what crime has Uchechukwu Okwukwu committed? What is the contention of Ogbakor Ikwerre on this? Do you belong to Ogbakor Ikwerre? Ogbakor Ikweere is an umbrella socio-cultural body; it has never said no Ikwerre man should have a different opinion on any issue. Ogbakor Ikwerre doesn't need to agree with me because, it has never, ever driven any Ikwerre man for identifying with the Igbos or one who said, he is an Igbo."

"They never drove away Okugbule Nwanodi. They are not thinking of that because there are available records to show, everybody wrote with his own hand writing. When people (Ikwerre) who went to school wrote in their own handwriting, when they were not biased, people wrote tribe and nation, (That they were Igbos). These records are available. What happens in this country is that we like to suppress truth. Believe me, this is the biggest shame coming from this part of the black race, it is not a courageous one, it's often very petty, I insist because some Ikwerres say they are not Igbos. It is not what we feel or think, many may speculate that I am a multi-millionaire, but I am not a millionaire, it is just an opinion. I have said and quote me, Uche

Okwukwu, take me up, put me down, bury me 5ft underground, ***I am an Igbo man. What is wrong with that?***

"I have said it before and I have given the names of great Ikwerre personalities who also said they were Igbos too. Identity is very important see. I read a book sometime in London". I recalled the history of the Samarians, and I read it in the monastery, and beheld how a man was asked the question, who are you? When he mentioned his name, the man asked him again, do you remember what happened to your people? He answered, no, so, the man then told him to go back and read his history because; the Samarians are today a lost tribe, because they refused to read their history. Again in Geneva in 1998, I met a senator from the US, attending the meeting of the unrepresented United Nations Organization. The man said he was Assyrian, and everybody was shocked but he said it. That he is from Assyria, the most interesting thing was that the man could read and write in Assyrian language, even though there is no country today, called Assyria. I took him up on that and he said, the worst thing that can happen to a man is to deny his own root, out of fear, cowardice, and intimidation. When you do that, on the long run, you pay dearly for it, if you are not careful; your genealogy disappears from the face of the earth."

"An Ode to My Igbo Heritage" - "I am Proud to be Igbo"
(by anonymous author)

Igbophobia" notwithstanding – Igbos proud to be Igbo!

We end this chapter with a powerful **'Ode'**, a lyric poem, usually in the form of an address to a particular subject, (here**, 'the Igbo race – love them, hate them, they are proud to be Igbo').** The poem, the sung is often elevated in style or manner and written in varied or irregular meter. *Historically 'Ode' is* a poem meant to be sung.

"I am an Igbo. I was born an Igbo. I live the life of an Igbo. I come from Igbo. I speak Igbo. I like to be Igbo. I like to dress Igbo. I eat Igbo food. My heritage, culture and tradition is Igbo. My parents are Igbo. I am sorry I cannot help it if you hate my lineage. I am sorry I cannot help it if you detest Igbo. I am sorry I cannot help it if you hate me because I am Igbo. Igbo is who I am. My name is Igbo and I must die an Igbo. You see Igbo as a

threat. Why? You call Igbo rapist, criminals, ritualistic, prostitutes, and kidnappers. You attribute all negative vices to represent Igbo. Why do you do that? You do that because you feel threatened that Igbo might outrun the rest of the tribes. Why do you hate Igbo and despise us? You do that because we are creative, enlightened, hardworking, industrious, geniuses, intelligent, smart, rich, beautiful and amazing. But it's difficult for you to admit it because you feel jealous of my race.

Igbo do not own politics. Igbo do not control the economy neither do we control the natural resources and the common wealth of the Nigeria. You do, we don't and yet, despite the fact that you own everything, we still remain one indispensable race that has outshined the other races in all ramifications. You fear us and you want to exterminate and annihilate our race. You deny us many things and yet we are stronger, richer and mightier. You fear us because we are everywhere. You fear us because no matter how rural a place might be, when Igbo steps in, they turn it into a Paradise. We have our own resources, which lie in resourcefulness, we do not bother you and your control over the polity, but yet when we cough you and the other races begin to shiver. I am proud being an Igbo. I am proud of my heritage and culture. Igbo means high class. Igbo means independence. Igbo means hard work and strength. Igbo means riches. Igbo means resourcefulness. Igbo means self-belonging. Igbo means self-esteem. Igbo means pride. To be Igbo is great. I am proud to be Igbo**. Udo diri unu umunnem!**

CHAPTER 10

THE AFTERMATH OF THE CIVIL WAR ON IGBO YOUTHS AND THE DECLINE OF IGBO RELEVANCE AND TRADITION IN POST-WAR NIGERIA

> **And best of all, those who did not attend school become Prophets and Imams and everyone follows them. What a paradox of life? This can only happen in Nigeria where corruption is the order of the day.** *(Bishop Matthew Kukah)*

Nigerian youths on suicide mission to foreign lands 'flowing with milk and honey'.

Almost everyday on television and social media one receives 'Breaking News', reports of deaths, scandals and misfortunes associated with young Nigerians, male and female, who are found abroad in search of greener pastures, quick wealth and prosperity. Not even the government, Nigeria's political, traditional and religious leaders, lawmakers, fathers, mothers, siblings and other family members show concern for most of the calamities that befall the future generation of Nigerians. These young men and women can be located in every nook and cranny of cities and even in the remotest parts of very unsafe and dangerous parts of the world. What are young Nigerians seeking for in places like the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, North Korea, Guatemala, Libya, Yemen, Malaysia, Singapore, Dubai, Oman, Turkey, Bangladesh, just to name a few? Most observers and worried critics, insist that the deteriorating situation is one of the evil products of the civil war. Could they be right and where is Nigeria heading to?

Many have completely abandoned education. Others have no interest or taste in learning any known handiwork. All roads lead to other nations of the world, where all efforts are geared towards making money without much sweat and irrespective of risks involved. One can trek through the massive deserts and across oceans of the world and the goal is to get wealthy at the shortest possible time. Sometimes many succeed and return home to spend the illicit wealth- and the way it is spent can be embarrassing. Many of course perish in their odyssey. Anyone can check up in the whole universe. One can 'Google it', confirm or contradict the facts; it is only the affluent

Nigerians who 'spray' money at festive gatherings, parties or joyful occasions. Spraying money, usually at dancers as a way of honoring them or publicly offering one's donation to the celebrants has been the Igbo people's tradition or culture of showing delight and support during cultural dances or festivals and traditional wedding ceremonies. It used to be the highlight of many such celebrations and in fact guests who can afford it are encouraged to spray money on chief celebrants, musicians and dancers.

But in the modern times the practice has degenerated into what critics believe is now an occult and fetish practice, a naked exhibition of ill-gotten wealth. In the modern times often well known rich members of Igbo communities, known to engage at home or abroad; in criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping and 'Yahoo practices' (aka '419' activities) are seen in public occasions spraying large quantities of genuine local and foreign currencies packed in large wraps in cartons. Reports always confirm that thousands and even millions in local currencies have been recorded at such occasions. Many elderly Igbo leaders have questioned the morality behind such public show of affluence when so many people can no more find one square meal a day. The simple explanation is found in what the same Igbo people refer to as ***'Ogwu Ego (ill-gotten, satanic wealth)'.*** It is believed that the evil forces through whose influences such 'gold' is acquired; equally control the ways they are spent or distributed. Often such huge sums of money are acquired through various forms of swindling and scams.

Search for Fast illicit Wealth

Indeed, Nigeria's agricultural industry has suffered from decades of mismanagement, inconsistency, poorly conceived policies and lack of basic infrastructure. Sadly, a sector once known to be contributing the largest percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment is no longer attractive following the discovery of crude oil. With the oil exploration in place, Nigeria was no longer a major exporter of cocoa, groundnuts (peanuts), rubber, and palm oil production. Besides, more dramatic decline in groundnut and palm oil production had also taken place. Use of the oil palm fruit to extract edible oil had been in practice across the continent for centuries, and it remains an essential ingredient in most of West African cuisine. Farmers in the region, who inter-cropped oil palm trees with other food crops

such as yam and maize, started the first export trade early in the 19th Century. Before its closure, the industrial revolution in Britain had created a huge demand for palm oil, which by then had found its way for use in candle making and as an industrial lubricant. The economic importance of palm oil grew steadily because of its high yield, leading European colonialists to start plantations in Central Africa by 1900. As palm oil found wider use in food-processing and industry, global demand for the commodity surged. By 1982, worldwide palm oil exports had grown to a staggering 2,400,000 million tons per annual. For most of this period, Nigeria held centre stage as one of the largest producers and exporters of palm oil, accounting for more than 40 percent of global output in the 1950s. At the time of the country's independence from British colonial rule in 1960, palm oil contributed 82 percent of national export revenue. Unfortunately, Nigeria has degenerated, slumped. Instead of exportation, importation of palm oil is a booming business in Nigeria today!

Adulteration of Food and Pharmaceutical Products

Investigations revealed that the problems facing Nigeria are too complex. Not only that the palm oil production has been ignored by both government agencies and local village producers, the products have even been banned for exportation. Buyers and suppliers, local and foreign don't want Nigerian oil, food and pharmaceutical products anymore, as a result of massive adulteration. What we sow is what we reap. There is need to raise a new generation of patriotic citizens who will steer our country to the right direction. There is need to start early to raise, for example, our future pharmacists who will not manufacture and sell fake and adulterated drugs, just out of greed to make money and thereby put the lives of millions of Nigerian at risk. Hundreds and thousands of our people die every year as a result of intake of fake drugs. This is just a single example. Remember how these evil men and women fought **Dora Akinyili**, one-time Director General of NAFDAC and renowned pharmacist. Akunyili established as a top priority; the eradication of counterfeit drugs and unsafe food in Nigeria. Before her assumption of office in NAFDAC, fake and substandard foods and drugs were sold in Nigeria without any form of regulation. She fought hard to save her country men and women, but

criminals involved in the illegal business did not like her and wished her death.

Truly, the rate at which certain foodstuffs are adulterated in Nigeria is alarming. You go to market to buy foodstuff and you are not sure of the quality of what you are buying. In the case of palm oil, one may make mistakes by simply depending on the physical appearance of the oil. Some sellers add colorants, liquids and other chemicals to increase the volume and make it more attractive and appealing to buyers. There are a lot of dangerous and illegal ways of making money and many Nigerians, and majority of them Igbos engage, full-time; in the bad business. In the local milieu 'adulterated products' are known as 'imitation products'. Adulteration of products is close to Yahoo-(419 scam) business. To 'adulterate' means to corrupt, debase or make impure by addition of a foreign inferior substance or element, especially to prepare for sale by replacing more valuable substances with less valuable inert ingredients. Big, rich and successful drug traffickers are known to double or even triple their gains by adulterating drugs they receive from the big drug cartels, and drugs coming from countries like Turkey, Afghanistan, South American countries into African countries, including South Africa and Nigeria. The same is true of medicines and medical supplies from India, and the Middle East.

Many Nigerians cry out against the evil of adulteration of imported products into the country as well as those manufactured in Nigeria. Someone laments: "Things are no longer as they used to be." Why? Even custard does not taste like the custard I grew up to know. Almost is everything adulterated in Nigeria today? Why should this happen? Another added: "You will not believe that every product in the market has been marked and has a number 1, 2, 3 and so on, with the same price, same packaging, and only the same people marketing them, and perhaps known insiders may know the secrets of their business and operations." It is only when you, the buyer insists, that they let you know the differences in the fabrication! How then do we claim we have (SON) Standard Organization of Nigeria? Stop! Someone has more revelations: "You have not seen anything. Don't you know that **okpa** (local maize delicacy), **ogiri** (local magi cubes and sauce), **mmanya ocha, nkwu enu** (palm wine), **mmanu anu** (honey) etc, also have imitations?" These are purely local village products, and not imported from China, India, Turkey, Thailand or Mexico. They are local products but

are also adulterated for quick gains in Nigeria and Igboland, and include many more, bean cakes, pepper, snuff, rice (plastic rice). There is need for lamentation! This country is in real trouble. Sincerely, Nigeria is going into extinction. There is nothing to be happy about. A hitherto peace-loving country, a country filled with milk and honey, once beehive of indigent neighboring countries, nay, the much orchestrated richest and most populous country in Africa! Many weep hysterically for this once beloved-Nigeria!

Contradictory Moral Codes – Crime and the Sinful

As for morality, what constitutes 'sin' and 'crime' before God the creator, 'offense', including those categorized by the state as 'criminal' and punishable by law, the Igbo position is often disturbing and disgusting! They often blow 'hot and cold'. Examples will help clarify this ambivalence, hypocrisy and confusion. Unfortunately this contradictory Igbo interpretation of what constitutes moral offense has contributed a lot to the growth of evil among Igbo youths at home and in the Diaspora. "You shall not covet your neighbor's good" (Number 7 God's Commandment). Oh Yes! The Igbo will not tolerate anyone stealing even a piece of yam, fish, corn or any farm product. Igbo society prescribes any kind of severe punishment, including the parading of the 'thief' naked and in the streets, public squares and market places. In fact in the past this form of punishment had been the traditional way of dealing with young and elderly people who stole anything no matter how tiny.

Public exposure and putting the fellow to shame and public ridicule was the climax of this primitive and shameful method of showing community disapproval for breaking this seventh commandment of the Almighty God. Among various Igbo communities of the past the victims of theft, adultery and witchcraft were usually exposed and ridiculed in traditional songs and lyrics during grand cultural festivals. Till date the practice extends to composition, sale of videos and cassette recordings of such matters of 'sinful behavior!'Behold the Igbo who cannot accommodate the company of a convicted thief or criminal, or stand the face of a piece of land grabber, condoning the sins of corruption and massive embezzlement of government and public funds! Behold the Igbo who call for the public execution of one caught or convicted of stealing a tuber of yam, chicken or goat, embracing a fraudster, corrupt and immoral

fellow who has made a fortune through devilish and mischievous activities at a glance, completely overlooking such atrocities committed by another fellow, who claims to be a 'businessman!' Nigerians, Igbos and communities and nations of the world should not celebrate illegal wealth acquisition. It is sinful. The Igbo traditional ethics and moral theologians fail to help matters as they seem to justify the hypocritical attitude of Igbo people with regard to what is 'sinful' and unacceptable in every society all over the world. What these 'traditionalists' are saying is that as long as the thief does not steal from Igbo brother, sister or neighbor', all is well with his or her activities! This attitude is completely immoral and unacceptable.

The Decline of Nigerian Relevance

As Nigeria declined in influence and importance in the African and world stage, no one can without equivocation declare that Igbos have not also lost relevance in Nigeria. The inference is clear as our discussion discovers most of all that have really gone wrong. The Igbos as Nigerians, located in the area referred to as South-East or as a recognized entity called Biafra have a share in what is known today as 'Nigerian Dilemma'. This dilemma is an unfortunate state or situation always linked to a series of embarrassing problems that have truly made Nigeria a laughing stock among all the nations of the world today. There is no way you, a Nigerian, could raise your head anywhere, at home or in the Diaspora to claim you are from a great country, or publicly claim 'I am a proud Nigerian!' Someone would put that rhetorical scorching question, 'how have we arrived at this situation?' Has the nation Nigeria sank really too low and deep into sin and crime, underdevelopment, and lack of vision? Why do Nigerians think or claim Nigeria is a great nation? On what ground should Nigerians today claim to be the richest and most powerful nation in Africa! If ever it can be proved statistically that Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa, what does that claim add to Nigeria's strategic importance and influence in the world today? The irony of the matter is that while Nigeria, its leaders and citizens should be beating their breasts in agony for having lost relevance today in almost every area of influence, they continue to raise their heads as great nation and people that must be revered as number one at least in Africa! In the face of ugly realities what can ever justify such a folly? It is a shameful and shocking news galore making headlines for long now

Igbo Relevance in Nigeria in Jeopardy!

There is no doubt that the Nigerian civil war caused a great disruption in the old traditional and Christian moral codes that guided the conscience of Nigerians and Biafran-Igbos. As society continues to grow in evil and sin, more laws enacted to control decadence, continue to weaken their power. This process or attempt to regulate or control evil has always been seen in newly enacted laws in both Christian and traditional societies with political institutions. So with military coup in 1966 in Nigeria, the counter-coup d'etat, the genocide against a section of the country, the ensuring civil war with brutal massacres at the beginnings, during the war, at the end and thereafter, things would not be the same again in a united Nigeria. The successive military administrations that ruled Nigeria for more than 25 years, no doubt must be held responsible for the near-collapse of law and order in Nigeria till date. New laws, codified or not, written or unwritten; like the Ten Commandments of God and Moses, must appear to show how the situation has drastically changed for the worst. The Igbos cannot be shielded from the rough consequences of the civil war as well as from the scandalous and corrupt lifestyles of the leaders of the nation. Massive corruption scandals have wrecked the moral fabric of the nation and the wounds, such as scandals; have inflicted the nation's youths in particular and it will take years to erase.

Government Take-Over-of Schools.

There is no gainsaying it; the 1966 coup plotters together with the subsequent military administrators contributed to the downfall of Nigeria and the Igbos in particular. Believing they were punishing the Igbo rebels by initiating an educational policy by which all missionary and privately owned schools in all the Igbo-Biafra territories should be 'seized', 'confiscated', or 'taken over' by government and run as public schools, the Igbos lost their first place in qualitative education for which the hitherto mission schools contributed a lot. A period of decadence had set in and little attention was paid to qualitative education all over Nigeria. Most of the Igbo youths who survived the war, as ex-soldiers or ordinary civilians were affected by the evils of the war, including stealing, armed robbery, kidnapping, all sorts of immoral behavior, dealing on drugs and excessive drinking

habits and violent behavior. Many young Igbo girls ran after Nigerian soldiers and some practiced prostitution. There was little or no effort at rehabilitating victims of the civil war thus offering ex-soldiers and their counter-parts proper chances of reintegration into the civil society. What a calamity! Having abandoned education, Igbo youths found a lucrative and consoling portion anywhere else outside Nigeria. The long and massive exodus of Igbos from the fatherland to unknown far and near countries of the unknown world had begun and can never be stopped any more. It became the great search for greener pasture. ***(See My Book "Search for Greener pastures, Igbo and African experience, Nebraska, USA 1998) for full coverage of this chapter).***

Igbo Spirit, Ingenuity, the archetype in decline

Before and during the Biafra war Igbos were renowned for their stupefying skills or cleverness that allowed them to discover and invent tools that helped this gifted black race to face Nigeria and in fact the rest of the world that sided with their enemies to fight back fiercely. We have discussed most of those ingenious devices or contrivances. Not only that the Igbo can invent, he is known to be a hard laborer. The Igbo is never a lazy folk and as far as survival is concerned, his ambition to rise in power and prosperity has no limits. He has few choices in trade and handiwork to earn a living, marry, raise his family and help his kinsmen and even distant friends to earn a living. There is no job he considers 'low-paying' or 'dirty'. Most Igbo rich businessmen and women, past and present at one time or other have recounted how they labored to earn their living from the miserable level or state of 'house servants' to become a well-known landlord and extraordinary opulent chief and recognizable and successful man in life. He starts as a young learner or 'apprentice' under his master, as a young carpenter, mason or bricklayer, cutter of wood and hewer of water. He engages in what they called 'bottle business', a business or collecting empty and discarded bottles of various types of drinks, re-uses later for storing hot drinks and body creams and various types of engine and cooking oils. Various types of leather wares and foot wares were converted to new saleable products.

Popularly known as 'scrap business' the modern 'recycling' technology has afforded many Igbo job seekers lucrative methods of engaging oneself in useful and honest

business. Before the war, during the war and until lately the Igbo was in fact a hard laborer, what miscreants negatively refer to as "Ogwu-aja (One who digs sand)", describing the hardship involved when one wants to engage is useful hard labor that may eventually lead to level of prosperity and enjoyment. The expression 'Kim-mbom(masonry or bricklaying)' used in building construction in Igboland till date summarizes all that the young Igbo industrious folk, male or female would undergo, the type of work he or she is ready to accept and engage in to make money. In mixing bags of cement, together with sand, stones and gravel, laborer must work really hard to earn a decent living. The quantities one is able to mix, empty in measured tins or head-pans, lift up on the head, ascend the wooden or iron structures to the top of a new building under construction, and how fast and strong one is able to accomplish that task will determine the salary or earning on daily basis!

Probably outside his local community, but far away in cities in Nigeria and anywhere in America, Europe, Asia and somewhere in remote islands, deserts, and dirty swamps, an Igbo youth is always ready to take up further 'dirty' and 'inhumane' jobs to make a living. In freezing cold winter regions of the world, including Arctic Seas and Greenland, in the dusty desert regions of Arab Emirates, to name but a few, you find Igbo youths in various types of jobs, including, Cab drivers, street cleaners and garbage disposers, hotel and restaurant plate washers and cleaners. Courageous young Igbo women who have not been lured into fast-money-making business of prostitution engage in 'lucrative' but low-paying nursing profession they refer to as 'Nurse Eliza'. In UK and USA, 'Nurse Eliza' (CNA is not as highly qualified to compete with a 'Registered Nurse' (RN). The job of 'Nurse Eliza' is truly 'dirty' and humiliating. It includes the job of taking a 24-hour care of the elderly and bedridden patients in 'Retired-Home' communities in rich American and European cities. This shows how far the Igbo can go to earn a living!

Affluent lifestyle in place of education and work

Igbos, together with the Yorubas have led the way in education since the amalgamation and the number of academics they have produced testify to this assumption. The emphasis on the importance of education for civilization and development can never be emphasized. It was necessary to embrace western education to succeed. "Standard Six School Leaving Certificate"

was a barest minimum to secure good job during the colonial era. That standard was high enough to equate with today's West African School Certificate (WASC) or General Certificate in Education (GCE). "Standard Six" English grammar in the 1960s was good and better than most of the written and spoken University students' English in Nigeria today. Wow! And the Igbo youths lost out almost completely! Today Igbos are no more the leader in education as in the past. There is a big decline, though Igbo students still take first positions in national exams. Igbo youths compare well with uneducated street quacks found all over markets in Nigeria. They prefer gutter English to written and spoken British English, fake certificates to genuine academic degrees; examination malpractice to studies and hard work. There is no doubt that bribery and corruption penetrated the former hard walls of schools, colleges and universities.

The Case of the "Prodigal Son!"

Biafra ingenuity in war time science and technology lost completely to avarice and struggle for quick wealth and prosperity. The Igbos lost their palm oil industry to Malaysia and other regions of the world. There are no palm trees in the north but they did not fail in food production. Igbos became more of buyers and sellers and no more producers. Igbo youths do not engage in wood or metal work, building technology or farming. Most have left the villages and cities for overseas countries in search of greener pastures, where luxuriant abundant pastures rot away in their fatherland. Igbo people now import workmen, local and foreign labor to do mason, carpentry, painting, building and farming work, from other parts of Nigeria and beyond, to help out in Igboland! Most foreign workers, carpenters, bricklayers, painters, security guards, house-cleaner and cooks one finds in Igbo villages are from the North, from neighboring West African countries of Togo, Benin Republic, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Liberia. While foreigners and non-Nigerians flood Igbo villages and earn decent living, their Igbo counterparts are scattered all over poorer African countries scavenging for discarded scraps of food or rich spoils from scams and dishonest business transactions. What an irony! The prodigal sons languishing abroad, while servants enjoying life in father's house at home!

Igboland & Catastrophic "Brain Drain"

Brain drain, a situation in which large numbers of educated and very skilled people leave their own country to live and work in other countries where pay and conditions are better has affected Igbos in such a magnitude that recovery may not be possible in the nearest future. It is getting worse every day since the economic situation in Nigeria has continued to degenerate. *"Search for greener pastures"* is a phenomenon experienced by many professional and non-professional people all over the world, who look for better life elsewhere. As for Igbo people as we have already discussed here, migration to other parts of Nigeria, Europe and America, to settle and earn a living has been part of their history. Only recently the horizon has widened to include every enclave in Asian and South American country. Why we describe the situation as 'catastrophic' is that virtually every economic sector or field is affected. The best Igbo medical doctors, engineers, professors, architects, and teachers are found in Europe and America and most of them vow never to return to their fatherland as a result of the chaotic political situation and mismanagement of the nation's resources by the ruling class. Some Igbo and Nigerian university professors and college lecturers accept teaching positions in Secondary or High Schools in Europe and America, rather than languish in their fatherland where their academic qualifications mean nothing to the leaders, in terms of remunerations, when politician who barely has G.C.E. certificate earns millions of naira monthly. No one can easily blame the Igbo professionals and their counterparts elsewhere for taking decisions to look for better conditions of service wherever these can be found.

Skilled Workers and Middle Class Manpower

The consequences of the so-called 'Brain drain,' as this affects young skilled workers and middle class manpower in Igboland, can be described as unfortunate and lamentable. As far as Igbo youths are concerned, days are gone when youths must learn a trade, serve under their masters before 'graduating' and establishing their own businesses. Skilled professional jobs, including carpentry, brick-laying, metal work, auto-mechanics, road construction and maintenance jobs, and perhaps farming too, don't seem to attract the younger generation of Igbo youth.

As most of them have developed voracious appetite for quick wealth, they focus their attention on the easiest and quickest way and method of getting rich and as well 'masters'. So, it obvious most Igbo youths are scattered all over the world, heavily engaged in every type of scam business.

As we have seen already, as Igbo youths vacate, take leave of villages for cities and countries overseas, Igbo neighbors and foreigners come in to take over scarce jobs in building constructions and whatever low-paying jobs that had been abandoned by the owners of the land. What an irony! Nearly every imaginable job in Igboland is undertaken by our neighbors: roofing constructions – Yorubas; mason work and wood work – Togolese; dress marking – Yorubas; drivers – Non-Igbo; marble, concrete, terrazzo, tiles – Ghanaians; timber, wood industry – guys from Benin Republic; security organization, public and private houses – Hausas; professional and domestic cooks – guys from Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Efiks; domestic servants – Efiks and Ibibios;; house maids, baby-sitters – girls from Middle Belt region of Nigeria (Middle-Belt); security man – Hausa-Fulani(Aboki)!

Better than Igbos and trustworthy!

It is interesting to records why 'the rest of Nigerians' and certain foreigners are preferred by Igbo landlords to work for them, than their own brothers- Igbo youths. The writer carried out extensive interviews and consultations to find out why 'these other people' are gradually taking jobs meant for Igbo youths. Are we finding ourselves in that type of confusing and dangerous situation as recently witnessed in South Africa? South African youths have been organizing brutal massacres of Black foreign workers, including Igbos and Nigerians they accuse of invading their job markets and grabbing jobs meant for the natives! Could it be true? South African authorities are expected to provide answers to these numerous questions and rumors.

In our own case, the interviews produced stunning answers (1) The Yoruba building workers are more submissive and skillful. They accept their pay with gratitude. The author can testify also under oath that in more than 6 housing projects he awarded contracts to Igbo engineers, all the workers were Yorubas. (2) Why are the Hausas or Abokis the usual security people that guard Igbo families and properties 24/7? "These Hausas, these Northerners are more trustworthy and reliable

than Igbos. You don't need to entertain any fear of 'coup d'état' at any time." What of the Efiks and Ibibios? They are more trustworthy and reliable. They are respectful and obedient. The writer can equally add that for the past 25 years he had domestic servants more than 80% were from other parts of Nigeria. (3)Why Ghanaians, Togolese, and young workers from Benin republic? They charge much less fees. They do most honest work and rarely disappoint their employers. (4)Why not Igbo contractors? "They charge double what these other contractors would charge you. They are not trustworthy and can be contentious. They cheat a lot. So for various reasons the 'Brain Drain' syndrome in Igboland has worsened the economic conditions in the fatherland. While many Igbo guys return annually with money and huge wealth from abroad to make their families and friends happy, such flamboyant gestures and exhibition of wealth don't point to the right solutions to Igbo problems.

Igbo Dilemma – Igbos at the Crossroads

In spite of the great losses the Igbos have to put up with, since the civil war, frightful rejection by the rest of Nigeria and of course becoming politically and economically irrelevant in the nation, Igbos never cease counting their blessings and fortunes. They agree that like the Jews of the old, Igbos are 'a chosen race' blessed with numerous human and natural resources. No one disputes their claims of achievements. Even their enemies recount similar stories of ingenuity, power, success, wisdom and intelligence. Unfortunately achievements of the great Igbo nation and people are mostly related to the 'glories' of the past, when our forefathers and grandparents performed beyond expectations in almost every field of endeavor. Many Igbos were millionaires and some, those days were richer than Dangote of the present times, said to be the richest man in Africa today. As kids we sang songs that identified Odumegwu Ojukwu, the father of Ikemba Ojukwu as the richest Nigerian those days. There are so many good memories of the past achievements of Igbo sons and daughters. Igbo ndi eji eme onu – Igbo ndi eji eje mba! While we rejoice and cite our great Igbo achievers of the past, how much more can we proudly mention Igbo names that would make us proud today? Here lies the seriousness of the present Igbo predicament, Igbo dilemma. The young people are clamoring for a new generation of leaders, great mentors they

can look upon and feel proud to be an Igbo. Igbos are at the crossroads and there is need to re-visit the old glorious path-ways. A crave for the lost glorious old 'path-ways', that used to be considered 'tough' but the best.

Restoration of the Igbo Religious-Moral values

Both at home and in the Diaspora, what the Igbos mostly celebrate or exhibit is the Igbo attire or dressing; perhaps dances. There is not much 'show' of the language-the soul and heart of every culture! With regard to religion and morals, what does Igbo traditional religion teach on moral codes, which possibly can be drawn from the Mosaic Ten Commandments? The Igbo traditional God (Chukwu-Abiamara/Abraham) is the same Supreme Being, God of justice. The Igbo Supreme God, like the Israelite God is not Satan. The Igbo chief priests and elders invoke Him, God of justice to intervene when Igbos are being persecuted and enslaved. They invoke Him when evil people invade their land. They invoke Him to come and cleanse the land when criminals through various detestable atrocities desecrate the land. During Igbo cultural festivities the chief priests call on him to bless the land and harvests, nature, children and longevity, in the nature of 'Itu mmanya, Igor Offor", "Igba Ndu". God's blessings are also sought for good governance and other intentions. Intercessory prayers are equally sought for peace and love to reign in the land. In social life, Igbo social ethics are not known or appreciated any longer by many Igbo youths born and raised in Nigerian cities and in the Diaspora. We can be sure only a few in the villages know how to greet elders or seniors in Igbo language or various types of greetings at various occasions. Surely those born overseas know little or nothing about their villages, towns or even country Nigeria or Biafra. We all lament that Igbo culture is dying away! What of adults? How many of us can speak or converse in Igbo language without struggling with additional English words and expressions?

How have we arrived at this corner?

"And best of all, those who did not attend school become Prophets and Imams and everyone follows them. What a paradox of life? This can only happen in Nigeria where corruption is the order of the day." The quote from a write-up by Bishop Matthew Kukah, Catholic Bishop of Sokoto, Nigeria; gets

me thinking about the paradoxes, ironies, and dilemmas which the nation, Nigeria has to contend with. This is just one among so many! It is the position of the prophets, Imam, namely church ministers, and pastors which should make us wonder and cry out, what a paradox! Parents have their role to play too in this catastrophic situation. There is need for deep reflection. "Nigerian educational systems have surprising outcomes;" the bishop intones!

"The smartest students pass with First Class and get admitted to Medical and Engineering Schools. The Second Class students get MBAs and LLBs to manage the First Class students. The Third Class students enter politics and rule both the First and Second Class students. The Failures enter the Underworld of crime and control the politicians and businesses. And best of all, those who did not attend school become Prophets and Imams and everyone follows them. What a paradox of life? This can only happen in Nigeria where corruption is the order of the day"

Lost Sons and Daughters of Igbo Nation

There are over three million Igbos cut off from ancestral roots! It is an irony of faith. The Bible puts it rightly "by their fruits you shall know them". It is not funny to warn those Nigerians and Igbo adults who place great hope on Igbo renaissance that their hopes may be hard to come to fruition. Who will bell the cat? Who will carry out the great revolution that will restore things turned upside down by the corrupt leadership and move Nigeria to the right direction? Will those dead parents and great leaders of the past generations arise from the dead to bring about the desired changes in our fatherland? What a miracle! How are Nigerian and Igbo youths faring? How prepared are they to take the bull by the horns? With the present generation of Nigerian pastors, evangelists, and men of God and with the type of moral and spiritual leadership they are offering to their numerous followers what hope do they offer for the survival of Nigeria as a great nation to be admired at home and internationally? Not a few concerned Nigerian adults are amused. Someone did not hesitate to paint a gory picture of our great expectations for a 'rosy picture' of a great future for our fatherland. Parents are called to "wake up" to their responsibilities before it is too late. The nostalgia for the past continues to perturb those of us who

can still claim to have experienced 'good times', worked hard and can claim to have lived these precious and rewarding experiences quite different from the present sad and frustrating realities. Surely no one finds oranges under mango trees or pears under banana or palm trees!

How are Igbo mothers raising the future leaders of tomorrow? One is provoked to ask questions and apportion blames on the Igbo mothers for neglecting their traditional family obligations towards the proper upbringing of their children. Sources of these worries and anxieties are too many. But let's consider the following: Many Igbo sons and daughters living with parents at Aba, Port Harcourt, Lagos, Abuja, Owerri and other capital cities of Nigeria neither speak nor understand Igbo language. Igbo sons and daughters born and raised in the United Kingdom and United States of America, not only don't understand or speak Igbo; many don't know the names or locations of their villages or towns back home in Africa. Is it possible that Igbo sons and daughters born and raised in the big cities of Nigeria as well as overseas do claim that they are familiar only with Lagos and Abuja?

Is it possible to imagine that Igbo sons and daughters born and raised in America and Europe would need interpreters or translators when they ever visit Africa, Nigeria and Igboland in any foreseeable future, and attend village and kinsmen (umunna) gatherings or meetings? What of the "First Sons" ('Diokpara') who would inherit or take over the Igbo family dynasty leadership and hand over the same to their children and grand children and the subsequent generations till the world comes to end? Who will show them their ancestral lands (Ala-obi)? It indicates the exact spot where any Igbo male must be buried.

If this 'First Son' fails woefully to take over the traditional and ancestral leadership after the death of his father (at home or Diaspora) will it not be the greatest calamity and curse on the family? According to the sacred Igbo tradition, what would be the consequences? Ama ha were chie!! (The generation has ceased to exist!) Please don't say it again! It is very scary to imagine! Wow! ***'al-la-ha-laa'!*** (The lineage is ceased (perished) for ever, as the original father of the family drops dead, perhaps in Lagos, Abuja, America or London. Very sad!

Unfortunately the kids and grand kids of the great Igbo parents and former patriots did not know that by tradition, an

Igbo corpse can never be buried outside Igboland, but right on the spot allotted to him by the kindred representatives.
Fellow Igbo brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, many traditional Igbos are in deep distress. Can one imagine that there may really be an estimated number of three million (3,000,000) Igbo sons and daughters, who many Igbo researchers and writers describe as "lost sons and daughters of Igbo nation?" This is alarming. What are you saying? What are Igbos at home and in the Diaspora doing? Dear Igbo parents, wherever you locate yourselves, know that your particular attention is drawn to this terrible catastrophe. Many claim that mothers in particular should be held responsible for this calamity that has befallen Igbo race. Many Igbo mothers in villages of Igboland are said to insist that their kids, even the toddlers must learn and speak English, and not their native tongue! Igbo mothers, why this scandal? Can it be true? Think about it please; the sons and daughters of All ethnic groups all over the world understand and speak their languages, except the Igbo!

Igbo Land and Inheritance Tradition

Ama ochichi, Ama gi chie (Let your pathway close). In Igbo culture, this is a curse, the worst one can wish an Igbo man. One's pathway, inheritance, genealogy, the land symbolizing life and prosperity, is his greatest and most cherished treasure. One who abandons or loses that symbol of life is worse than a dead man. Today, most Igbo sons and daughters in diaspora seem to accept that curse. They are ready to negotiate their inheritance in the village for a safe passage to anywhere, except Nigeria. What a tragedy? Most Nigerians who live in the United States struggle to settle down in that part of the world. The surest way to that dream is the Green Card. Once that is secured, the Nigerian citizenship becomes secondary to any other property. Then the way is open to bring over the entire family and closest relations. It does not matter how long it takes, the number of trips these family members troop to the American embassy, the number of disappointments and insults, the cost of visa fees and DNA and other tests. Once the entire family and other relations have settled down in the United States or in any other western country or Asia, it is celebration and of course 'Good Bye' to that bloody fatherland. In other words it is 'Good Bye' to all possessions, including land and inheritance in the village! *"Ama ha echiela."* The deal is sealed. All rights to earthly possession and what they

symbolize in the once-cherished traditional system have been abandoned.

Igbo Renaissance: Customs and Traditions

There was an Igbo Primer Book called ***"Omenala Igbo;"*** (Customs and Traditions of Igbo People), just like "There was once a country called Biafra". "Omenala" simply connotes 'law and order', 'truth, justice and civility'. 'Omenelu' is 'Aru' (abomination, the absurd, evil.) Therefore a suggested action or behavior which does not measure up with the known standards of Igbo traditional moral laws and ethics has to be questioned no matter its material benefits. When in doubt elders call on Chukwu Abiamara as a witness. "Do not steal" – "Do not cheat". On these principles rest supreme justice, peace and order. It condemns greed, envy, theft, reckless life, corruption, and evil desires. And to make sure every member of the community subscribes to law and order the Annual Oath Taking Ceremony is carried out by all adults. Those who fail to participate are 'excommunicated' from the community. The oath taking ceremony, like the 'political swearing-in-ceremony of candidates' used to be mandatory and lends support to promises to perform according to the laid-down-rules and regulations. How they perform or fulfill their promises is usually left with them and their God. There are many concerned Igbo sons and daughters who believe that Igbo traditional and religious leaders should come out publicly and join in the crusade for sound revival of Igbo moral education. The old moral order cannot be discarded and be replaced with fraud and anarchy.

"**Charity Begins at Home" – Elders Admonish Ndigbo**

Most Igbos invest outside Igboland; 'the rest of Nigerian invest little or nothing in Igboland', is an incontestable truth. In practical terms among all the ethnic groups that make up Nigeria, it is only the Igbos that truly believe that Nigeria is one nation and every citizen could settle anywhere and earn a living. Igbos settle and invest in the North, West and Southern sectors of Nigeria. But for the other regions of Nigeria, it is a different a story. The highest property a Northerner may acquire in Igboland is a kiosk and a mat. The highest property a Yoruba civil-servant may acquire in Igboland is a rented 3-bedroom apartment or single room a.k.a "face me, I face you."

Immediately he is able to get a transfer, he scampers off Igboland with every pin that belongs to him. Any Hausa Malam on multi-million cow business in Onitsha for over 30 years lives in a rented house and has no investment in Igboland. The highest properties some other non-Igbos may acquire in Igboland scarcely have no tangible value. As for Igbo millionaires, any doubting Thomas can visit Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, P.H, Zaria, and all major cities of Nigeria. Igbos have uncountable numbers of establishments and estates and properties all over Nigeria, including farming and fishing areas of South-South and Middle Belt regions of Nigeria. Their investments run in billions of naira and dollars. The only explanation one can offer for this embarrassing situation that continues to sap Igboland the much needed resources, energy and manpower needed for development and survival is lack of vision on the part of the Igbo elders and entrepreneurs. Perhaps too, responsible for this catastrophic situation is misguided arrogance, pride and misplacement of priorities. It is arrogance to close eye to 'signs of the times'. A wise man gets his priorities right when he remembers that 'charity begins at home'. Having taken care of the family and home, then one can spread out one's treasures to other limits.

The picture is not saying non-Igbos are too poor to acquire properties or invest in Igboland. The picture is not saying Igboland is unproductive. The picture is not saying Igboland is landlocked. The picture is not saying that Igboland can't be home for all, and where anyone can succeed. The picture is not saying Igbos are not friendly and accommodating. The picture is not saying Igboland can't be explored, it says the greatness in it is not taken for proper use and for everyone's benefit. It is getting late for Igbos to re-think their stands! It is the only remedy because Ndi-Igbo have done so much in developing the north, south west and other places but what do they get in return? Threats, derision, rejection, all sorts of name-calling and constant reminder that 'here is not your land' and anything is possible, which may result to Igbos losing all they labored for and built all these decades outside Igboland. With the current socio-political and ethno-religious situation, it is evident Igbos must start now to apply real wisdom in whatever plans or dealings they have in Nigeria. Politics or not, whatever anyone stands to gain in the Nigerian contraption or not, whatever opinions about any agitation or not, Igbos cannot afford to ignore the hand-writing on the wall. Get back home now. Go home as Igbo and invest in

Igboland too. Even if it is a hut you wish to build, go home and build it. Ignore the lies of Igbo traitors. Igbo land is very viable and individual success stories coming off the South East are there as proofs .Ndi-Igbo think. Let your charity begin at home.
An Igbo elder, Bob Manuel Udokwu, alias "Onye ana-agba nkili", admonishes Ndigbo, in great distress but with meticulous attention. I listened to an address, an admonition rendered to a gathering of Igbo sons and daughters in a gathering, somewhere in Igboland. There is no way I can do justice to this important address meant for all Igbos, especially those living in the other parts of Nigeria and in the diaspora, than to reproduce the address 'verbatim'. In response to a question from a concerned Igbo 'journalist" the elder statesman Bob Udokwu begins his admonition given entirely in pure Igbo language, which this writer translated his words into English thus:

"There is no gain saying it, that Igbos are special type of people, a race blessed with wisdom and knowledge, with spirit of hard work and tenacity in labor. They are found everywhere within and outside Igboland. No one may doubt the fact that wherever an Igbo settles outside his homeland, he begins to toil, to contribute to the development of his new home, often filled with greater zeal and competence than the natives. Only the Igbo in Nigeria, if not in the entire universe visits another town, city or country and he is shown a piece of undeveloped land, a forest, and believe it, in a twinkle of an eye he turns the bush or forest into a fascinating habitation. He builds access roads and sets up massive structures that would surprise everyone. This is his lifestyle. He doesn't relent or discriminate...But watch other Nigerians who visit or settle in Igboland. They don't cut bushes. They build nothing. But without any atom of doubt, we welcome these fellow Nigerians in Igbo communities. We offer them everything, water, food, name any type of hospitality we place at their discretion. Sadly these other Nigerians simply fold their arms and watch. They absolutely contribute nothing, invest practically nothing. It is sad."

"However we will not change our character and adopt their attitudes and lifestyles because it is obvious this is the way God created the Igbo. But my honest request to our people, Ndigbo is simple. My brother why couldn't you, from these your riches, treasures which you deposit in foreign places and lands, just a little, a minute portion invest them in Igboland, in your

community? Have you forgotten that the elders admonish that 'Charity begins at home?' Ndigbo! Don't you know that your little investment located in your community in Igboland will go a long way towards the development of your fatherland? Such investments will be of benefit to everyone, including those who may not even appreciate your kind gestures. These ventures or projects will definitely benefit those who pester you for undeserved favors. At least they will give you a breathing space so that you can continue with your labor for the good of everyone. My brother, don't you know that if your treasure is stored only somewhere else, not within your natural locality, it is worthless. No one knows tomorrow. Something can happen to you and to your 'uninsured treasure' and behold a catastrophe." The Igbo elder laments..... "That one is a generous benefactor only outside his community is worthless. Simply take note that "Aku ruo ulo", (when wealth is well distributed or shared and every Tom, Dick and Harry benefits), behold, controversies, jealousy, hate, evil disappear from neighborhoods. Someone you have helped today to get a job will ever remain grateful. No doubt, Ndigbo are never known to be beggars. If you help in creating a job for just one member of the family that favor goes further to shelter and offer hope to other dependents. In conclusion I am begging Igbos to invest also in fatherland. Where you decide not to listen, the inevitable can happen one day. If the strong man and lord is no more around, what a disaster! Fruits of hard labor disappear or fade aware in ruins!"

He concludes....

"Unfortunately Ndigbo have not still learned from the lessons of the Biafra war! We are still preaching a message of salvation to Igbos and it seems many have continued to turn deaf ear to this message. Look at our Igbo women folk. Almost every calendar year our women return home from far and wide to participate in 'August Meeting', a grand gathering meant to foster development throughout Igboland. Is such a wise undertaking or project not worthy of emulation by the men-folk? You can check if you have doubt and discover that in Nigeria it may be true that only the Igbo women folk engage in this type of venture. I believe it is high time we changed our miserable mentality. We must learn to believe that there is nothing like home. Thank you!"

A frontal attack at our "mortal enemy"! Stop messing up the Igbo race!

Another Igbo elder was not only angry with Igbos who sow bountifully only outside Igboland; he also cautions Igbo youths who bring shame to Igbo race by their nefarious (impious, shameful) activities, home and in the Diaspora, as they search for quick wealth. He describes Igbos as "a stubborn, hard-to-deal with, a messy race". He introduced the Igbo term ***'Nnyitosi',*** literally ***"messing up"*** in his hard address. He used the disturbing Igbo idiomatic expression, in a state of uncontrollable emotions, and sarcastically described the nefarious and distasteful behavior or activities of Igbos everywhere they register their presence all over the world – Asia, Europe, America, Australia etc as 'Nnyitosi'. ***'Nnyitosi'*** also means ' turning things upside down', disorganizing, and bringing confusion and disorder, causing discomfort and agony to their hosts and even friends, brothers and sisters. Children mess up their rooms and provoke their mothers' anger and often get physically punished. Stupid and poorly raised children and even adults mess up public toilets, parks and places of public interest. The elder is saying that the presence of Igbos in foreign lands where they have visited in search of greener pastures and wealth constitutes great danger, insecurity and disorder for the entire nation. They are a menace to the unsuspecting owners of the land. Disorder or the mess is soon evident when a hitherto quiet innocent community somewhere in **East Africa, Thailand, Malaysia, Dubai, Korea, Singapore, South Africa,** to mention but a few countries, begins to get reports of drug trafficking, scams and Yahoo businesses, series of violent armed robberies and kidnapping, money laundering, illegal printing and distribution of local and foreign currencies, and hitherto unusual criminal activities in their former peaceful communities. Arrests and reports of these and other crimes are traceable to newly arrived visitors and "business" men and women from Nigeria, and Igboland! Natives and nations' security executives take up arms against the wicked invaders and call them all sorts of names, imprison them or execute them. What a mess? Once the damage is done it is often difficult to clean up the mess! Igbo people put it correctly in their adage "Otu aka ruta mman…" (When one finger touches the oil, the rest of the fingers are affected. The damage is irreparable).

"Achtung! Ein Nigerianer (Attention! Alert! A Nigerian is around).

Nigerians are put to shame everyday in the lands of their sojourning. Many young immigrants are subjected to all sorts of harassment by police and security officials. Not a few had died in scuffles with police as these unwanted guests resist arrest or deportation. "***Achtung! Ein Nigerianer". (Attention! An alert! A Nigerian arrives!),*** is a usual distress alarm raised by security or customs officials at the German (Frankfurt) international airport when they catch sight of a Nigerian passport. Meticulously Nigerians are searched at all ports – land, air and sea as they visit other parts of the world. It is awful living there. Most Nigerians who abandon their fatherland in search of greener pastures know the hard truth. They pack bag and baggage as they escape with no intention of returning in any near future. Those who have settled down in Europe and America after many years of struggle engage in frantic efforts to bring their families and loved ones over to the safer areas of the world. Nigeria is not safe; they inadvertently tell the outside world and investors. 'Flee for your dire life before the Armageddon' It is worse for the Igbo of Nigeria. Known culturally for their attachment to land, Ndigbo don't easily exchange land for anything. It is a calamity not to possess a piece of land where you will be buried. That could be many years ago and more. Things have changed. For the younger generation, it is worthless keeping anything of value including land - at home.

The Truth of the Matter: Once again the same Igbo people summarize our discussion here and deliver the final judgment that admits no appeal - ***Mmadu ime isi ka ihe akoro ya!*** This is the worst indictment, proof of the case against the accused, namely, when in any way or form, you really look like, resemble the object of your caricature. If you have a nasty bulging stomach and people make fun of you, surely you can do nothing about it. You don't need to protest or go to court. Go and rest and bear your pains of natural or man-made 'deformity'. If you truly have 'cock-eye', 'bow-leg', unusual big head or ear or flat nose and your opponent uses the unfortunate features, to make nasty fun of you; rest your case. Your opponent has won. Go and lament. Does the cap fit you? If you bear any resemblance to your accusers' mockery, then you are in real trouble. Otherwise, there is no cause for alarm!

CHAPTER 11

HOW THE IGBOS COMPARE WITH AND DIFFER FROM THE JEWS – HISTORICAL SURVEY

Have the Igbo race anything in common with the Jews or are the often-quoted 'similarities' between the Jews and Igbos simple myth, wishful thinking, and fantasy? In a **White House memo dated Tuesday, January 28, 1969** to the President of the United States of America, Nixon, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger described the Igbos as **"the wandering Jews of West Africa; gifted, aggressive, westernized, at best envied and resented, but mostly despised by their neighbors in the federation"***(foreign relations document, volume E-5, documents on Africa 1969-1972).*

There are not a few Igbo scholars and Jews of today who still maintain that the Igbos of Nigeria exhibit and share common identities, fortunes and misfortunes with the Jews world-wide. The popular saying that the Igbos are the Black Jews of Africa has continued to earn credence among the Igbo and Jewish scholars today. There are truly many modern Jewish scholars who claim similar features with Igbos; conclusions they have arrived at through researches and detailed studies of both peoples. The Jews, in both homeland, Israel, and in the Diaspora are still not loved by their closest neighbors and very distant enemies all over the world. Reports of Neo-Nazi hate crimes are committed against the Jews all over the world, including the United Stated States, their second 'homeland'. Right from the Babylonian Captivity, to the Enslavement of the Jews in Egypt and their liberation, the settlement in the 'Land of their forefathers in 1948, the race has not enjoyed relative peace. Their ordeal and nasty experiences are traced to their peculiar character or mode of life. They are described as stubborn and stiff-necked people and often rebellious people, and hard to deal with. They are ambitious, domineering, and money-loving race. Their flamboyant life-style even irritated the Lord Jesus that He criticized them for loving to occupy the first positions or seats in society and anywhere. Their leaders never enjoyed any good relationship with Jesus, their son, who pronounced the several 'Woes' (curses) on them, the Scribe and Pharisees, the Chief Priests and their Elders! Their religion is still the ancient **Judaism.** Some researchers and writers refer to the Igbos as **Black Jews.** Interested readers can equally consult some

interesting recent books ***(i) Igbo-Israel: A Comparison of Igbo and Ancient Israel's Culture, By Moghalu Odi (ii) Ibos: Hebrew Exiles from Israel, By Alaeze O.***

Have the Igbo race, Igbo nation, Igbo tribe; Igbo people of Nigeria any thing in common with the Jews of the old and the present? The investigation gathered great momentum long time ago, especially during the Nigeria-Biafra war. There were strong allegations that Israel supported the Biafran cause during the civil war, and that the support failed short of diplomatic recognition. There were allegations that Biafran envoys were well received in Tel Aviv, and that the Biafra government also enjoyed the patronage of **France** and **Portugal.** The strong relationship which Igbo-Biafra enjoyed with Israel never diminished in any way after the defeat of Biafra in the battlefield. If it ever waned after the civil war, it is true that IPOB Movement under **Nnamdi Kanu** tried a lot to rekindle the good relationship, the friendship with the Jews of Israel from various sectors, political, cultural and religious. All over the social media the concept of **"Igbos as the Black Jews of Africa"** is not hard to document. There are many sources emanating from Igboland and the United States of America. There are too many Biblical references, names and locations, which Igbo scholars trace their origins or similarities to the Jewish folklores or traditional customs. Biafra-Igbos were great inventors during the civil war.

Perhaps it is as a result of Jewish fame, strength, achievements, inventions and development in various fields of technology, science and economics that a wave of nostalgia continues to sweep over the Igbo nation when they notice likely similarities or remote connections with the Jews. Igbos recall that the Jews were victims of **Hitler and Nazi aggression**, which resulted in the **Holocaust**. Why did the Hausa-Fulani Cabal order their people and soldiers to carry out the massacre of the Igbos living peacefully in Northern Nigerian among the Muslim neighbors and doing businesses with them? Could the reason be found in the simple allegation that the principal officers that organized the first military coup in Nigeria that left some of the Northern Muslim leaders dead were Igbos? Could that be enough reason to organize a massive destruction of a people, a pogrom, genocide, in an attempt to put the Igbo race (like the Jews) out of existence? The reasons for the Igbo genocide have a lot of similarities with those of the Jews of the Hitler command and the Holocaust which we give a personal

hint here. Our story throws much light to the depth of Igbo-Hausa-Fulani compared with the Jewish holocaust.

The Holocaust

It is horrific to learn how and why the Jewish massacre did spread to German Villages. As I was ending my language studies in Germany in 1974, I requested the father of the family I spent my time with to narrate to me the history of the **Jewish Holocaust** as much as he witnessed it as a youth. I have been a curios student of European and African History and of course history of Slavery in the Americas. I had quarreled with most of my German friends over their crude ideas about Africa, how primitive Africans are, or behave like monkeys, live or sleep on top of trees, etc. But I didn't care so much about their ignorance and lack of simple knowledge of history and Geography, which most African students learned even in primary schools.

My German friend told me he was 17 years old when the **"Kill Every Jew Movement"** started or was ordered in their local community near the present state or region of Munich, spreading to Koblenz, Karlsruhe, and Heidelberg. The hate killings spread like wild fire and affected almost every Jewish family that had been living peacefully and doing business with the Germans in the communities.. **The Jews were nice intelligent, loving, hardworking, prayerful people.** They were very enterprising and owned almost every big and small shop or business enterprise in the communities and were the business employers. They offered the poor villagers jobs. They bought and owned lands and developed them and were very rich people. Not all the native Germans anyway liked them. Some owners of the land were jealous of these 'foreigners'. Suddenly mass-killings of the Jews in their midst turned to 'genocide', as the massacre of the Jews turned to a deliberate and systematic destruction of the racial, political, and cultural group. The massacre of about **six million Jews** could therefore be referred to as **"genocide".** It was a wicked plot to single out a racial group for extermination.

The Jewish Holocaust vis-a-vis Biafra Genocide

Massacre is described as an act or an instance of killing a number of usually helpless or unresisting human beings under circumstances of cruelty, and **genocide** is a deliberate and

systematic destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group. The wanton and unruly killings of **Igbos** by the Hausa-Fulani hordes that led to Nigeria-Biafra war must be nothing but genocide, as a result of its enormity. The most frightening word also used to describe mass killings is **holocaust**. Holocaust is a thorough destruction involving extensive loss of lives. **The slaughter of the Jews by the Nazis during World War II is called holocaust**. Another word is **ethnic-cleansing**. The number of the Jews who got killed is usually put at about six million.

My German friend broke down in tears when he narrated and demonstrated what happened one day at their "Community Square" ***(Stadt Platz),*** when a group of young men arrived with about 20 Jewish citizens, including about 12 children. It was a horrifying spectacle! First, the victim was stripped naked. Then two strong German youths grabbed a victim, one on the right leg, and the second on the left leg. They spread the legs apart and at a count of 1, 2 and 3, the legs would be torn apart in a horrifying splash, from the buttocks to the neck, exposing the entrails of the human body! It was a terrifying experience!

That was how the victims were destined to die, one after the other. Still, unbelievable, as the 'show' of inhumanity to man was going on, some of the villagers around rushed to various homes and arrested more of the Jews and dragging them to the village square for similar execution! The villagers went from house to house and dragged every Jew around saying: "Oh, Yes, You must die, you evil people", my friend ended the terrifying story! "We have read from history books about Hitler and the Jewish Holocaust, about the world wars", I told my friend. I wanted to know really the reasons for that type of punishment. What actually were the sinful acts the Jews committed? "What did you think were other reasons, why most other Germans joined in the movement?" My friend confessed that he was shocked to note that there was great amount of simmering hatred against Jews in Germany, even among ordinary people in the villages who had nothing to do with politics. But on the D-Day everyone showed up to take their 'revenge'.

What were the Jewish Crimes?

What was the Motivation behind the Holocaust?" My friend began by explaining the role of **nationalism** in Germany before the war. "German nationalism that began to develop before

World War II was a major motivation behind many individuals who joined the Nazi Party. **Adolf Hitler,** the leader of the Nazi Party, used his profound oratory skills to manipulate the German people into following his regime's propaganda. The people were looking for something to improve the economic situation caused by the depression. The Nazi Party had a great propensity to purvey "mythical nationalist beliefs"; in 1933. They began deliberately to blame the Jewish population for the economic disparity in Germany. The Nazis told people to blame the Jews because many Jewish citizens were still wealthy while everyone else was monetarily suffering, using economic inequalities to agitate for change. That began to fuel the **anti-Semitism** that the Nazi Party endorsed. From the Old Testament Biblical History we know that Arabs, Assyria, Persians, and Israelites were called Semitic race. But Anti-Semitism refers to the modern Jews, and is described as hostility, prejudice, and discrimination against Jews.

"Another reason for blaming the Jews, as advertised by the Nazi party, was their collective refusal to fight in World War I, argued to have caused economic depression in Germany. In a state of ubiquitous anxiety, the once disjointed Germans unified under a government that provided comfort and security, a new state that would take control and help Germany become a rising hegemonic power. This newfound nationalism was built around a common enemy: the Jewish people. The people were blinded by these newly instilled nationalist beliefs, coerced by their superiors to believe that the Nazi way was the right way. The government was telling the people to represent and preserve national interest first and foremost. Simultaneously, the people were told that the Jewish citizens were threatening this national security. Some perpetrators knew exactly what evil they were doing during the Holocaust. On the other hand, other individuals were just nationalistic pawns of the Nazi Party that were so programmed to operate for the state and its interests. The binary dichotomy of victim and perpetrator is problematic because these traditional, distinct roles assume that one cannot overlap the other. The Holocaust happened in large part because an over-powering government took advantage of a weak people who just wanted to be provided with direction during a time of disparity. The people followed their government whole-heartedly because their faith in their previous government, where they had lost their possessions and valuables, had been compromised." *sic*

The people (Germans) complained bitterly about the Jews and although they lived peacefully together with them, they had a lot of **grievances** and harbored great hate in their hearts against the Jews. Some of their grievances, my narrator continued were: (a) Jews were proud and arrogant people. (b) They were overbearing and domineering. (c)They liked first places and positions everywhere. (d) Their love of money was excessive. (e) In business, they liked to cheat. (f) They had inexhaustible lust for possession and wealth. (g) They were always masters and other people were their 'slaves'. (h)They were autocratic; detested any opposition or challenges. Wow! I find great and frightening similarities comparing the Jews with my people, the Igbos of Nigeria! What people are saying about these the two races might after all not be a fairy tale or fantasy? There is need for more investigations. But all said and done I find the summary and the real answers to my questions in the great quotes of the great **German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche**, cited at the beginning of this chapter. *"To live is to suffer; to survive is to find some meaning in the suffering. He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster. And if you gaze for long into an abyss, the abyss gazes also into you. He who has a 'why' to live can bear almost any 'how'. Without music, life would be a mistake. That which does not kill us makes us stronger. One must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star. Woman was God's second mistake. Blessed are the forgetful: for they get the better even of their blunders. There are no facts, only interpretations. We have art in order not to die of the truth".* Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was a German philosopher, cultural critic, composer, poet, philologist, and a Latin and Greek scholar, born in Roecken, Luetzen, Germany, whose work has exerted a profound influence on Western philosophy and **modern intellectual history**. He began his career as a classical philologist before turning to philosophy.

There is something in the name "IGBO"

The Igbos know their worth. They are principally a proud people, in the sense that they like 'independence'. They don't like to be 'fed', and command lots of enviable virtues which usually irritate their best friends and cause their downfall. Praises poured on you by your best admirers can be sources of envy and hate and at the same time one's successes can blind somebody and prevent

him from seeing his failures and defects too. There is something in name; in the name, the race, the ethnic group, Igbo. Come rain, come sunshine, it is unlikely they will change, or be defeated, subdued, whether by suffering, persecution, isolation or marginalization. When one road closes, they will always discover another one and continue to struggle. Such adverse situations, (pogroms, genocide, ethnic cleansing, shrinking enclave, marginalization, loss of properties, and Igbophobia, like those associated with the Jews, the Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, tiny enclave around and within sworn enemies, did not start today, and may not end soon! It is not Nigerian unity that is not negotiable! It is Biafra nation that cannot be negotiated, no matter how long it takes to achieve. What is not negotiable is Biafran nationhood, national identity or independence! These beautiful verses from the Epistle to the Romans summarize the 'riddle' we are trying to untie!

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord". (Romans 8:35ff)

Arab-Israeli major wars – 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973

After the establishment of Israel in **1948**, many **major wars** have been fought between the Israel and Arabs. The **1948** Arab-Israeli war or the **first Arab-Israeli war** was fought between the state of Israel and a military coalition of Arab states over the control of Palestine, forming the second stage of the 1948 Palestinian war. The Suez Canal, or the **second Arab-Israeli War**, also known as Tripartite Aggression and Operation Kadesh or Sinai War, was an invasion of Egypt in late **1956** by Israel, followed by the United Kingdom and France. The six-Day war or **Third Arab-Israeli War** was fought between the 5th and 10th June **1967** by Israel and the neighboring states of Egypt, Jordan and Syria. The Yom Kippur War, Ramadan War, or October War, also known as **1973** Arab-Israeli War was a war fought from

October 6th to the 25th **1973,** by a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria against Israel.

"Igbos be Careful" – "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!"

"Igbos be careful!" When Ojukwu (Jr.) cried out and warned: "Igbos be Careful', as agitation for separate Biafran state was reaching a dangerous turn, the young man was not behaving cowardly. He was letting Igbo youths stop and think again. The *Igbophobia* did not start today. The seeds of discord and hate were sown long ago, and precisely by the colonial masters. They didn't mean well for Africa or for Nigeria. It was not only a policy of the so-called 'divide and rule', also established, was perpetual state of war, anarchy, disagreement and disunity. The British preferred the 'more loyal and conservative' **Muslim-Hausa-Fulani in the North,** 'the slippery unreliable Yoruba in the West, and disliked 'the dynamic, clever but proud and arrogant Igbos in the East'. It is clear that these three major ethnic groups can never forge a United Front to dislodge the colonial influence in Africa. The 'three countries', purposely referred to as 'tribes', 'ethnic groups' or 'regions', with little or nothing in common - not language, not religion or any cultural bond - will never develop, grow or have peace but will languish in perpetual state of anarchy. No type of alliance is possible, political or economic stability! It is a sad situation.

Igbo elders who know the roots of **"Igbophobia"** continue to caution the new generation of Igbo politicians seeking for political alliances with other ethnic groups in Nigeria to "count their teeth with their tongue", namely to be careful. Mutual hatred among different Nigerian ethnic groups seems to be an overt historical and social phenomenon. Brought forcibly together under colonial rule, the three regions developed the hatred and jealousies of totally different cultures. Most hated of all—and most envied by other Nigerians—were the Igbos quite possibly Africa's most capable people and, by force of energy and intellect, the dominant tribe of newly independent Nigeria. Anti-Igbo sentiment is unprecedented: Few people have been as unfortunate as Ndigbo by virtue of their relationships with other people in Nigeria, misunderstood, misrepresented, mistreated and mismanaged. Their energy and enterprise were misunderstood as 'over-ambition', their will to venture out and turn adversity to advantage, misrepresented as attempts to dominate.

Why Hausa-Fulanis massacred the Igbos in the North?

Now we examine the other side of the Igbo people of Nigeria. Our investigation will not make much meaning if we fail to recount too, what looks like the negative qualities, features or characteristics of the Igbo. It is a question of *"Man know yourself!"* If Igbos fail to acknowledge their failures, surely success in their struggles will remain a mirage for long! It will in fact be like a futile and embarrassing exercise in mediocrity! Why did the Hausa-Fulanis massacre the Igbos in the North? Are there similarities with the Jewish Holocaust? Are there lessons to learn from both calamities? The organized or random-massacre of the Igbos in various parts of Northern Nigeria that precipitated the Biafra secession was not as a result of the following factors: They were blatant fabricated and fictitious lies to justify the Igbo Genocide!

1) **Igbos wanted a separate state:** No! The Igbos were, have been, and still are the most patriotic Nigerians, who believed and worked for one united nation by whatever name. They never wanted a divided Nigeria. Most top Igbo leadership even in the face of realities of Igbo extermination never supported the Biafran secession. A very large group led by a personality like **Ukpabi Asika** sabotaged all attempts to establish an independent Biafran state!
2) Igbo army officers organized the coup and murdered the Hausa-Fulani leaders to install Igbo President and dominate the government. That really sounded credible at the first sight when General Aguiyi Ironsi (Igbo) became the military leader of the new government after the first military coup, and the end of the first Republic. But both the coup plotters and most Nigerians knew that it was only an **accident of history** and there is no need for an elaboration here. The Igbo and Yoruba political leaders who led the independence movement knew that the British agenda for independent Nigeria favored the weak Muslim North. Igbos were interested in prosperous Nigeria. Even today every Igbo man knows that it is a bad dream to talk about ***Igbo presidency*** in the present Nigerian political dispensation! Only deceived ambitious Igbo politicians entertain such a dream today.

3) **Igbo coup plotters deliberately killed the Muslim leaders because Igbos hated Islam**. The worst lie ever told! Igbos are not religious fanatics and care little about Hausa-Fulani and their Allah, Mosques and Rituals. No Igbo embraces Islamic faith for the sake of its religious or spiritual teachings or gains. Any Igbo who openly professes Islam or believes in the Koran is a fake. Perhaps for some material and political advantages or gains, the Igbo takes sides with the Muslims. The Igbo is a 'liberal' as far as religious beliefs are concerned. He accommodates the Hausa-Fulani in Igbo communities and does not interfere with their religious practices. None of the few Mosques or Islamic Centers located in Igboland during the Nigerian-Biafra war suffered any damages, while Christian churches were completely destroyed in most of the Northern cities of Nigeria.

Having eliminated or debunked some of the alleged reasons for the hate killings of the Igbos, that precipitated the war of secession in Nigeria, we have to get to the real roots of the reasons for the tragedy. Our investigation will help the Igbos, especially the younger generation unborn before the war, to come to terms with discussions about the future of Nigerian unity and Biafran problem.

'Pride', 'Arrogance', 'Jealousy' and 'Morbid Hate'

'Pride', or 'arrogance' is the English word that rightly describes the vice and evil inclination to stick to one's ugly convictions that one's actions, ways of doing things and, in fact, opinions are the best and most acceptable and most convincing. The tendency to look down on others and claim superiority for one's selfish reasons is always there. We fail to accept other people's suggestions, opinions or views, and dismiss theirs with contempt, insults aggressive utterances and scorn. Igbos are generally guilty of such actions. Not only the Igbos of Nigeria are proud and arrogant. There is no part of Nigeria, including Yorubaland, Hausa-Fulani-land, Itshekiri-land, or any ethnic group in Nigeria one may not find proud and arrogant human beings. This therefore cannot be enough reason to generate morbid dislike of Igbos by other ethnic groups in Nigeria. All over the world and in most cases, most fearless or bold people, who take risks in criticizing proud persons or leaders in authority

usually, face heavy reprisals and punishments. They are regarded as disloyal and disrespectful elements to kings, queens, presidents and rulers, and people of honor. They, therefore must consequently suffer humiliation and punishment, and reprisals. The opposite of pride is humility and most people see humility as sign of weakness. No proud person likes to be told that he or she does not possess the revered virtues of humility. So millions of people all over the world; not just the Igbos, are not humble people.

Igbos differ from the Jews, too - WJC-WIC

So when some Igbo writers, researchers, scholars, or speculators try to trace Igbo 'origins', or 'ancestry', and religious 'faith' to Israel, the Jews ancient and modern, for whatever reasons, they may not be entirely wrong. If these 'speculators' have read the History of Israel (ancient and modern - Biblical and extra-Biblical) very well, they must realize the implications of their insinuations and conclusions and the eventual consequences for the younger generation of Igbo people. Unfortunately, unlike the Jews, whom they claim to align with, Igbos, **unlike** the Jews of today are very **'divisive'**, and never 'stick together'. They are never united in action. For example, while there is **"World Jewish Congress" (WJC),** which was founded in Geneva, Switzerland, in August 1936, as an international federation of Jewish communities and organizations, unfortunately there is no functioning **'World Igbo Congress' (WIC).** What Igbos have may be seen as fragmentary associations of independent Igbo unions, fighting for leadership and at loggerheads with each other!

Unlike the Jews, the Igbos are never United

Unlike the Jews, Igbos are not united! Among the Igbo communities of Nigeria every kindred wants to convert to a village status and every village wants to be autonomous community. On the same line every autonomous community wants to be raised to local government status and there are many traditional rulers who are always ready to divide the communities so that they grab or inherit a portion of the 'kingdoms'. There is no peace, unity and love. There are too many divisions! On the national level, in the Igbo nation, the most expensive commodity one can purchase even with available

billions of dollars or naira is what they call unity. **The five Igbo states are in disarray! Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo governors** and traditional rules see the word 'unity' as a strange term. These Igbo politicians are among the worst human beings you can encounter in our corrupt world. The **present South-East Nigeria** lost the extra one state, the military regime initially denied the Igbos, because the Igbo political leaders could not agree on the 'location' of the new state in the South East! Each of the 5 states wanted the new state to be located in its 'state' or 'region!'

As general elections approach each time, the politicians distribute money to the hungry youths, and market women they had dispossessed and dehumanized during years of their dictatorial and oppressive administration. These hungry people, quickly forget their grievances, and begin singing the praises of the old and new wicked political aspirants for government offices and posts – governorship, senate, House of Representatives, state assemblies, and local government chair persons. Wow! What a horrible world! After electing fraudulent, corrupt con men and women into political offices, shortly we begin again licking our wounds. What we sow, we reap.

While Hausa-Fulanis are united under one Islamic leadership and political party (NPC, now known as PDP or APC), Yorubas, united under their traditional tribal party (AG, now known as ACN, Action Congress of Nigeria, Igbos are void and have abandoned their Igbo tribal party (NCNC, also known as APGA). Today the same real enemies of Igbo nation, the true traitors and saboteurs, Igbo 'political' sons and daughters wander about in the wilderness like confused drunken drivers in search of new political parties and alliances. They join PDP, and when they fail to achieve their selfish political goals, they decamp, cross over to another foreign party, APC, and next they cross over to ANPP OR AP, all, names of the same Hausa-Fulani Islamic parties. Igbo politicians, who claim to the educated, have not heard or learned that "Charity begins at home!"

One United Front or Many Divided Fronts!

There is one World Jewish Congress, with headquarters in Jewish homeland, Israel, and with branches in some large cities of the world, under one leadership, taking care of all Jewish political and economic interests in the hostile world. Among the great Igbo race there are too many leaders and associations –

name them **Ohaneze Ndigbo, Alaigbo Progressive Union, MASSOB, IPOB, World Biafra Congress.** There is **Independent Biafra Movement in Exile with its 'Prime minister' based in London. There is Igbo United Front** in various European and American cities. Then you have **Igbo United,** with headquarters somewhere. The divisions, commands, voices, ideologies and political manifestoes are too many to count. And these divisions blossom to bickering among the leaders, and no patriotic Igbo in the homeland is ready to accommodate or tolerate the ranting and antics of these organizations and their aggressive power struggle. What about the Church! The scenario is worse in the church. Every station wants to be raised to a parish level (and they are getting what they are looking for.) And their cup is now over-flowing. Every region wants its own diocese and bishop today or tomorrow! There are hundreds of Pentecostal churches and pastors. The competition and struggle to win membership constitute insurmountable religious problems all over Nigeria and beyond. Where is the Unity and Love they are preaching or are supposed to be practicing?

The presumed "World Igbo Congress", conceived to function like the World Jewish Congress, is unable to agree on a "unified mission statement". "Alaigbo Development Foundation" has its agenda for Igbo people. "Biafra in Exile", has its constitution and manifesto ready. "Ohaneze Ndigbo" has its vision of 'Restructuring Agenda for the Nigerian Federation, while IPOB and MASSOB, have theirs! This is a very complicated but important point. We will take the above points one by one and expand them and see how the exposure of Igbo vices in general has continued to affect their lives and undermine their quest for separate existence or the possibility of nurturing any type of meaningful association with Nigeria or acceptance of their Biafra in the world comity of nations.

Israeli/Jewish – Biafra/Igbo factor – Real or fiction

Those who compare the Jewish and Igbo 'historical' or cultural identity or sad realities of life, sagacious mental and heroic achievements and whatever, may also like to consider this important side of our investigation. Arab citizens of Israel or Arab population of Israel as historians tell us right from the foundation of modern Israel in 1948 are Israeli citizens, whose cultural and linguistic heritage or ethnic identity is Arab. Surely

not all Arabs in Israel are Muslims. We rarely hear about Arabs who worship in Jewish synagogues or Jews who worship is Mosques. The Arabs have been no friends of the Israelites of the Old or the Jews of the modern times. The stories of hate and wars that had promoted perpetual enmity and bitterness has passed from generation to generation and are told and retold in the biblical accounts, old and new testaments as well as in the profane historical books. We have outlined some of the reasons for this state of affairs above as we traced the roots of the Jewish Holocaust.

The Igbos of Nigeria share the same fate with the Jews in many ways. Their neighbors or **minorities within Igbo controlled region** never liked Igbos for the reasons we have outlined and have continued to disown their **Igbo identity.** Like the Arab Palestinians, who surely do not deny their Israeli citizenship, but do not claim to be Palestinian 'Jews', the rest of the Old Igbo South-Eastern Nigerians are ready to support the Biafran Movement but deny any Igbo citizenship, even though culturally and linguistically they are 100% Igbo. They accept Biafran citizenship but not Igbo identity. Why? The causes of their resentment had been there, not because Igbos persecuted them, massacred them, or discriminated against them. No! The root causes of their grievances lay in the attitude of the Igbo. Thanks be to God that these minority groups did not publicly join the Hausa-Fulani hordes in the pogrom. Unfortunately the Northerners mistook them all to be "Igbos", though some are not truly Igbo (the Urohbos, Itshekiris, Efiks, Ibibios and few others). But the Mid-Western Igbos, Ikwerres, most of the Present Port Harcourt and Rivers State ethnic nationals are Igbos.

The minorities in the Igbo enclave, Biafra, however have not hidden their grievances and dislike for the Igbo race as tactically their leaders and youths refused support for the Biafra war effort or became the so-called **'saboteurs'**. While true patriotic Igbo youths abandoned university and High school education (as educational institutions were closed down) and joined the army, youths from the minority areas stayed away and hid in the villages or 'crossed over to the enemy lines when Nigerian soldiers approached their borders. These youths might not have fought in the battle field, but simply directed the Nigerian soldiers to Biafran positions. The rapid retreat or withdrawal of Biafran forces from besieged towns and villages as the war raged was primarily as a result of non-cooperation of the

minority Igbo and non-Igbo ethnic border tribes who did not like core Igbo people and rather supported Nigeria in its war of aggression against the Igbos. The so-called 'core Igbo' People of Nigeria are found in the present states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo.

As the war ended the minority Igbo stock completed their denial or rejection of their Igbo identity for selfish reasons of gaining acceptance, recognition and high office appointments in the federal government of Nigeria. It worked for some of them but for most others, especially scholars, traditional rulers, educationists and historians it was a shameless exercise in futility. But whatever the case maybe we have rehearsed this Igbo-Biafra saga and the minority question to allow the younger Igbos to take note of these past events so as to be able to figure out the future relationship with 'the rest of Nigeria'. Igbos should know why their neighbors complain and continue to show resentment towards them!

The Igbo and Money – A Jewish Shylock connection

Shylock, is a character in William Shakespeare's play '**The Merchant of Venice**. A Venetian Jewish money-lender; Shylock is the play's principal antagonist. His defeat and conversion to Christianity forms the climax of the story. Shakespeare wrote many other plays we read in secondary school, like *Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar,* and many others. What is special about **'Merchant of Venice'** is the reference to **Shylock, the Jews and Money**. Shylock was a ruthless money-lender, usurer, loan shark, who demands as much as a pound of his debtor's flesh as compensation for default upon a loan. In a nut shell the Igbo is seen as a lover of money like Shylock the Jew.

Not negating their positive contributions toward the economic growth of Nigeria and any other nation and spot they set their foot on, Igbo people have lots of bad dents on their collective beautiful face and it has always connections with **money,** known to be *the root of every evil.* And for their 'presumed characteristic' excessive love of money in all its ramifications, other Nigerians do not like the Igbo. Igbos in excess, most other Nigerians insist, seem to revere money, adore it, go for it whatever the cost and risks. There is truth in what I heard my grandfather told us about this and it has even become a popular adage among both friends and foes of the Igbo in Nigeria

"**Money can raise the dead"** Oh Yes! "Agitated, furious, and aggrieved; offer the Igbo money and he will calm down." Hence this has become the litmus test to confirm the 'death' or demise of the Igbo. There is no need for medical tests or autopsy. Is he unconscious, in coma, having a cardiac arrest, there is no need to call for a medical doctor's confirmation of the final demise.

No! Set packets of wrapped money before his eyes, if the eyes are still wide open; jingle some coins into his ears, or pronounce the words 'money', 'ego' peacefully into his open ears! If he fails to react, move, or open his eyes, pronounce him dead and announce it to the people!! Such stories or jokes are often hard to dismiss, seeing how he, the Igbo, kid, young, adult, and the elderly love to handle money! There is no proof, however that the love of money which the bible declares is the root of all evils is limited to Igbo people. But it seems the enemies of Igbo people have vowed to fight this race, hate and destroy them. Their plans may not work, is our finding. Since he loves money so much, he goes for it with passion, often damning the consequences. He does not exclude some of the fraudulent ways or methods of grabbing money, accepting bribes, engaging in internet or 'yahoo' practices. In countries where human organs are bought and sold, he doesn't mind offering one of his **kidneys or livers for sale**. The next day he begins to spend the money lavishly, in flashy cars, mansions and noisy flamboyant lifestyles. He is almost addicted to what Nigerians refer to as "settlement option", and are prone to bribery and corruption in all their ramifications. Many avaricious Igbo youths have been shot and killed by their business partners at home and in the Diaspora as a result of suspicions of fraudulent practices

The "Settlement" Option – Root of Corrupt Practice

Most Nigerians claim they know the Igbos' greatest weakness, namely that the Igbo no matter his position in society and government, is ready to accept money (bribe) and forget his agitation or protest against injustice. This was the project referred to as "**settlement option**"; the presumed cause of the downfall of **Ralph Uwazurike,** the leader of MASOOB. He was said to have been 'settled' by the federal government representatives and he gave up his agitation for Biafra! So are many Igbo politicians, lawmakers and those who switch sides or change political party alliances. The Igbo can exchange any other offer, no matter how valuable and lucrative for money.

There was a story, rumor (but confirmed to be 100% true) that circulated widely among concerned Igbos of the old Eastern Nigeria, that Igbo great son, a one-time **aviation minister** accepted money (bribe) offered to him by Hausa-Fulani elites to divert the construction of an airport meant for his own town, in Eastern region to the North. It was confirmed that **Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport** was originally and conclusively meant to be built in the old Eastern Region. The **Aviation minister**, Igbo, who was expected to put down his signature on the contract documents, was **'settled'** by the Hausa-Fulani and the construction was diverted to Kano! This Igbo government minister could not resist the offer, the temptation, and money!

It is widely believed among Nigerians that their often respectable, most industrious and intelligent neighbors, friends, comrades and fellow Nigerians, the Igbo could easily be won over, deceived, and converted with money-offer. Not one Igbo lawmaker in Abuja, no matter how highly placed is trusted by any average Igbo man or woman. Each can switch sides and join their 'enemies' at any moment once he is offered some money! Money in the hands of fellow Igbo has become a symbol of deceit, in fact a national disaster. It was the main cause of the Biafra tragedy and every Igbo man or woman knows today. Those youths who were born after the end of the war know today why Biafra woefully lost the war. Not that their soldiers were no more gallant in the fields; not that they lacked the required weapons; not that the soldiers were not well fed! No! They were great and motivated fighters, with or without foreign support as Nigeria had in excess! No! Biafra lost because some of their leaders were bribed. They accepted Money and hence the sabotage! What is it? A destructive or an obstructive action carried out by a civilian, military or enemy agent, a spy, to hinder a nation's war effort. We find all details in songs and riddles, in Igbo and English!

The Emmanuel Ifeajuna Tragedy – The Lamentation

The named **"Ifeajuna"** had gone down in history for several reasons. For generations of Igbo youths unborn before the Biafra war, Ifeanuna means a lot to Igbo family. In fact many Igbos regard him as a curse on Igbo race, as the following Biafra war song portrays.

Ewoo! Mu na nwannem gara agha; akpiri ego Ifeajuna rere anyi! Ewoo! Mu na nwannem gara agha, akpiri ego Ifeajuna rere anyi! Akpiri ego gbuo nwannem o, akpiri ego gbo nwannem o! Gini k'anyi na ayo gi umu Biafra, Gini k'anyi na ayo gi Chukwu Biafra! Biko nye any amamihe, nye anyi amamihe zuru oke....

(Behold! Very deplorable! I went to battle with my brother (Major Ifeajuna).....Ifeajuna accepted money and handed us over to the enemy. He sold his brothers and sisters into slavery! Love of money brought the war to a disastrous end..... What is our next option? We ask God to grant us wisdom, wisdom that is without bounds!)

But there is yet more about **Ifeajuna.** The picture of Ifeajuna painted by one Igbo writer tells more unforgettable story about the man, said that have brought about the defeat of Biafra by the Nigerian forces, part of the consequences of the Igbo humiliation and unending suffering in the hands of the Hausa-Fulani Cabal. The Ifeajuna and co-saboteurs saga had remained a thorn in the flesh of every Igbo, a sad reminder of the results of bribery and corruption, which in Nigeria today is still an unbeatable enemy of progress and development.

What 'Emmanuel Ifeajuna' symbolizes and why no Igbo man names his son 'Ifeajuna'.

"Emmanuel Arinze Ifeajuna was born around 1935 and was executed by Emeka Ojukwu on 25 September 1967. He was an Onitsha man who graduated from the University of Ibadan (UI) with a science degree. During his time at UI, he led many students' union protests. While also at UI he became close friends with Christopher Okigbo and J.P. Clark, both of whom would go on to become prominent Nigerian poets. Ifeajuna was also a close friend of Emeka Anyaoku, later Commonwealth Secretary-General. He was affiliated with the Dynamic Party, led by mathematician Chike Obi. At the 1954 Games in Vancouver, Canada, he competed, wearing only his left shoe yet managed to clear 6 ft 8 in (2.03 m), which was both a Games record and a British Empire record for the discipline. The resulting gold medal made him the First Black African to win at a major international sports competition.

"He was one of the first University graduates to join the Nigerian Army. Post-graduation, he became a science teacher at Ebenezer Anglican Grammar School in Abeokuta. Ifeajuna remained in regular contact with Okigbo, who also went on to teach, and the two continued to discuss revolutionary politics. This culminated in Ifeajuna leaving the teaching profession to join the army in 1960. He underwent training at Mons Officer Cadet School in Aldershot, United Kingdom. As a graduate, he rose quickly within the military ranks and reached the position of Major in January 1966. He was the Brigade Major in Lagos. People often think that Major Kaduna Nzeogwu was the brain behind the first coup. Major Ifeajuna was the brain behind the first coup and Emeka Ojukwu later confirmed this in one of his interviews. It was and it is still believed that Ifeajuna killed the Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa and captured and killed Brigadier Zakariya Maimalari his commanding officer. Ifeajuna also shot and killed Lieutenant General Abogo Largema at a hotel in the Ikoyi district of Lagos. He also killed the finance minister Festus Okotie-Ebo. According to the coup plotters, they wanted to finish off the first republicans political leaders and make Obafemi Awolowo president. The first coup was foiled by General Aguiyi Ironsi and Emeka Ojukwu (both Igbos). Ifeajuna then fled to Ghana where he was welcomed by Kwame Nkruma, the then president. Nkrumah's regime was overthrown shortly afterwards on February 24, 1966, and Ifeajuna returned to Nigeria (during the war) after assurances from Emeka Ojukwu that his life would not be at risk. Ifeajuna again became involved in the military, this time within the Biafran Army.

"Emmanuel Ifeajuna, Victor Banjo, Phillip Alale and Sam Agbam began negotiating with the federal Nigerian officials, via British agents, hoping to bring about a ceasefire, overthrow Ojukwu and kill Ojukwu, kill Gowon, make Obafemi Awolowo president and gain prominent positions for themselves. Ojukwu promptly uncovered this plot and sentenced the four to death by firing squad for treason. It was believed these four men were also responsible for the fall of the newly proclaimed Republic of Benin. Ifeajuna claimed the plan was to preserve civilian lives in Enugu from an oncoming assault by federal troops (which he arranged with the Nigerian Army and the British). Ifeajuna and his three co-conspirators were executed on 25 September 1967. Enugu, the Biafran capital, was captured by federal Nigerian forces two days later (courtesy of Ifeajuna and co)". *sic*

Ifeajuna achieved a lot for Africa but his betrayal of his own people and longer-throat for money, power and ambition finished him off. Today, no Igbo man wants to name his son Ifeajuna. Possibly Nigeria would be able to find a final lasting solution to its problems, created by the British long ago. But if like the Jewish state of Israel founded in 1948 has survived in spite of the aggression of enemies around her, Igbos must be prepared to fight for her survival if they have to sustain the Biafra Movement. Here, they have to remember, always the implications of the war-time Biafra slogan: **"Onye Ndi Ilo gbara gburugburu na eche onwe ya nche mgbe nile"** *(One surrounded by vicious enemies must always be vigilant*. Surrounded by enemies or bad neighbors **(Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt)** and other Arab nations, Israel is always on guard to keep her citizens safe. It is not an easy task, one must admit!

Anti-Semitism vis-à-vis Igbophobia

Pittsburgh Mass Shooting in Jewish Synagogue

Jews share a lot with Igbos. We are sure of their common sad fate in areas of **genocide, organized persecution and hate**. Even in the United States Jews are not safe in public, private, sacred places, including in the houses of worship – the Synagogue or Church. **Anti-Semitism** is another word for **Igbophobia**. Igbos and Christians have systematically been massacred by Islamic jihadists in houses of prayer. Latest reports of mass-murder of worshipping Jews in their synagogue in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania United States of America confirmed that the memories of the Holocaust are still fresh. Reports confirmed that an anti-Semitic terrorist, armed with an assault rifle and at least three handguns, and shouting anti-Semitic slurs opened fire in a Pittsburgh synagogue Saturday morning, October 27, 2018 and killed at least 11 people and wounded many worshippers. Many people - Jews and non-Jews described the shooting as a "wicked act of mass murder", a "pure evil."

The suspect, identified by law enforcement officials as Robert D. Bowers, 46, surrendered to the police after barricading himself inside a third-floor office of the synagogue, the Tree of Life Congregation in eastern Pittsburgh. Four police officers were among the wounded, the authorities said. "It's a very horrific crime scene," said Wendell D. Hissrich, Pittsburgh's public safety

director, adding that federal investigators identified the mass shooting as a **hate crime.** "It's one of the worst that I have seen, and I have been on some plane crashes. It's very bad." One aggrieved press commentator added "It's a terrible thing what's going on with hate in our country and frankly all over the world, and something has to be done about it. "The results are very devastating," he said.

It was at least the third mass shooting in a house of worship in three years, and left Americans feeling unmoored in what has been a vitriolic political season. A gunman killed 26 people in a church in Sutherland Springs, Tex., last year and a white supremacist killed nine in a black church in Charleston, S.C. in 2015. According to the Anti-Defamation League**, Saturday's attack was among the deadliest against the Jewish community in the United States.**

Why Israel Supports Igbos and Biafra

Many Igbo patriots have suggested that President Muhammadu Buhari's support for an **independent Palestinian State** did induce Israel's sympathy and support for Biafran agitation for an independent State. Buhari's pledge to help **"our brothers and sisters in Palestine"** attain independence greatly angered the Israeli government. Buhari had in a visit to **Qatar,** promised the Emir (Head of State) Tamim Bin Hammad Al-Thani, that **"we will stand side by side with you until our brothers and sisters in Palestine achieve their desired objectives (independence)."** Buhari's meddling in the Israeli-Palestinian crisis was no doubt due to the nature of his Islamic bigotry Buhari keeps addressing Palestinians as 'our brothers and sisters,' unlike the majority of other African Muslim countries which have since soft-pedaled on their support for Palestinians."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chose to recognize Biafra at a very important televised ceremony like the Holocaust memorial, last April, 2018. Anyone who listened to his world-wide televised address at the memorial must have heard when Netanyahu chided the world "for keeping quiet and standing aside and did not prevent genocide or mass murder in ***Biafra, Cambodia, Rwanda, Sudan and also in Syria." Biafra was the first name he mentioned.*** **Netanyahu is the first Head of State of a First World country to describe the 1967-1970 war against Biafra as genocide."** It will be recalled that an Israeli envoy had earlier hinted on the impact of

Netanyahu's presence at ECOWA'S meetings in Liberia, when he said: "The Israeli Prime Minister's presence at the 51st ECOWAS summit in Liberia, the first by any Israeli leader to Africa, and the first by any non-African Head of State, coupled with the promise of a $1 billion solar power project for the region, was tailored to teach Nigeria a bitter lesson." Nigeria's absence at the "very important" regional summit may have been orchestrated to avoid the embarrassment the very large Israeli delegation would have caused the country.

Nigeria continues to lose leadership position in Africa

Even in ECOWAS and other West African sub-regional leadership positions, Nigeria continues to lose grounds. ECOWAS countries have a combined population of about 350 million, of which Nigeria, which suffers tremendous power deficit, has about 180 million or more than half of the total population. Clearly, one would have expected such solar power plant to be sited in Nigeria, but Israel chose **Liberia** apparently to snub **Nigeria.** Israel's bid for reinstatement as an observer in the African Union (AU) would further injure Nigeria's interests. Nigerians should have paid greater attention to Netanyahu's forecast at the ECOWAS summit that 'Israel is coming to Africa and Africa is coming to Israel". Nigeria's decision to withhold funding of the ECOWAS may have come to a whittling down of the country's dominance in the sub-region. Nigeria's influence in ECOWAS is at its lowest ebb. The country used to be the biggest financier of ECOWAS but stopped funding the body the moment Buhari came into power. Nigeria's indebtedness now hovers around $700,000. The other member countries are now forced to look elsewhere, and don't be surprised if none-African countries like Israel come in handy,

Nigeria and Contradictory Foreign Policies

The recent decision of **Morocco**, a northern African country, to join ECOWAS is a pointer to the belief that certain countries can't wait to **take over Nigeria's leadership role in West Africa. Many Nigerians fear that like Israel, Morocco may have a diplomatic axe to grind with Nigeria after** Buhari openly declared support for the independence of **Western Sahara** just a few months after hosting **King Mohammed VI** in Abuja". Most Nigerian political leaders don't

even know the shape of the country's foreign policy. The president goes about canvassing support for people who seek **self-determination in Israel and Morocco**, **yet rolls out the tanks on Nigerians who express the same sentiments, namely the Biafrans!** Whither Nigeria?

Igbos Share Quite a Lot with the Jews

Both 'communities' have common enemies they have to avoid or confront in order to survive as a people or race. Both are not liked because of their intelligence and ingenuity. They are hard to subdue or suppress. They share also many common features that are both ancient and modern.

"The Lemba A Lost Tribe of Israel"

Lemba is a Jewish community in South Africa. Magdel Le Roux's book ***"The Lemba, A Lost Tribe of Israel"*** has created a lot of sensation and curiosity with regard to African connections with the old tribes of Israel. Le Roux is a professor in the University of South Africa. But in an interview with one of the leaders of Lemba Jewish communities the South African Black Jew categorically made it clear to everyone stating: 'We are not ***lost Tribe*** of Israel. We are one of the ***scattered tribes*** of Israel!" From an **'Abstract'** – summary of main points of the book, in a skeletal form, concentrating on the essentials of the larger content, Magdel Le Roux' reveals the following: (a) The Lemba of South Africa regard themselves as Jews or Israelites who migrated southwards into Yemen and later as traders into Africa. (b) Scattered over parts of Southern Africa, they are concentrated largely in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces and the southern parts of Zimbabwe. The book seeks to discover to what extent ***the culture of early Israel (1250-1000 BCE) is similar to African cultures, more specifically to that of the Lemba***. A selection of presumably representative social and religious practices from these two entities had been made. Remarkable commonalities between the Lemba and the communities of early Israel do emerge in this study.

The Ethiopian Jews and Igbo connection

Many authors are equally very familiar with history of the Ethiopian Jews. In 2015 Israel approved the immigration of

9000 Ethiopian Jews as reported in the Times of Israel. According to TEL AVIV (JTA) reports, Israeli government had approved entry of the "last" group of Ethiopian Jews awaiting immigration to Israel. The move came two years after the arrival of 450 Ethiopian Jews then deemed to be the "last" such group. Indeed, there have been several groups said to be the last since Ethiopian immigration began in the 1970s. The initial wave was supposed to have ended with a giant military-style operation in 1991. Experts and Ethiopian community members say this group may actually be the one capping three decades of Ethiopian immigration. But when the new arrivals hit Israel, they'll encounter a whole new set of challenges. Ethiopian-Israelis lag in employment, wages and education, and have protested what they call institutional discrimination. **It had been confirmed that Jews had lived in Ethiopia for 3,000 years.** Many believe that Jews first arrived in Ethiopia three millennia ago after splitting off from King Solomon's ancient Jewish kingdom. Since then, Ethiopian Judaism developed mostly in isolation from the rest of world Jewry. Nnamdi Kanu and the IPOB have continued to retrace the Igbo roots to Israel. Could the Igbo really be one of the tribes of the 'lost' or scattered tribes of Israel?

Nnamdi Kanu on Israeli TV – Israel and Biafra

After his reappearance since the **Python Dance** operation to kill the leader of the **Indigenous People of Biafra** (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu was interviewed by an **Israeli Anchorman**, October 26, 2018. An Anchorman is the main host of a television or radio program, particularly one relating to important breaking world news. An Anchorman is a broadcaster, who introduces reports by other broadcasters. He interviews important guests on important issues, primarily to let world, listeners **'hear from the horse's mouth.** Nnamdi Kanu answered questions like a well-groomed leader and politician. He retold the Biafra story, the secession, the genocidal war, the second Biafra Revolution, the Python Dance, his escape from Afaraukwu and his arrival in Israel and not London. Kanu told his Israeli audience all about Igbo/Jewish connections, including ***Nri, Aguluri, and Arochukwu*** researches and findings, similarities between Igbo Traditional Religion and Judaism, the God of Abraham and **Chukwu Abiamara**. Brilliantly Kanu explained to his audience what Igbo/Biafra wanted Israel to do for the Igbos – one of the scattered tribes (not lost) of Israel. The Igbos/Biafrans are like

the Jewish Lemba people of South African and the Ethiopian Jews. With the help of sympathetic friendly nations, and organizations, including Israel and the United States, Nnamdi Kanu's struggle for Independent state of Biafra will not be in vain.

CHAPTER 12

MILITARY DICTATORSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP IN THE MURKY WATERS OF NIGERIAN POLITICS.

Nigerian Heads of State (1960 – 2019 – 58 years)

(1) Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (October 1,1960- January 10, 1966
(2) General Aguiyi Ironsi (January 1966 – July 29, 1966
(3) General Yakubu Gowon (1966 – 1975 – 9 years)
(4) General Murtala Muhammed (July 30th 1975 - 13th Feb - 1976 - about 6 months)
(5) General Olusegun Obasanjo (OBJ) (1976 – October 1, 1979)
(6) Civilian Shehu Shagari (1979 – December 1983 – 4 years)
(7) General Muhammedu Buhari (1984 – 1985 – 1 year)
(8) General Ibrahim Babangida (1985 – 1993 – 9 years)
(9) General Sani Abacha (1993 – 1998 – 6 years)
(10) Major General Abdulsalami (9 June 1998 to May 1999 – 1 year)
(11) In Civilian Garb, Olusegun Obasanjo (OBJ) (1999 – 2007 – 8 years
(12) Umaru Musa Yar'adua (? years)
(13) Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (GEJ) (2007 – 2015 – 8 years)
(14) In Civilian Garb, Muhammed Buhari (2015 –

There is no doubt that the type of political leadership Nigerians witnessed after the 1966 coup will continue to affect their ways of life for long. It is difficult to separate the wheat from the cockle. There is little or no difference between the administration or leadership of a 'head of state' in military uniform (a soldier) and that of a civilian (usually politician by profession). Former military heads of state in Nigeria, sooner or later removed their military attires and became 'politicians' and started contesting for political offices in 'democratic' elections. Neither the soldiers nor the soldiers-turned-politicians ever qualified as credible political leaders. They did not attend any known political institutions, schools of economics, or law schools. They were only intoxicated with power to lead and as well enjoy all the honors and paraphernalia that went with political leadership, especially

in the black African fashion. Some undoubtedly, tried through many fouls means to install themselves 'presidents for life'. They never graduated as managers of institutions and none was known to be a great academic. Some were said to have absolutely no credible academic credentials, naturally demanded by any political institution for ministerial appointment.

There is no wonder that many Nigerian youths have gotten disoriented. There are no known criteria for leadership being demanded from aspirants to political offices. It became a free-fight for all. Equally true is that the future of leadership in Nigeria is quite uncertain, in fact in jeopardy. Times without number various authors have identified the trouble with Nigeria as that of leadership. No one contests that assertion. Nigerian political leaders and elites have blazed the trail and showed the youths the wrong way of doing things. Disoriented as it were the youths have taken to the streets, not necessarily in protest, but doing whatever they can to become wealthy and popular, no matter how vicious, shameful and disgraceful the ways and means they employ are. There are no guardians and mentors, no teachers to emulate, no worthy leaders to follow, absolutely no masters to fear for punishment or misbehavior. Ask any young intelligent and admirable Nigerian graduate, why he is taking to politics and wants to run for the senate, house of representatives or any other political office; you will be disappointed by his response. His first motivation is not to serve his constituency and fatherland. He is attracted by the huge sum of money the Nigerian lawmakers make every month, the remunerations and gratuities at their disposal. They see politics in Nigeria as the best and easiest way of acquiring fast wealth.

A saying among the Igbos rightly points to the direction Nigeria is moving to, especially since the military took over political administration in the country. A simple expression of a mournful look or feelings on the face of the elderly can precipitate or provoke an uncontrollable or perhaps unprecedented scenario of massive ecstatic weeping and lamentation among the youths. *(Okenye mia onu akwa, umuaka ebegburu onwe ha akwa).*Another expression paints the emerging picture this other way, too: A simple command, order or encouragement from an elder to the youth to engage in acts of violence, ends up in massive destruction of lives and properties. *(Nwata nna ya nyere ntuzi aka ime ihe ojoo n'eji ukwu agbaka uzo).* Nigerian elder statesmen and women of every grade and status, including parents and guardians have brazed the trail and

the youths could only move ahead in relentless efforts to accomplish the unthinkable. At home parents continued encouraging their sons and daughters to join their mates in the new 'Search for Security, in the greener pastures overseas in the massive accumulation of new types of wealth. Parents, brothers and sisters instruct their loved ones eager to travel abroad: "Join them, when you get there try your hands and luck in whatever these other fellows do to get so rich in such short periods of sojourn overseas".

It has in fact become the opening and closing news of the day in Nigeria, morning and evening news, curious and often frightening, how a young Nigerian youth who visited Malaysia a year ago came back at Christmas with fleet of cars, including jeeps and land rovers and of course millions of cash in dollars, pounds and Euros. In fact the young man has purchased hundreds acres of land in the cities and had commenced building constructions all over and establishing private companies of his own and being managed by brothers and sisters at home! Wow! At home, and in the Diaspora there is no type of bad and 'good' news about the wicked, dishonest and dishonorable activities of Nigerians that circulates in the social news media. Massive scams, violent armed robberies, kidnappings, money laundering and dishonest practices practiced and executed on fellow countrymen and women as well as on foreigners anywhere these are found.

Sad Tale of Misrule and Corrupt Leadership

The bible recounts this type of disaster that struck the old people of Israel, this tragedy with a story beginning like this; "And there arose a Pharaoh (king) who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1:8). And in a similar story "This was the sin of the house of Jeroboam that led to its downfall and to its destruction from the face of the earth….." (1 Kings: 13.34). "When he tore Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam, son of Nebat their king. Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the Lord and caused them to commit great sin.

Unfortunately the old story of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt and leading to the happy memories during the time of their son Joseph and then their enslavement, hardship and persecution in Egypt does not actually fit Nigeria context. The point is that there had never been a period in the history of the contraption named Nigerian, before the colonization,

amalgamation, and independence and after independence to the present times can Nigerians claim they had enjoyed any kind of good leadership or having been well treated. Since these separate entities, with nothing common in name, culture and religion, got its name made up and imposed from the 'Niger River', there had never been any peace and good leadership. Right from the periods of agitation for independence by the Southern freedom fighters, the Northern Hausa-Fulanis had resisted identification with the Southerners. It was truly a bad idea of the British to have implemented the arrangement of the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Nigeria. From Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the first Prime Minister to the second appearance General Buhari on the political throne (1966 – 2019), a period of more than 50 years of the chequered Nigerian political history, more than 15 woeful corrupt leaders have experimented with Nigeria in political jamboree.

Yakubu Gowon

General Yakubu Gowon was head of the Federal Military Government from 1966 to 1975, had full support and backing of the Hausa-Fulani Cabal and the British government. He took power after the counter-coup of July 29, 1967, during which all Igbo top military officers and others of various ranks were massacred, including civilians of South-Eastern origin. The original intention of Murtala Mohammed and his fellow counter-coup-plotters was said to have been to engineer the secession of the Northern region from Nigeria as a whole, but they were subsequently dissuaded from carrying out their plans by several advisors, among them high-ranking civil servants and judges, and importantly emissaries of the British and American governments who had interest in the Nigerian polity and oil. The counter-coup-plotters decided to appoint Lieutenant Gowon (not from the Hausa-Fulani ruling class), but a Christian from the Middle Belt region, as Nigerian head of state. On ascent to power Gowon reversed Ironsi's Decree Number 34, which proposed the abolition of the federal system of government in favor of **unitary**, a position which had been championed by the South-dominated NCNC.

In anticipation of eastern secession, after the failures of peaceful negations with the injured and battered Eastern region, Gowon moved quickly to weaken the support base of the region by decreeing the creation of **twelve new states to replace the**

four regions of the Nigerian federation. Six of these states contained minority groups that had demanded state creation since the 1950s. Gowon and his leaders rightly calculated that the eastern minorities would not actively support the Igbos, given the prospect of having their own states if the secession effort were defeated. Many of the soldiers that fought in the Nigerian civil war to bring the Eastern Region back to the federation, were members of minority groups. Gowon led the Nigerian delegation to the aborted Aburi peace meeting with Biafran delegation led by General Odimegwu Ojukwu. Accepting the instructions of the British officers, Gowon refused to implement the Aburi accord, which led to the Nigeria-Biafra war (1967-70). Yakubu Gowon should be held responsible principally for the disastrous consequences of the war and the Igbo genocide.

On October 1, 1974, in flagrant contradiction to his earlier promises, Gowon declared that Nigeria would not be ready for civilian rule by 1976, and he announced that the handover date would be postponed indefinitely. Furthermore, because of the growth in bureaucracy, there were allegations of rise in corruption. Increased wealth in the country resulted in fake import licenses being issued. There were stories of tons of stones and sand being imported into the country, and of General Gowon himself saying to a foreign reporter that **"the only problem Nigeria had was not money, but how to spend the money that was available and in the federation treasury."** Money from oil revenue, which tripled during the Middle East war made Nigeria the richest nation in Africa and beyond. Corruption and scandals provoked serious discontent within the army and on **29 July 1975,** while Gowon was attending an OAU summit in Kampala a group of officers led by **Colonel Joe Nanven Garba** announced Gowon's overthrow. The coup plotters appointed **Brigadier Murtala Muhammed** as head of the new government, and **Brigadier Olusegun Obasanjo** as his deputy. As the bible would put it "Yakubu Gowon reigned over Nigeria for 9 years. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Then another succeeded him" (2 Kings 13)

Murtala Muhammed: ("All who take the sword perish by the sword" Mat. 26.52ff)

Murtala Muhammed wasn't a new face or figure in coup plotting. Though a no-nonsense man as regards discipline or good governance was concerned, he was as well a brutal general that played a major role in the prosecution of the war against the 'secessionist Biafra'. One source of information linked Murtala Muhammed to the famous "Abagana military disaster", where the desperate attempt by the federal army to capture the International Onitsha Market ended in a fiasco. Abagana became the waterloo of the heavily equipped federal forces coming from the Nsukka-Enugu sectors of the war. Another source tells us that during the war, Muhammed was General Officer (GOC) of the Nigerian Army's Second Division. This division was said to be responsible for the legendary beating back of the Biafran Army from Mid-Western Region. Lieutenant Ishola Williams, an officer who served under then Colonel Muhammed alleged that Murtala Muhammed ordered the summary execution of Biafran prisoners of war. Professors Bird and Ottanell in a study titled ***"The History and Legacy of the Asaba, Nigeria Massacres"*** documented the mass murder of civilians (often referred to as the '**Asaba Massacre'** by troops of Second Division under **Murtala Mohammed**. The documentary "Asaba Massacre" has been reviewed many times in CNN, BBC and other international news media. The victims of that horrible massacre have equally been yearly remembered by Asaba indigenes and other Mid-western regions of Nigeria.

Murtala Muhammed had enough blood on his palms, and as the bible has it "those who live with the sword die by the sword". On 13 February 1976, Muhammed set off for work along the usual route on George Street, Lagos. Shortly after 8.00 a.m, his Mercedes Benz car travelled slowly in the infamous Lagos traffic near the Federal Secretariat Ikoyi in Lagos and a group of soldiers (members of an abortive coup led by one Colonel **Dimka**) emerged from an adjacent petrol station, ambushed the vehicle and assassinated Murtala Muhammed. Many Nigerians, however, including some Igbos were unhappy about Murtala's demise. They lamented and cursed the coup plotters, who murdered Muhammed. He truly accomplished a lot as a 'committed', though brutal military leader. Unfortunately, as the saying goes, "good things don't last". "Good leaders are never cherished in the evil world!" Many newspaper headlines

questioned: **"Who hired Lt. Col Buka Suka Dimka?"**As head of state, it was Murtala Muhammed who put in place plans to build a new Federal capital Territory in Abuja. On February 3, 1976, he announced that the federal capital will in the future be moving to Abuja, in the central part of the country, due to Lagos being overcrowded city. Murtala Muhammed was immortalized when the Lagos International Airport was named after him, and as well his portrait adorns 20 naira note.

Truly a lot of questions were asked as regards the reasons for his assassination. But we had included what looked like a newspaper "tribute" at his funeral: "That was Murtala Muhammed, who mounted the saddle of leadership on July 30, 1975, but was assassinated less than seven months in office. The initial reasons for his death included his retirement of Yakubu Gowon and sacking corrupt military governors and administrators and other influential cabals in government. For nearly half a century after his stint as Nigeria's military leader, Murtala Mohammed remained widely regarded as a dogged corruption fighter who took fearless steps against corruption and disorder in a decadent and evil nation."

USA Department of State: Briefing Memorandum (August 18, 1975
("Secret")

To: The Secretary
From PA – John E. Reinhardt

Nigeria After the Coup of July 28, 1975

This memorandum is presented in response to your request of August 14. It is concerned with the nature of the new government, its prospects, and continuing **American interest**

The New Leadership

The leader of the coup against General Yakubu Gowon is an erratic, vainglorious, impetuous, corrupt, vindictive, intelligent, articulate, daring Hausa. **Brigadier Murtala Muhammed** was a prime force in the Nigerian coup of July, 1966, which brought Gowon to power, and is one of the two principal plotters against Gowon for the past two years. He commanded a division during the Nigerian civil war, was involved in the only

documented cases of **genocide,** won one important battle, and thereafter coasted for upwards of two years until Gowon finally removed him from command and placed him in charge of Army signals, a position which he held until last month., though he combined his military role with the civilian position of Commissioner (Minister) of communications from July 1973, until the coup. Muhammed inherits from Gowon vast petroleum resources (potentially 3-3.5 million BPD, based on the known reserves), considerable but neglected agricultural wealth, tremendous but untapped natural gas reserves, other minerals (coal, tin, columbite, uranium), by African standards an excellently trained civil service, and the dubious asset of eighty million people. **'Secret'** (cancelled); '**Declassified';** PA/HO Department of State/ E.O. 12958, as amended/ May 4, 2006.

The Nigerian State and U.S. Strategic Interests

What do we make out of the above Document? Who is **J. E, Reinhardt**, (John Edward Reinhardt (March 8, 1920 – February 18, 2016). who supplied to the United States Secrete Service (CIA/FBI) the "Declassified" information? He was United States diplomat and ambassador to Nigeria (1971-1975). From available information Reinhardt was born in Knoxville, Tennessee. After graduating from Knoxville College in 1939, he attended the University of Chicago, initially pursuing a graduate degree in English, but did not finish on account to serving in World War II. His doctorate in English was completed in 1950 at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He was the American ambassador to Nigeria from 1971 to 1975, becoming one of the first black ambassadors. From 1975 to 1977, he was Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.

If some Nigerians are truly worried about the future of their country, they should listen to the address or the much quoted speech of Princeton *N. Lyman, the former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria and South Africa titled* ***"The Nigerian State and U.S. Strategic Interests***" at the Achebe Colloquium at Brown University. Nothing has really changed as regard United States and other Western interests and influence in Nigerian politics! A lot has really changed and had gone wrong and Nigeria may never succeed in recovering her past 'glories', if she ever had one before. In his speech Lyman suggests that rather than continually emphasizing Nigeria's strategic importance; it would behoove us to consider elements that might

eventually lead to Nigeria's irrelevance on the international stage. It is foolhardy arguing about it; it has been long Nigeria lost relevance on the world stage. The reckless leadership extends to years of dictatorship and massive corruption.

Dented Image of a Nation – Nigeria

The lesson we draw from American's call on Nigeria for caution touches the heart of our discussion on **Igbo relevance in Nigeria.** It has been long the rest of the Nigerian ethnic groups revered, feared, adored **Igbos** for whatever Igbos claimed they possessed more than other Nigerians, intelligence, education, wit, wealth, entrepreneurship, industry, valor, etc. If Nigerians had doubted any of those wonderful qualities beforehand, not during the three-year Nigeria-Biafra war! But it seemed a lot of the Igbo 'fame' has waned or faded. There is a lot for Nigerians and Igbos to learn from the Lyman's speech. Igbos behold Nigeria being torn to pieces! And didn't one Igbo adage pronounce the verdict! "Cock, watch where the hawk's meat is being shared.....you were once siblings!" **(Okuko, lee nga ana abo okwa!!)**

Lyman's long connection with Nigeria of 'those years' may have helped him recall having a deep and abiding vital emotional attachment to the Nigerian people, their magnificence, their courage, artistic brilliance, their irony, sense of humor in the face of challenges etc. But a lot had changed for the worse! Hence he quickly added: "And I hope that we keep that in mind when I say some things that I think are counter to what we normally say about Nigeria.....I have a feeling that we both Nigerians and Americans may be doing Nigeria and Nigerians no favor by stressing Nigeria's strategic importance." What were those arguments about Nigeria's 'great achievements' which are ***no more relevant*** today? (a) Nigeria is a major oil producer. (b) Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. (c) It has made major contributions to Africa in peacekeeping, and of course negatively if Nigeria were to fall apart the ripple effects would be tremendous, etc.

Then the relevant question, the American went on: "But I wonder if all this emphasis on Nigeria's importance creates a tendency of inflating Nigeria's opinion of its own invulnerability. Among much of the elite today, I have the feeling that there is a belief that Nigeria is too big to fail, too important to be ignored, and that Nigerians can go on ignoring some of the most

fundamental challenges they have, many of which include;- (a) Disgraceful lack of infrastructure (b) The growing problems of unemployment. (c) The failure to deal with the underlying problems in the Niger-Delta (including Biafra of course) (d) The failure to consolidate democracy and somehow feel Nigeria will remain important to everybody because of all those reasons that are strategically important.

Mr. Lyman was not sure that was helpful, and decided, sort of, to deconstruct those elements of 'Nigeria's importance', and wondered whether they are as relevant as they have been. Here really is where Nigerians goof around! "We often hear that one in five Africans is a Nigerian. What does it mean? Do we ever say one in five Asians is a Chinese? Chinese power comes not just for the fact that it has a lot of people but it has harnessed the entrepreneurial talent and economic capacity and all the other talents of China to make her a major economic force and political force. What does it mean that one in five Africans is Nigeria? It does not mean anything to a Namibian or a South African. It is a kind of conceit." "What makes it important is what is happening to Nigerians. Are their talents being tapped? Are they becoming an economic force? Are all their potentials being used?"

"And the answer is "Not really." And oil, yes, Nigeria is a major oil producer, but Brazil is now launching a 10-year program that is going to make it one of the major oil producers in the world. And every other country in Africa is now beginning to produce oil. And Angola is rivaling Nigeria in oil production, and the United States has just discovered a huge gas reserve which is going to replace some of our dependence on imported energy."So if you look ahead ten years, is Nigeria really going to be that relevant as a major oil producer, or just another of the many oil producers while the world moves on to alternative sources of energy and other sources of supply?" **What about Nigeria's influence and its contributions to the continent today?** As our representative from the parliament talked about, there is a great history of those contributions. "But that is history. Is Nigeria really playing a major role today in the crisis in Niger on its border, or in Guinea, or in Darfur, or after many promises making any contributions to Somalia? The answer is no, Nigeria is today **not** making a major impact, on its region, or on the African Union or on the big problems of Africa that it was making before.

What about its economic influence? "The truth is there is a de-industrialization going on in Nigeria, a lack of

infrastructure, a lack of power means that with imported goods under globalization, Nigerian factories are closing; more and more people are becoming unemployed, and Nigeria is becoming a kind of society that imports and exports and lives off the oil, which does not make it a significant economic entity". **Nigeria is becoming much less relevant to USA and rest of the world:** The American widens the scope of the present discussion and makes his clearest statement on why and how Nigeria is fast becoming much less relevant to the world. It is frightening and cannot be ignored! He continues: "Now, of course, on the negative side, the collapse of Nigeria would be enormous, but is that a point to make Nigeria strategically important? 'Years ago, I worked for an Assistant Secretary of State who had the longest tenure in that job in the 1980s and I remember in one meeting a minister from a country not very friendly to the United States came in and was berating the Assistant Secretary on all the evils of the United States and all its dire plots and in things in Africa and was going on and on and finally the Assistant Secretary cut him off and said: "You know, the biggest danger for your relationship with the United States is not our opposition but that **we will find you irrelevant."**

The point is that Nigeria can become **much less relevant** to the United States. We have already seen evidence of it. When President Obama went to **Ghana** and not to **Nigeria,** he was sending a message, that Ghana symbolized more of the significant trends, issues and importance that one wants to put on Africa than Nigeria. And when I was asked by journalists why President Obama did not go to Nigeria, I said "what would he gain from going? Would Nigeria be a good model for democracy, would it be a model for good governance, would he obtain new commitments on Darfur or Somalia or strengthen the African Union or in Niger or elsewhere?" No he would not, so he did not go. And when Secretary Clinton did go, indeed but she also went to Angola and who would have thought years ago that Angola would be the most stable country in the Gulf of Guinea and establish a bi-national commission in Angola.

Rededication and commitment or Failure: Lyman points out without any equivocation, that the handwriting may already be on the wall, and that is a sad commentary. Because what it means is that Nigeria's most important strategic importance in the end could be that it has failed. And that is a sad conclusion. It does not have to happen, but I think that we ought to stop talking about what a great

country it is, and how terribly important it is to us and talk about what it would take for Nigeria to be that important and great. And that takes an enormous amount of commitment. And you don't need saints; you don't need leaders like Nelson Mandela in every state, because you are not going to get them."

Layman continued: "I served in South Korea in the middle of the 1960s and it was time when South Korea was poor and considered hopeless, but it was becoming to turn around, later to become to every person's amazement then the eleventh largest economy in the world. And I remember the economist in my mission saying, you know it did not bother him that the leading elites in the government of South Korea were taking 15 - 20 percent off the top of every project, as long as every project was a good one, and that was the difference. The leadership at the time was determined to solve the fundamental economic issues of South Korea economy and turn its economy around. It has not happened in Nigeria today. You don't need saints. It needs leaders who say "You know we could be becoming **irrelevant,** and we got to do something about it".

Obasanjo's First Military Adventure as Head of State

With the demise of the no-nonsense and ruthless man leading a 'crusade for sanity' and change for better future for the nation, Nigerians once again reentered another dark tunnel in its political history. Murtala Muhammed was succeeded by the Chief of staff, Supreme Headquarters, **Olusegun Obasanjo**, who completed his plan of an orderly transfer to civilian rule by handing power to **Shehu Shagari** on October 1, 1979

Shehu Shagari

Described as a good honest man, it was said he did not have complete control over the immensely powerful ministers in his cabinet, just like Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. While Shagari worked honestly, he was not powerful enough to control, direct, or sack the many dishonest men and women working alongside him. Shehu Shagari's National Party of Nigeria (NPN) won the 1983 general elections. These were known as the worst elections in Nigerian history. The political parties resorted to violence, arson, vote rigging and other malpractices in the struggle for victory. Shagari, however in that second tenure tried to reorganize his cabinet, appointing respected technocrats such as

Emeka Anyaoku, but mistakenly reappointed his relative, **Umaru Dikko,** who had been a well-known corrupt man.

Soon after Shagari began his second term as president on 31 December 1983, the military staged a coup. It was led by General **Muhammed Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon.** The coup was launched two days after Shagari had announced an austerity program, forced due to a fall in the price of oil, which provided 90% of government revenue. Shagari and many cabinet members were arrested. Buhari said the coup was required to remove the 'inept and corrupt administration' that left Nigeria a beggar nation.

Muhammed Buhari

Before he became a military president of the federal republic of Nigeria, most Nigerians could recount or recall some of the following issues about Buhari;

(1) Lieutenant Muhammedu Buhari was one of the participants in the July 1966 so-called "Counter-Coup", led by Lt-Col Murtala Muhammed.

(2) During the civil war Buhari was assigned to the First Division under the command of Lt-Col Shuwa. He served in several sectors. But in 1968 he was posted to the 4th sector, also called the Awka sector which was charged to take over the military attempt to capture Onitsha from the second Division of the Nigerian army. The sector's operation was within the Awka-Abagana-Onitsha region. It was in this sector that Buhari's group suffered a lot of casualties, **(called "Abagana Disaster"),** trying to get to Onitsha and Nnewi along Oji River and Abagana.

(3) After the war (1974-1975) Buhari was Acting Director of Transport and supply at the Nigerian Army Corps of supply and Transport headquarters

(4) From August 1 1975 to 3 February Murtala Muhammed appointed Buhari as governor of the North-Eastern State.

(5) From 1976 to 1978, the head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo appointed Buhari as the Federal Commissioner for Petroleum and Natural resources (NNPC). During Buhari's tenure as commissioner, 2.8 billion Naira allegedly went missing from the accounts of the NNPC. Many Nigerian officials including Ibrahim Babangida allegedly accused Buhari of being responsible for this fraud. It cannot be denied that the 2.8 billion Naira fraud which occurred when Buhari was minister of NNPC, whether proved 100% true or not, left a bad spot on his name. In

the later years of his services in various capacities, Buhari made 'fight against corruption' his priority task to bring sanity back to Nigeria as a nation. Did he succeed?

Buhari- Head of State in military uniform (1983-85)

Highlights of Buhari's activities during his tenure of office as military president after overthrowing the government of Shehu Shagari include the following:

(1) "War on corruption". Buhari mounted an offensive against entrenched interests. In 20 months as head of state, about 500 politicians, officials of businesses were jailed for corruption during his stewardship. Detainees were released after paying back to the government some of the stolen or looted sums of money and as well, agreeing to meet certain conditions.

(2) Many Nigerians still remember the so-called **"Umaru Dikko Affair".** It was another defining moment in Buhari's military government. Umaru Dikko, a former minister of Transport under the previous civilian administration of President Shehu Shagari, was accused of embezzling $1 billion in oil profits. With the alleged former Israeli Mossad agents, the Nigerian Security Organization, NSO traced him to London, where operatives from Nigeria and Israel kidnapped and drugged him. They placed him in a plastic bag, which was subsequently hidden inside a crate labeled as "Diplomatic Baggage". The purpose of this secret operation was to ship Umaru Dikko off to Nigeria on an empty Nigerian Airways Boeing 707 to stand trial for embezzlement. The plot was foiled by British airport officers.

(3) One of the most enduring legacies of Buhari government has been the War against Indiscipline (WAI). The policy tried to address the perceived lack of public morality and civic responsibility of Nigerian society. It was a 'project' many Nigerians, young and old saw as the right idea towards curbing disorder and near-total collapse of discipline and civic morality.

(4) Buhari's numerous Decrees geared towards cracking down of public dissent, freedom of speech, harassment and jailing individuals who went on strike won for Buhari the title of **"Dictator'**. His regime drew criticisms from many foreigners and Nigerians, including Nigeria's first Noble Prize winner, Wole Sonyinka, who in 2007, wrote a piece called **"The Crimes of Buhari",** which outlined many of the abuses conducted under his military rule.

(5) In August 1985, Major General Buhari was overthrown by **General Ibrahim Babangida** and other members of the Supreme Military Council.

"Muhammedu Buhari reigned over Nigeria for 1 year. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Then another succeeded him"

Ibrahim Babangida (1985 – 1993)

Ibrahim Babangida who ruled Nigeria from 1985 to 1993 overthrew General Muhammed Buhari. Buhari had earlier in his own military coup overthrown the weak civilian government of Shehu Shagari and returned political leadership to the military. The tale of the leadership of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB), no doubt must go down in Nigerian history as one of the worst evils that happened to Nigeria and can directly be likened to that of the biblical ***'Jeroboam, son of Nebat that taught Israel to sin.*** Also known as **"Maradonna**", a figure of an Argentine world soccer wizard, known for his tricks in soccer fiestas and world championships, like scoring winning goals with hands instead of head and legs, Babangida truly introduced a lot into Nigerian politics, murder, assassinations, scams and dubious political and economic policies, like (SAP), structural adjustment programmed, that truly brought Nigeria to a near-total collapse and completely dehydrated in morals. Like Jeroboam of the old who 'taught Israel to sin' Babangida taught Nigerian youths the heinous crime of trafficking in drugs, which Nigerians are today leading offenders? The death of **Dele Giwa,** through a letter-bomb, is associated with Babangida military regime. The journalist and others were involved in the drug-trafficking saga in which the lady, **Gloria Okon** and other unnamed traffickers were involved.

Babangida, who remained a 'sacred cow', as far as criticisms of his administration were concerned, annulled the only elections that could have returned Nigeria once against on the road to sanity, democratic rule. Babangida was a key player in most of the military coups in Nigeria (July 1966, February 1976, December 1983, August 1985, and April 1990). Reckoning with Babangida's evil tricks in government (which earned him the appellation 'Maradonna'), it remained a mystery that after retirement from the army, certain political parties and

politicians, mostly from the Northern region of Nigeria, were ever prepared to name Ibrahim Babangida as their "presidential candidate!" Certainly, it on record, that it is 'Only in Nigeria', that such a figure, together with his likes, General Sani Abacha and Muhammed Buhari, could be the best 'choice' of the people, presumed to know what moral leadership and democratic dispensation should be all about!

Ibrahim Babangida and OIC Saga

Very important to recall that it was under Babangida administration that Nigeria in January 1986 joined the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) as its 46th member. The international organization was founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states, with a collective population of over 1.5 billion as of 2009 with 47 countries being **Muslim** Majority countries. Whatever the implications for Nigeria (supposed to practice a secular democracy, all non-Muslims in Nigeria saw that move as clear intentions or signal from the Northern Hausa-Fulani Muslim oligarchy to Islamize the nation. As a result of his opposition to OIC, the chief of staff supreme headquarters Commodore Ebitu Okoh Ukiwe was removed from office by Babangida. As at the time this present work was nearing completion, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), a group representing all Christian churches, has continued protesting, requesting the government to remove Nigeria from the OIC. There are no signs that the government is paying any heed to those demands. Babangida has been an influential member of the Northern Cabal and king-maker.

As corruption became institutionalized in the Nigerian political administration, it was clear that it was **Babangida** who blazed the trail, namely, the first who set the precedent, who did something novel, who broke new grounds for others to follow. References *like "He who made Israel to sin, like Jeroboam, son of Nebat, the wicked King of Israel*" demonstrates how vicious and monstrous Babangida was as one of the worst if not the most recorded corrupt Nigerian leader of the modern time. The late Tiv warrior, **Gideon Orkar's,** unsuccessful coup speech of April 1990 contained references to this event. Who was Orka? Major Gideon Gwaza Orkar was the Nigerian military officer who staged a violent coup against the government of General Ibrahim Babangida on April 22, 1990. Orkar and his conspirators seized the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), various

military posts around Lagos and the Dodan Barracks, Lagos, the military headquarters and presidential residence. Babangida was present when the barracks were attacked but managed to escape by a back route. In his coup address, Orkar called for the excision of five northern states. However, the coup was crushed by the Babangida regime and Orkar was executed. We present the **highlights of Major Gideon Orka's address**

Fellow Nigerian citizens,

a) On behalf of the patriotic and well-meaning peoples of the Middle Belt and the southern parts of this country, I, **Major Gideon Orka**, wish to happily inform you of the successful ousting of the dictatorial, **corrupt, drug baronish,** evil man, deceitful, homo-sexually-centered, prodigalistic, un-patriotic administration of **General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida.**

b) We have equally commenced their trials for unabated corruption, mismanagement of national economy, the murders of **Dele Giwa, Major-General Mamman Vasta,** with other officers as there was no attempted coup but mere intentions that were yet to materialize and other human rights violations. The National Guard already in its formative stage is disbanded with immediate effect. Decrees Number 2 and 46 are hereby abrogated.

c) We wish to emphasis that this is not just another coup but a well conceived, planned and executed **revolution for the marginalized, oppressed and enslaved peoples of the Middle Belt** and the south with a view to freeing ourselves and children yet unborn from eternal slavery and colonization by a clique of this country.

d) Our history is replete with numerous and uncontrollable instances of callous and insensitive dominatory repressive intrigues by those who think it is their birthright to dominate till eternity the political and economic privileges of this great country to the exclusion of the people of the Middle Belt and the south. They have almost succeeded in subjugating the Middle Belt and making them voiceless, and now extending same to the south. It is our unflinching belief that this quest for domination, oppression and **marginalization** is

> against the wish of God and therefore, must be resisted with the vehemence. Anything that has a beginning must have an end. It will also suffice here to state that all Nigerians without skeleton in their cupboards need not to be afraid of this change. However, those with skeleton in their cupboards have all reasons to fear, because the time of reckoning has come.

For the avoidance of doubt, we wish to state the three primary reasons why we have decided to oust the satanic Babangida administration. The reasons are as follows:

To stop Babangida's desire to cunningly, install himself as Nigeria's life president at all costs and by so doing, retard the progress of this country for life. In order to be able to achieve this undesirable goals of his, he has evidently started destroying those groups and sections he perceived as being able to question his desires. Examples of groups already neutralized, pitched against one another or completely destroyed are: **(2)** The destruction of the peoples of Plateau State, especially the Lantang people, as a balancing force in the body politics of this country**. (3)** The buying of the press by generous monetary favors and the usage of State Security Service, SSS, as a tool of terror. **(4**) The intent to cow the students by the promulgation of the draconian decree Number 47. **(5)** The cowing of the university teaching and non-teaching staff by an intended massive purge, using the 150 million dollar loan as the necessitating factor. **(6)** Deliberately withholding funds to the armed forces to make them ineffective and also crowning his diabolical scheme through the intended retrenchment of more than half of the members of the armed forces. Other pointers that give credence to his desire to become a life president against the wishes of the people are: **(7)** His appointment of **himself (Babangida)** as a minister of defense, his putting under his direct control the SSS, his deliberate manipulation of the transition program, his introduction of inconceivable, unrealistic and impossible political options, his recent fraternization with other African leaders that have installed themselves as life presidents and his dogged determination to create a secret force called the national guard, independent of the armed forces and the police which will be answerable to himself alone, both operationally and administratively. It is our strong view that this kind of dictatorial desire of Babangida is unacceptable to

Nigerians of the 1990's, and, therefore, must be resisted by all. Another major reason for the change is the need to stop intrigues, domination and internal colonization of the Nigerian state by the so-called chosen few. **(8)** This, in our view, has been and is still responsible for 90 percent of the problems of Nigerians. This indeed has been the major clog in our wheel of progress. This clique has an unabated penchant for domination and unrivalled fostering of mediocrity and outright detest for accountability, all put together have been our undoing as a nation. This will ever remain our threat if not checked immediately. It is strongly believed that without the intrigues perpetrated by this clique and misrule, Nigeria will have in all ways achieved developmental virtues comparable to those in Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, India, and even Japan. Evidence, therefore, this cancerous dominance has as a factor constituted by a major and unpardonable clog in the wheel of progress of the Nigerian state. (Sic)

It suffices to mention a few distasteful intrigues engineered by this group of Nigerians in recent past. These are: (i) The shabby and dishonorable treatment meted on the longest serving Nigerian general in the person of General Domkat Bali, who in actual fact had given credibility to the Babangida administration. (ii) The wholesale hijacking of Babangida's administration by the all powerful clique. The disgraceful and inexplicable removal of **Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe, Professor Tam David-West, Mr Aret Adams** and so on from office. (iii) The now-pervasive and on-going retrenchment of Middle Belt and southerners from public offices and their instant replacement by the favored class and their stooges. (iv) The deliberate disruption of the educational culture and retarding its place to suit the favored class to the detriment of other educational minded parts of this country. (v) The deliberate impoverishment of the peoples from the Middle Belt and the South, making them working ghosts and feeding on the formulae of 0-1-1- or 0-0-0 while the aristocratic class and their stooges are living in absolute affluence on a daily basis without working for it.(vi) Other countless examples of the exploitative, oppressive, dirty games of intrigues of its class, where people and stooges that can best be described by the fact that even though they contribute very little economically to the well being of Nigeria, they have over the years served and presided over the supposedly national wealth derived in the main from the Middle Belt and the southern part of this country, while

the people from these parts of the country have been deprived from benefiting from the resources given to them by God.

"Ibrahim Babangida reigned over Nigeria for 9 years. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Then another succeeded him"

Sani Abacha (1993-1998)

Perhaps it was a plan. On 17 November 1993, Abacha overthrew the short-lived transitional government of **Chief Ernest Shonekan,** which Babangida set up after annulling the election in which **MKO Abiola** was alleged to have won. Babangida chose another devil, **Sani Abacha** (who served as the de facto president of Nigeria from 1993 to 1998), to replace himself. As an 'untouchable' king-maker, Sani Abacha, who died in mysterious circumstances, and whose demise became a great cause for celebration in Nigeria, was another evil that visited Nigerian political scenario! During Abacha's regime, he and his family reportedly stole a total of 5 billion British pounds, which were deposited in secret and known bank accounts in foreign countries.

Sani Abacha was not a strange figure in various Nigerian military coups and adventures. He announced the coup that brought an end to the government of President Shehu Shagari on December 31, 1983, and brought Major-General Muhammed Buhari to power. After Buhari was overthrown in a palace coup on August 27 1985, (by Babangida), it was Abacha that announced the chief of army staff , Major General Ibrahim Babangida, as the new military president and commander-in-chief of armed forces. Abacha was believed to have participated fully in the July 1966 counter-coup, which led to the death of the head of state, Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, and subsequently resulted in the civil war. Officially Abacha did not overthrow the interim national government instituted by Babangida to be headed by **Ernest Shonekan** in 1993. The head of government, Ernest Shonekan resigned and Abacha, being the secretary of defense and the most senior member of government, took over, in what has been described as a 'bloodles palace coup'.

Sani Abacha reigned over Nigeria for 6 years. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of

Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Then another succeeded him"

General Abdulsalam Abubakar

Major General Abdulsalami , Nigeria's Chief of defense staff was sworn in as the country's head of state, Abubakar had never before held public office and was quick to announce a transition to democracy, which led to the election of **President Olusegun Obasanjo,** (who had then pulled off his army uniform and had become an 'accomplished' politician.) Abdulsalami Abubakar who succeeded Abacha was military president from 9th June 1998 to May 1999, when he transferred power to president-elect Olusegun Obasanjo on 29 May 1999. It was reported that General Abdulsalami was in no way different from his military counter-parts as far as looting of the federal treasury was concerned. Abdulsalam was never a Saint among all Nigerian military heads of state from Gowon to the last political leader in army uniform and those who retired and took up politics as a profession. One of those to expose the General was the former CSO of General Sani Abacha, Major Al-Mustapha, who leveled lots of gross corruption charges on General Abdulsalami Abubakar. Nigerians were not surprised to note that when General Abdulsalami came to power, he, like his predecessors, exhibited an accumulated and accentuated thirst for money.

There was the case of $40 million contributed by multinationals for General Sani Abacha's transmutation to civilian president. There was also the case of Engineer Buba Galadima, Director of NMA whom General Abdulsalami Abubakar directed to release N5 billion from the NMA to the minister through Chief Hope Ozodimma. The sum ended in Abubakar's purse, though the N5 billion was to be shared like this: "1.35 to be given to the minister, Chief Hope would be given N265 million and $18 million would be given to General Abubakar. There was the issue of the printing of new naira denominations, of 100, 200 and 500. During the regime of General Abacha the idea of the printing of new naira denominations was mooted. Three companies were said to have bided for the contract - J.B. of Munich; Thomas & Co. Of London, and Bodous of Germany. They all submitted their quotations. They all agreed on $30 per one thousand pieces but

General Abacha said it was too much. The agreement was not sealed before his death.

When General Abdulsalami came on board, he said it should be printed at $45 per thousand. G & D was given the contract of printing and here was the company reputed for tax evasion. The company had offices in Germany, Greece, Spain, Belgium, Argentina and other places, but only had a liaison office in Nigeria. The company evaded tax to the tune of 2 million Dutch marks in Germany. This was the same company given the job to print the money. There was the ECOMOG financial support scandal in which General Abubakar diverted millions of dollars meant for the soldiers to his private pockets. There was the issue of parting gift to each PRC member. N1 million was agreed as parting gift for each PRC member or 500,000 dollars. But at last it was only 50,000 dollars. So what happened to the remaining 450,000 dollars per each PRC member times the total PRC members?

Before General Abacha died, he left a foreign reserve of 9.7 billion dollars. There are papers to show this. But Abubakar claimed that only 7.17 billion dollars was left in the reserve. What happened to the balance? This reserve that Abacha accumulated in five years, Abdulsalami depleted in nine months. Eagle Square in Abuja was being renovated yearly when General Oseni was FCT Minister. Consultants were appointed for the renovation at N230 million. But General Abdulsalami rejected this and opted for upward review of N2.3 billion as against N230m. Through 59 million dollars General Abubakar siphoned from government coffers he bought a house in London at 5 million pounds renovated it at 1 million pounds. Before General Abacha died he approved 66 million Dutch marks for the maintenance of Alpha jets and other aircrafts. When Abubakar took over he wrote another memo for the sum of 44,275,000 dollars for the same maintenance.

There was also another memo from the CGS dated March 17 1999 at the injury time of the administration. There was request for the purchase of boats at 45 million dollars, purchase of amphibious plane at 21,747,660 dollars; and 5,000 rain coats jacket to cost 14,500,00 dollars. The normal cost of one rain coat was said to be 45 dollar per piece and the total cost for the 5,000 rain coats should be 2,9000 dollars. It was signed by General Abdulsalami Abubakar to be purchased on behalf of but what happened at last was every Nigerian's guess! When Abdulsalam Abubakar handed over power to President Obasanjo

on 29 May 1999, only the of $ 200 m. was left as Nigeria's foreign reserve, a tiny percent of the real sum and investigators and critics believed President Obasanjo was aware of the massive embezzlement almost emptying of Nigeria's treasury by General Abubakar, but his successor Obasanjo did not speak out. He kept mute! General Abdulsalam Abubakar was not investigated and went away with his loot, like Sani Abacha!

Olusegun Obasanjo at a Glance: Another Political "Maradona" Par Excellence!

Many critics in every group of Nigerian tribal, ethnic, regional, politics see **Olusegun Obasanjo (aka "OBJ"** as a great Nigerian. Like **Ibrahim Babangida (aka IBB),** Obasanjo is another 'Maradona". Providence had played a big and enviable role in his lifetime. He was certainly a bright and intelligent person, but again not the best among the military and civilian 'politicians' that ruled Nigeria. He features prominently in the Nigerian post-war history. Obasanjo was there when Shagari took the reins. He was so an important 'god-father' when it ever came to the role of a benefactor, a supporter and advisor. Without Obasanjo, **Shagari** wouldn't have been a Nigerian head of state. Obasanjo preferred Shagari to Awolowo or Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Owelle of Onitsha, the once 'beautiful bride, among the presidential contestants during the democratic elections for return to to civil rule. Hopefully many people still remember the two-thirds-state%-vote saga! Obasanjo continued pushing Shagari until the man was toppled.

General **Muhammed Buhari** came on board. Obasanjo was playing his usual role until Buhari was shoved aside. Another military man entered, **Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida,** IBB, who was reputed to be Obasanjo's protégé. A protégée is one who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, performance or influence. He railed against IBB, namely, reviled or scolded in harsh, insolent or abusive language until he stepped aside. Then entered the crook, the man always in the goggles, **Sani Abacha** and Obj tried his populist antics, but Sani was hidden behind the dark sunshades. He played for keeps and thought Obj expendable. He tried but providence intervened. A deliberate and calibrated providence though. Sani Abacha was assassinated. By the contraptions of military brass, we got stuck with Obj

again. He pulled off his army uniform and turned a complete politician!

He reigned for **eight years** and being who he is, he imposed **Yar'adua on Nigerians** to replace him. He knew the man would not last. Three years down the road and at a stage he disclaimed Yaradua and began to ask for his resignation. Yaradua died and had to be replaced by his vice. The Northern cabal lamented the death of their man, but there wasn't much they could do, having handled the affairs of the government during Yaradua hospitalization in Saudi Arabia with no participation of the vice-presidential candidate or any other body outside the Hausa-Fulani political family. But Obasanjo was able to maneuver until **Gookluck Ebele Jonathan (aka GEJ)** staggered onto the saddle. Three years down the power lane, GEJ wasn't good again, and Obasanjo defected to **Muhammed Buhari** camp again. The Nigerian gullibility played out again. Buhari and his tribesmen were furious during Buhari's third attempt to grab power and return it to the 'original' owners, the Usman Dan Fodio dynasty – the Hausa-Fulani Cabal! "Nigeria would be destroyed to ashes if power was not returned to the North"; Buhari and his tribesmen threatened! GEJ was advised to 'concede victory and step aside, for peace to reign. Two years on the road, Obasanjo was telling Nigerians that **Buhari (aka PMB)** was not good. Who is Obasanjo's candidate now or was he bent on a "third tenure" or "President for life!"

Obasanjo: Third Tenure Scandal and Intrigues

Some authors refer to Obasanjo as a Nigerian general, statesman, and diplomat, who was the first military ruler in Africa to hand over power to a civilian government, served as Nigeria's **military ruler** (1976-79) and, as a **civilian president** (1999-2007). Though not worse than his comrades in military and civilian attires, Obasanjo too has a lot of questions in the Nigerian political blunders that set Nigeria's clock of progress and development back to pre-colonial era. He was never free from accusations of massive corruption scandals, but was as well clever enough to extricate himself from numerous accusations bribery and corruption. Towards the end of his second tenure, and, in fact intoxicated with power and money like other African leaders, he tried to extend his reign by manipulating the rules of the law, in order to grab a **third tenure** in office as president. Failure to secure a 'third term bill' or **'president-for-life-**

African-style, Obasanjo was responsible for setting up and enthroning a weaker candidate of his preferred party (PDP), **Musa Yar'adua** and deputy **Goodluck Jonathan**.

Obasanjo in the footsteps of most African dictators – "President-for-life"

Unfortunately he did not succeed; otherwise Nigeria would not have looked different from other African states. Democracy does not mean anything to African political leadership. Have a look!

(1) **Paul Biya of Cameroun ruled for 36 years**. He took over as president in November of 1982. In spite of his highhandedness, Cameroonians went to the polls about 7 times, but failed woefully to remove him from power. As at the time this chapter was being rounded off, **Paul Biya** was still the president of Cameroun since the past **36 years!**

(2) **President Gnassingbe Eyadema ruled Togo for 38 years.** The Togolese struggled to remove **Eyadema** from his seat. The more they tried, the more they failed. Until his death in 2005, Gnassingbe Eyadema ruled Togo in spite of the fact that he was rejected by the people. At his death however, his son, **Faure Gnassingbe** took over power! Up till date and for a period of **50 years** and counting. Two men ruled a country a father and his son!

(3) **Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga ruled for 32 years.** He took over power in **Zaire** in 1965 as a dictator after killing Patrice Lumumba. **Mobutu** later became a democrat and instead of open democracy, he unified all political parties under himself. It took a combined military revolution by the Rwandan Tutsi and the Ugandan army to topple his government in 1997! He ruled Zaire for **32 years!**

(4) **In Equatorial Guinea, President Teodore Obiang Nguema Mbasongo of Malabo is still very much in power since 1979.** Is it that Equatorial Guineans do not want democratically organized free and fair elections By all means they do but the yoke upon their necks cannot be broken by any voters' cards?

(5) **For 42 years, El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondinba ruled Gabon!** He won election after election till his

death in 2009! Even after death, his Biafran adopted son, Ali Bongo Ondinba took over power till date!

(6) What should one say about the famous **Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe**? If not for military revolution, even at 93 years he would have been in power still for over **40 years** of dictatorship.

(7) **President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda** who took office on 26 January 1986 is still the head of state of Uganda till date **(32 years)**

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua

On 16–17 December 2006, Yar'Adua was chosen as the presidential candidate of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) for the April 2007 election. It was claimed he received 3,024 votes while his closest rival, Rochas Okorocha, received 372 votes. Yar'Adua's success in the primary was attributed to the support of incumbent President **Olusegun Obasanjo.** At the time of his nomination he was an obscure figure on the national stage, and has been described as a "puppet" of Obasanjo and could not have won the nomination under fair circumstances. Shortly after winning the nomination, Yar'Adua chose Goodluck Jonathan, governor of Bayelsa State, as his vice-presidential candidate. Another view of the support he received from President Obasanjo was that he was one of few serving governors with a spotless record, devoid of any suspicions or charges of corruption. That must be a more acceptable view because according reliable sources Obasanjo had dismissed Rochas as an untrustworthy con man, the least candidate he could have supported for the office of the president of the federal republic of Nigeria. Many observers also saw Yar'Adua as a more suitable candidate. Yar'Adua also belonged to the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) – a powerful political block founded by his late brother, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, who was also Obasanjo's vice president during his military rule. In 2007 Umaru Yar'Adua, was reported to have developed some kidney problems and was flown to Germany for medical treatment.

Yar'Adua Presidency

In the presidential election, held on 21 April 2007, Yar'Adua won with 70% of the vote (24.6 million votes) according to official results released on 23 April. The election was said to be highly

controversial. Strongly criticized by observers, as well as the two primary opposition candidates, **Buhari** of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and **Atiku Abubakar** of the Action Congress (AC), its results were largely rejected as having been rigged in Yar'Adua's favor. However after the election, Yar'Adua proposed a government of national unity. In late June 2007, two opposition parties, the ANPP and the Progressive People's Alliance (PPA), agreed to join Yar'Adua's government. On 28 June 2007, Yar'Adua publicly revealed his declaration of assets, (becoming the first Nigerian leader to do so), according to which he had ₦856,452,892 (US$5.8 million) in assets, ₦19 million ($0.1 million) of which belonged to his wife. He also had ₦88,793,269.77 ($0.5 million) in liabilities. This disclosure, which fulfilled a pre-election promise he made, was intended to set an example for other Nigerian politicians and discourage corruption.

Yar'Adua's new cabinet was sworn in on 26 July 2007. Though Buhari and Abubakar filed petitions to have the results of the 2007 presidential election invalidated due to alleged fraud, nevertheless, on 26 February 2008 a court rejected the petitions. Marred by corruption, many argued that the election was rigged by Obasanjo as well, as he wanted his successor to have the same basic ideals that he possessed as President.

Illness and Death

President Yar'Adua left Nigeria on 23 November 2009, and was reported to be receiving treatment for his kidney ailment at a clinic in Saudi Arabia. He was not seen in public for long, and his absence created a dangerous power vacuum in Nigeria. There were a lot of controversies and speculations about Yar'Adua's health and the future of his presidency. Many Nigerians and the opposition parties insisted that Yar'Adua should have handed over power to Vice-President Goodluck Jonathan in an acting capacity during his illness, a statement that was backed up by the NBA national executive committee. There was need to get an official report about his situation, namely testimony of doctors, one of whom should be Yar'Adua's personal physician.

On 10 February 2010, the Senate controversially used the "doctrine of necessity" to transfer Presidential Powers to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, and declared him Acting President, with all the accompanying powers, until Yar'Adua returned to full health. The power transfer, considered illegal by

some, has been called a "coup without the word" by opposition lawyers and lawmakers. However, there are others that felt the power vacuum would lead to instability and a possible military takeover. On 24 February 2010, Yar'Adua returned to Abuja under the cover of darkness. His state of health was unclear, but there was speculation that he was still on a life support machine. Various political and religious figures in Nigeria had visited him during his illness saying he would make a recovery. It never happened, as on May 5, at the Aso Rock Presidential Villa Yar'Adua died, and Islamic burial took place on 6 May in his hometown in Katsina. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan fully assumed the office of the President of the federal republic of Nigeria.

Goodluck Jonathan (May 6, 2010 – May 29, 2015)

As Vice-President, Jonathan took a very low profile, while recognizing the constitutional limits of the Vice-President's office, he participated in cabinet meetings and, by statute, was a member of the National Security Council, the National Defense Council, the Federal Executive Council, and was the Chairman of National Economic Council. But as a strong, promising politician, many Nigerians dismissed Goodluck Jonathan right from the time he assumed office as President of the federal republic of Nigeria after Yar'Adua' demise. Surrounded initially by unfriendly Northern cabals Jonathan looked unstable. Even after recruiting his own team, like President Shagari, Goodluck didn't seem to the right qualities of leadership to steer the turbulent ship in the stormy sea and weather of Nigerian politics.

As Vice-President, Jonathan was instrumental in negotiating an agreement with many of the major militant groups in the Niger Delta, to lay down their weapons and stop fighting as part of a government amnesty. But that temporary 'truce' with the Niger Delta militants did not resolve any issue at stake, as the real problems of the rich oil producing region of Nigeria were not tackled by Jonathan government. The Niger Delta region, the live-wire of the Nigerian mono-crude oil economy remained undeveloped till date, even when a son of the soil had all the tools to improve the lives of his impoverished people and region, devastated by oil pollution and neglect of infrastructural development!

From Acting President to President

On 9 February 2010, a motion from the Nigerian Senate invested Goodluck Jonathan as acting President of the Federation as a result of President Yar'Adua's ill-health. Jonathan was sworn in as the Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on May 6, 2010, becoming Nigeria's 24th Head of state. On assuming office Jonathan promised to continue implementing the Seven-point agenda policy framework of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua. He cited anti-corruption, power and electoral reforms as focuses of his administration. He stated that he came to office under "very sad and unusual circumstances". On 18 May 2010, the National Assembly approved Jonathan's nomination of former Kaduna State governor, Namadi Sambo, for the position of Vice-President.

2011 Presidential Campaign and Elections

On 15 September 2010, Jonathan announced on that he had decided to run for public office on his own for the first time, in the race for the presidency of Nigeria in 2011. In the contest for the Peoples Democratic Party nomination, Goodluck Jonathan was up against the former vice-president **Atiku Abubakar** and Mrs. Sarah Jubril. On 13 January 2011 the primary election results were announced in Eagle Square, Abuja. Jonathan was declared winner and so won the general election against General Muhammedu Buhari and his running mate Pastor Tunde Bakare, and on 18 April 2011, was declared the winner of the election.

Jonathan's Major Initiatives

On 2 August 2010, Jonathan launched his **'Roadmap for Power Sector Reform'.** Its primary goal was to achieve stable electricity supply in Nigeria. Historically, the Nigerian Power Sector has been plagued by blackouts. Economists estimate that power outages have cost Nigeria, Africa's biggest economy, billions of dollars in imported diesel for generators and lost output. In a study conducted by the World Bank, a lack of access to financing and electricity were cited as Nigeria's main obstacles to development, surpassing corruption. President Jonathan has overseen the privatization of Nigeria's power sector with the end goal being the establishment of an efficient and reliable power supply infrastructure for the Nigerian population. The Power Holding Company of Nigeria, which acted as the nation's electricity provider, has been broken up into 15 firms, with

Nigeria handing over control of state electricity assets to 15 private bidding companies. The Nigerian government contracted for the services of CPCS Transcom Limited, a Canada-based consulting firm specializing in transportation and energy infrastructure projects, to act as the transaction adviser for the handover of state electricity assets. There were no successes recorded by Jonathan's administration on the Power venture, just as earlier attempts by Obasanjo failed woefully till date. Equally Jonathan's "**Youth Enterprise"** meant to harness the creative energies of young people between the ages of 18 and 35 and expected to create between 40,000 and 50,000 sustainable jobs by 2014 did not yield any good results. Jonathan's **Transformation Agenda** of 2011 based on a summary of how the Federal Government hoped to deliver projects, programs, and key priority policies from 2011 to 2015, coordinated by the National Planning Commission (NPC), did not meet any expected results.

Security challenges: Boko Haram and Islamist insurgency in the North

On 26 August 2011, after the UN building in Abuja was bombed by Boko Haram, Jonathan announced that it was an attack not merely on Nigeria, but on the international community. He told reporters that "we would work together with the UN and other world leaders to ensure that terrorism is brought under control." In response to the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta's attack on an oil pipeline on 4 February 2012 in Bayelsa, the Senate President David Mark stated that the security situation in the country was "intolerable". On 14 May 2013, Jonathan declared a state of emergency in three northeastern Nigerian states, Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, to curtail the activities of Boko Haram. Although initially offering amnesty, by June 2013 he ordered a 20-year jail term for anyone found to be in support of Boko Haram. On 16 January 2014, it was reported that Jonathan had sacked his military high command in response to their inability to end the Islamist-led insurgency in Northern Nigeria.

Boko Haram Abduction of Chibok Girls

Jonathan's administration was heavily criticized for its failure to bring back the over 200 schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram.

Many demonstrations called for the government to be more responsive. Jonathan initially signaled his government would do a prisoner release in exchange for the kidnapped girls. Discussions then took place in Paris with foreign ministers from France, Britain, the United States and Israel, where he agreed no deals should be struck with terrorists. He then called off the exchange at the last minute on 24 May 2014. This about-turn reportedly enraged Boko Haram leaders, it was reported.

Removal of Fuel Subsidy Saga

That was one of the worst stressful issues Jonathan's administration had to deal with. On 13 December 2011, the 2012 fiscal year's budget removed any provisions for the existing fuel subsidy. According to a poll carried out by the Alliance for Credible Elections (ACE- Nigeria), 80% of Nigerians opposed the plan to remove the fuel subsidy. On 1 January 2012, the Jonathan administration announced the start of a controversial plan to end fuel subsidies. The government followed the advice of international experts that claimed the fuel subsidy ($8 billion per year, or 25% of the government annual budget was not sustainable. Brookings Institution, a think tank, praised the government's move, arguing that the subsidy crowds out other development spending, like education, and that it discourages investment in the country's economic lifeblood, the oil sector. Many prominent Nigerians spoke out against the removal of the subsidy. Former Petroleum Minister Professor **Tam David-West** has spoken out and expressed concern that the planned removal of the fuel subsidy will squeeze the economy, increase inflation, and hurt both businesses and the public. A former military Head of State and a former Minister for Petroleum & Natural Resources, **General Buhari,** urged President Jonathan not to remove the fuel subsidy and to tackle corruption. **General Yakubu Gowon,** another former military Head of State, warned the government that the country's infrastructure should be revived before fuel subsidy removal steps were taken. Former military president Gen. **Ibrahim Babangida** joined millions of Nigerians protesting against the removal of the fuel subsidy by the Jonathan administration, saying that the action is ill-timed. Following the Nigeria Labor Congress' warning that the country faced many strikes, the country unions followed up with strikes that were matched with civil protests from 9–13 January 2012. Protesters and groups called for President Jonathan to resign

over the removal of fuel subsidies. After five days of national protests and strikes, on 16 January, Jonathan announced that the pump price of petroleum would be 97 naira per liter compared with a post-subsidy level of 147 naira.

Jonathan Administration and Corruption Charges

Jonathan's government has largely been described as corrupt. According to The Economist, corruption flourished under the Jonathan administration, "who let politicians and their cronies fill their pockets with impunity." Large sums of money have been used improperly multiple times, with ₦ 3.98 trillion Naira ($20 billion USD) allegedly going missing and ₦ 398 billion Naira ($2 billion USD) of military funds allegedly dispersed amongst high-ranking officials. In addition, Jonathan was alleged to have personally ordered over ₦ 3 trillion Naira ($15 billion USD) from the Central Bank of Nigeria to support his election and other self-seeking projects under the guise of an intervention fund for national stability. **Charles Soludo**, a professor of economics and former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, equated Jonathan's financial recklessness to that of former Ugandan president Idi Amin. **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, an economist and former Finance Minister of Nigeria, pegged Jonathan's administration as the main cause of Nigeria's economic woes in a lecture at George Washington University.

2015 Presidential Campaign and Elections

On 31 March 2015, Jonathan conceded the election to challenger Muhammedu Buhari, who was sworn in to succeed him on 29 May 2015. Jonathan said in a statement he issued on 31 March 2015 that "Nobody's ambition is worth the blood of any Nigerian." Most Nigerians were so disgusted with Jonathan that most patriotic critics even called for his impeachment as a result of his recklessness in corruption charges. It was a looting spree! Goodluck Jonathan, perhaps most unprepared for the highest office of the presidency was another funny player, who almost brought to a final collapse, Nigerian economy. Crippled by uncontrollable wave of massive corruption and abuse of power by his ministers Jonathan had no option than to accept defeat from no other one than Buhari, who promised enthusiastic and frustrated Nigerians a political and economic **change** and a brighter future for long enslaved and misruled people. Musicians

and Actors on stage turned his unsuccessful priority political agenda of **change** to **chain**s. His economic policy was a blunder, as youths continued to flee their homeland, hunger and starvation reminded Igbos once again about the tragedy of Biafra-Nigeria war! Buhari's drama and struggles for the fulfillment of his electoral promises no doubt are the focus of attention of every Nigerian as were coming to the end of this our investigation.

The scandal caused by Buhari and the so-called lawmakers, who continued fixing and drawing from their huge salaries and gratuities, while ordinary Nigerian families could not afford one square meal a day, made a prominent Nigerian statesman, the one-time CBN minister and Emir of Kano, Sanusi to react. His was just a voice crying in the wilderness.

President Muhammedu Buhari Second Coming

Muhammed Buhari took over from GEJ. As everyone knows, Buhari who had retired as major general had served as the nation's head of state from 31 December 1983 to 27 August 1985, after taking power in a military coup. Since his retirement from the army it was certain he strongly believed he was not given the chance to accomplish his 'messianic' mission as head of state of the so-called "richest and most powerful nation in Africa. In fact he was bitter that Babangida and his henchmen, who abruptly ended his tenure in 1985 were 'agents of the devil'. Buhari continued to fight to regain leadership!

He unsuccessfully ran for the office of president in the 2003, 2007, and 2011 general elections. In December, 2014 he emerged as the presidential candidate of All Progressive Congress (APC) for the March 2015 general elections. Buhari won the election, defeating the incumbent Goodluck Jonathan. He was sworn in on 29 May 2015. The rest part of Buhari's leadership and political gimmicks (ingenious and new scheme or angle), occupies large spaces in books and stories about Nigeria in local and world politics. Buhari, at least will be remembered for his "Fight Against corruption!" At least one story can be recorded here right away!

"President Buhari arrived Ghana on Monday March 5, 2018 to honor the invitation to country's 61st Independence Anniversary gave a speech as a Guest of Honor. President Buhari while delivering his speech applauded Ghana's President, Akufo-Addo and assured him that he, Buhari would help Ghana fight

corruption. He intoned: "I congratulate you on your efforts to fight corruption which has eaten into the public fiber…….Your Excellency I can assure you that you have a good partner in me in tackling endemic corruption," the President Buhari said. However, in his bid to be of help to Ghana in fighting corruption in the country, Ghanaians expressed their furiousness over the statement of President Buhari. Many Ghanaians who blasted Buhari warned him to leave Ghana with his people who they accused of having corrupted their country. Many others reacting to the statement from Buhari told the President that he should not "bring snakes, and monkeys to swallow Ghana's money!? That was a comic reaction to the type of bizarre endemic corruption that had recently been reported in news media and in every nook and cranny of the country Nigeria, whose president claimed to be the first and best agent of anti-corruption fighter in Nigeria, if not in the entire African continent. Many corrupt gang leaders of corrupt practices in Buhari administration had ridiculously reported that huge amounts of money stolen by government officials and their henchmen, in fact had mysteriously been swallowed by animals found in their offices and in places where government used to deposit the country's money!"

Disenchantment, Disillusionment

Buhari's second tenure as head of state can be summarized as follows:

(1) The **"War against corruption**", though a worthy cause, was not popular, not only with the opposition party, but as well most Nigerians. Some described the campaign as a 'witch-hunt' and agenda meant for Buhari enemies. Most notorious corrupt Nigerians in APC were not probed and treated like others accused of theft and looting of government purse, including money-laundering' and other financial criminal activities.

(2) There was never any clear accountability by the government telling the public what government or its agents were doing with the 'recovered monies and properties!'

(3) Buhari brought back into his second administration some 'divisive' matters or issues that made it clear (except the Muslim North), that Buhari has only a part of the country in mind. Of course those familiar with 97/5%

constituency formula should not be alarmed. To an extent many writers were referring to Buhari as the "President of the Islamic Republic of Northern Nigeria"

(4) The term **Marginalization** finally got a permanent place in the Nigerian political lexicon. During his first visit to the United States immediately after his inauguration, Buhari did not hide his feelings towards Nigerians or sections of Nigeria and regions he would not treat well in his famous declaration that for him it would be absurd to give equal treatment to all sections of Nigerians. His administration would definitely favor them in the ratio of 95% to 5%? (95% for those who voted him and 5% those who did not vote for him! The Americans and the whole world press were shocked to the marrows! For Igbos and some other South-South regions, it was crystal clear President Buhari (PMB) was not for all Nigerians!

(5) Buhari's government never failed to put their agenda of 'marginalization' into practice by always appointing over 90% of his people to positions of importance, No matter their 'qualification' and 'competence' in any important position, office in his cabinet. Nepotism got a human face in Buhari regime. A northern Muslim is in-charge in every important post in his administration. Practically no Igbo was appointed to any position of importance, including politicians in the APC government. Some well-known key Igbo politicians in APC administration, like **Ogbonnaya Onu, Chibuike Amaechi, Chris Ngige, and Rochas Okoroacha** received little or no attention from Buhari's government. They were like unwanted 'visitors' in that administration.

(6) It was alleged that Muhammedu Buhari campaign was organized by former **Obama campaign manager, David Axelrod** and in February 2015 former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo quit the ruling PDP party and threw his support behind the Buhari/Osinbajo ticket. But there were a lot of concerns about the outcome of the elections! Buhari campaign utterances during the 2015 election instilled fear into many Nigerians! Such utterances littered with hate speeches, and warnings, including the evils that would trigger dissentions, chaos, and even war, if Buhari was not elected president! One threat outlined how the

opponents of the winning party (possibly PDP) would employ the aid of the Boko Haram insurgents to make Nigeria un-governable for the winning party. Many Nigerians even believed that unprecedented acts of disturbances would erupt in the North and spread down the South. The ugly situation, possibly could lead to army take-over of government. It was therefore a welcome act of good will, common sense and the best solution to allow peace reign in Nigeria, when President Goodluck Jonathan 'timidly' accepted defeat after the election and congratulated Buhari and his APC for their victory at the polls!

Nigeria Political Crisis – What a Dilemma!

At a time when greedy politicians were trying their luck in the formation of new political parties and choosing a most likely leader to lead them to victory, it was one of the most unqualified, corrupt and uneducated guy in military uniform that was the sole choice of each registered parties to contest for the office of the presidency! That was **General Sani Abacha!** Why not? He could have succeeded if death had not struck at his door. Abacha became 'a necessary evil', an unfavorable candidate that Nigerian political elite believed must be put forward because the goal of their political party was to clinch the leadership of the nation. In fact the view was strong simply because possible alternative courses of action or inaction would be worse. The military boys had toyed enough with the nation's political future before the rest of Africa and the world, and so provided they were ready to return the nation to civilian rule any form of arrangement the military accepted was equally good for the political class and the masses.

At that period of darkness in the political horizon the basic qualification for political leadership in Nigeria was just mediocrity, just basic knowledge or ability to 'read and write'. Could be possible that in a country with thousands of learned professionals in every field of endeavor, university dons, professors and masters in law and economics, career political scientists, none qualified to replace the military men and help Nigeria regain its place in world politics? Good question! Unfortunately the answer is in the negative. There were no credible professionals, not trustworthy politicians like the early

patriots that fought for independence from the white man, Azikiwe, Nkrumah, Lumumba or Nelson Mandela.

Some likely figures in Nigeria could no more be trusted by Nigerians and most of them had compromised their integrity by siding with the military or in fact had been the errand boys of the soldiers-turned-politicians. Some who came out to contest in the subsequent elections even lost in the primaries, right from their local communities, among their kinsmen and women. Most Nigerians didn't even like to see the faces of the so-called old and new-breed politicians, who were rated corrupt and even worse than the military administrators. The popular wish of the people or the electorate was a total hand-over power to the former colonialists. The qualified political class became an eyesore as they stood helplessly, rejected by the people, they kept watching the *'re-cycling drama'* going on in Nigeria's political history: former General Yakubu Gowon, contested again for the presidency, having been overthrown from power and retired; General Olusegun Obasanjo ruled Nigeria in two consecutive period, as a Military General, then an elected civilian president. He tried for the third time and failed.

General Muhammedu Buhari, first time, military president was overthrown and retired. Then in two subsequent elections Buhari contested for the presidency and failed. He only succeeded in the third attempt, old, sick and exhausted! As it stands today, there are truly no role models among the political elite, no mentors for the youth. In most cases and levels those who show some interest in political high posts, especially the presidency, remain disqualified and generally unacceptable by the people. They have betrayed their trust as law makers and senators on local, state and national levels. 'By their fruits you shall know them".

In Nigeria every political arrangement or hue was possible. Retired military generals could remove their uniforms and lead educated career politicians to political victory. Qualifications or experience played no role in selections for leadership. At a time that a presidential candidate's basic High School qualification was contested in major law suits in court. At the end no proof of such documents could be tendered, yet the guy became a Nigerian president!

The role of the military rulers in particular, misleading the Nigerian youths and of course among them majority of Igbo youths is the most pathetic part of the post-war Nigerian history. Not even did the much awaited return to democratic rule, added

any hope to the future of the once-great nation in the black continent. Political parties formed by greedy Nigerian tribal leaders failed woefully to produce a single patriotic and revolutionary leader that could give the nation any new sense of direction. Politics and elections in Nigeria became sources of real discord and corruption gradually and fully entrenched in the evil system that robbed the nation almost completely any hope for order, peace, progress, development and stability.

The politicians, presidents and their henchmen, governors, senators and other lawmakers at the national and state level went on complete jamboree plundering the national wealth that at last made Nigeria the most corrupt nation in the world with a nation of over 180 million of impoverished people on earth. Poverty and hunger continued to ravage the nation as most concerned Nigerians continued calling for a state of emergency to be declared. Some older and exhausted elders from every part of the ravaged nation openly continued calling for a military take of government, if such could bring about any change, while others wished that the colonial masters were back to continue from where they stopped before 1960!

General Election 2019

As politicians abandon the restructuring agenda that many thought might help revive the ailing Nigeria, both economically and politically scrambling once again for political office, President Muhammed Buhari was ready to run again for the presidency. Comedians and even tiny hungry kids have learnt to identify their problems with only a hardened leader, Buhari. Kid-comedians have been seen threatening to shoot anyone who mentioned the name Buhari in public, and woe betide one who made a mistake of even jokingly saying he would vote for Buhari, come 2019! So many images and jokes are posted everyday on the face book, tracing the Nigerian insurmountable problems to one man. The most recent one that caught my attention read: "The major problem we are facing in Nigeria is as follows:

(1) Boko Haram
(2) Unemployment
(3) Herdsmen
(4) Armed Robbery
(5) Recession
(6) Insecurity

"Put all the first letters together (1-6), and see the Real problem! **BUHARI**!! Wow! Whatever his motives, morbid ambitious attempts (more than 3 times), to grab power by all means, to rule over Nigeria, only Allah can say. Buhari is not even among the top 10 most qualified Nigerian politicians to lead the nation. What does he seek to achieve? Does he seek to return Nigeria to its pre-war blossoming economic status, by simply 'fighting corruption? Nigerians need to wait, watch and see! But many worried Nigerians and critics have read and interpreted the hand-writing on the wall, and are convinced that Buhari's agenda has much to do with complete Islamic conquest of Nigeria and the establishment of an **Islamic Republic of Nigeria**. This can't be far from the truth. Since, according to him, Nigeria's unity is not negotiable, and he was determined to take care of only the 97% of his people who voted him to power, it is clear that the so-called restructuring agenda of the federal republic of Nigeria, is a fairy tale. Is there any other option left to Nigeria to grow develop and survive as a unified nation? Nigerians are waiting and hoping.

Assessing Muhammed Buhari's performances towards the end of his first tenure as civilian president 2018

Buhari and his 'Fulani colonialists' and 'Herdsmen' were bent on securing a second tenure, come elections 2019. They were convinced his victory at the polls was never in doubt as his government had all their men at all the strategic positions in government and the army. Who would challenge election results as the INEC was ready to confirm Buhari as the next president of the Federal Government of Nigeria!

For all Nigerians, who are upset by the chaotic situation the nation has found itself since Buhari took over power from Goodluck Jonathan (his second return after serving as military head of state (January 1983 – August 27, 1985). He was ousted in a military coup led by Brigadier Joshua Nimyel Dogonyaro, for so many reasons outlined by the leader of the coup in the radio address to the nation. Were the soldiers who pushed Buhari aside from the leadership of the nation jealous or hungry for power? The man Buhari must have had genuine passion to lead Nigerians back to prosperity, honor and peace. Perhaps that was why Nigerians decided to give Buhari another chance after three

unsuccessful attempts to grab the presidency in 2015 general elections!

The poor leadership of Jonathan's government, coupled by unbelievable magnitude of corruption paved the way for Buhari to return to power! Perhaps, he would cleanse the rot left behind by Jonathan's administration. Even the worst enemies of Othman Dan Fodio, Buhari's grandfather in Islamic mission to conquer Nigeria and Islamize it voted for Buhari in the 2015 election. Buhari would the awaited 'messiah'. Nigerians have seen a lot of oppression, suppression, poverty, mismanagement of its human and natural resources, dispossession, and underdevelopment. Buhari would go for Nigeria! Why wouldn't all celebrate at his victory – Northern Moslems and Southern Christians and even traditional religionists!

What a Catastrophe!

Unfortunately, Buhari's second coming had not yielded any consolatory results for Nigeria, but further hardship, agony, marginalization, and worst of all bloodshed and Islamic jihad, never witnessed since that of Othman Dan Fodio!

(1) Buhari claimed he was **fighting corruption**; but corruption increased manifold and those who never participated in the previous looting of the country's wealth joined the queue, as Buhari turned his face away from the corrupt practices of his men and women, friends and Fulani compatriots.

(2) Buhari crushed the Igbo and Biafra youths who protested marginalization and oppression of their people, imprisoned and massacred many, during organized 'Python-Dances', operation 'wipe out all protesters against injustice) by the army in the South-East and South-South Nigeria.

(3) Buhari in command watched his army of Boko Haram, Herdsmen, and blood-tasty terrorists slash the throats of Middle Belter Christians, slaughter men, women and children and even infants snatched from their mothers. Many young and elderly women have been raped by the Fulani terrorists. Millions of Nigerians and non Nigerians all over the world see such gory pictures on the social media every day. Such are not fairy tales.

(4) No perpetrators of evil were called to book, as Fulani armed terrorists and their cows and cattle continued to

> wade into people's farmlands, and destroy food crops; enter students' classrooms and chase them away. Captured Christian towns and villages in the Middle Belt regions are occupied and renamed by Fulani soldiers. And Buhari watched!

Some Nigerian writers have not ceased calling the attention of the international community to the atrocities being perpetrated by the Fulani soldiers in Nigeria. Many more have in a series of flashbacks followed the 'Buhari saga', disturbing vivid memories of his first outing as military head of state. What did he accomplish and why was he overthrown. One can judge from the coup speech that overthrew Buhari on August 27, 1985. Here it comes:

I, **Brigadier Joshua Nimyel Dogonyaro**, of the Nigerian Army, hereby make the following declaration on behalf of my colleagues and members of the Nigerian Armed Forces.

Fellow countrymen, the intervention of the military at the end of 1983 was welcomed by the nation with unprecedented enthusiasm. Nigerians were unified in accepting the intervention and looked forward hopefully to progressive changes for the better. Almost two years later, it has become clear that the fulfillment of expectations is not forthcoming. Because this generation of Nigerians and indeed future generations have no other country but Nigeria, we could not stay passive and watch a small group of individuals misuse power to the detriment of our national aspirations and interest. No nation can ever achieve meaningful strides in its development where there is an absence of cohesion in the hierarchy of government; where it has become clear that positive action by the policy makers is hindered because as a body it lacks a unity of purpose.

It is evident that the nation would be endangered with the risk of continuous misdirection. We are presently confronted with that danger. In such a situation, if action can be taken to arrest further damage, it should and must be taken. This is precisely what we have done. The Nigerian public has been made to believe that the slow pace of action of the Federal Government headed by Major-General Muhammedu Buhari was due to the enormity of the problems left by the last civilian administration. Although it is true that a lot of problems were left behind by the last civilian government, the real reason, however, for the very slow pace of action is due to lack of unanimity of purpose among the ruling body; subsequently, the business of governance has

gradually been subjected to ill-motivated power play considerations. The ruling body, the Supreme Military Council, has, therefore, progressively been made redundant by the actions of a select few members charged with the day-to-day implementation of the SMC's policies and decision. The concept of collective leadership has been substituted by stubborn and ill-advised unilateral actions, thereby destroying the principles upon which the government came to power. Any effort made to advise the leadership, met with stubborn resistance and was viewed as a challenge to authority or disloyalty. Thus, the scene was being set for systematic elimination of what was termed oppositions. All the energies of the rulership were directed at this imaginary opposition rather than to effective leadership.

The result of this misdirected effort is now very evident in the country as a whole. The government has started to drift. The economy does not seem to be getting any better as we witness daily increased inflation. The nation's meager resources are once again being wasted on unproductive ventures. Government has distanced itself from the people and the yearnings and aspirations of the people as constantly reflected in the media have been ignored. This is because a few people have arrogated to themselves the right to make the decisions for the larger part of the ruling body. All these events have shown that the present composition of our country's leadership cannot, therefore, justify its continued occupation of that position. Furthermore, the initial objectives and programs of action which were meant to have been implemented since the ascension to power of the Buhari Administration in January 1984 have been betrayed and discarded. The present state of uncertainty and stagnation cannot be permitted to degenerate into suppression and retrogression. We feel duty bound to use the resources and means at our disposal to restore hope in the minds of Nigerians and renew aspirations for a better future. We are no prophets of doom for our beloved country, Nigeria. We, therefore, count on everyone's cooperation and assistance. I appeal to you, fellow countrymen, particularly my colleagues in arms to refrain from any act that will lead to unnecessary violence and bloodshed among us. Rest assured that our action is in the interest of the nation and the armed forces. In order to enable a new order to be introduced, the following bodies are dissolved forthwith pending further announcements: (a) The Supreme Military Council (b) The Federal Executive Council (c) The National Council of States. All seaports and airports are closed, all borders remain closed.

Finally, a dusk to dawn curfew is hereby imposed in Lagos and all state capitals until further notice. All military commanders will ensure effective maintenance of law and order. Further announcements will be made in due course. Can any Nigerian tell the difference then and now after over 40 years? What has Buhari achieved that qualifies him for another chance as a head of state of the Federal government of Nigeria?

Exclusive: Buhari Historical Certificate Saga

By: LT. Col. Idris Bako (Rtd)
(NA Regular Course II Set)

The pre-2019 election period in Nigeria was full of controversies, which mostly centered on ***(1)*** Mass disillusionment with performances of the ruling APC government. Most Nigerians (East, West, North, and South), more than 80% scored Buhari's administration below 10%. ***(2)*** There was political upheaval in both upper and power houses of national assembly. The performances of the lawmakers were equally rated below standard. Nigerians grieved, suffered and were overburdened with unbelievable poverty, insecurity, unemployment and lack of basic amenities, while the so-called lawmakers took ***millions of naira home every month as salaries, pensions, gratuities and benefits.*** (3) Politicians decamped and camped with parties they were sure would successfully win by the usual rigging of elections. (4) The worst political scenario was that created by the intriguing ***"Buhari Certificate Saga".*** This is part of Nigerian History and we publish the outcome of the investigation about this Certificate controversy carried out by Lt. Col. Idris Bako, thus bringing this chapter to an end,

"I want to re-state categorically that Buhari has ***no verifiable certificate*** anywhere in the world.

1. WAEC/CAMBRIDGE GCE: - Buhari did not sit for the Cambridge examination in 1961 as his names (Muhammadu, Mohammed or Mohamed Buhari) is not in the UK Examination body's List of candidates' names from 1960-1962 ***(2)*** His name(s) is also ***not*** on WAEC candidates names in both Ghana and Nigeria Offices from 1960-1962. Any attempt by Buhari or his agents to present any document to INEC representing WACE or GCE certificate may constitute an Offence**. *(Forgery,***

perjury pending) (3) Certificate/Army Recruitment: - Buhari presented no certificate to the Nigerian Army in 1961 when Late Ahmadu Bello conscripted him from his School (Still In session) to join the Army, as he had none. The only paperwork came from his school principal, stating that. ***(4)*** "I consider that he (Buhari) will pass West African School Certificate Exam, with credit in English, Maths and three other subjects". This letter is self-explanatory. You cannot pass an examination you never sat for. ***(5) Nigeria Defense Academy (NDA)***: - Buhari did not attend the NDA as claimed. He attended ***Royal Military Forces Training College (RMFTC)*** for months (End of 1961 to the beginning of 1962) for normal Army recruitment and physical fitness training. ***(6)*** This is not a certification programme. RMFTC was renamed NDA (established on the 5th of February 1964), and regular courses were introduced thereon. ***(7)*** **UK Military Training:** Buhari attended the Aldershot based, Mons Officer Cadet School. No Certificate was issued to Buhari, as he passed no examination for the short period he was in the UK in 1963. Cadet School information collaborates this. ***(8) Defence Service Staff College, Willington, India:*** - As usual, Buhari attended the staff college and did not sit for their examinations. The Defense Services Staff College, Willington does not issue a certificate of attendance to its attendee in 1974. ***(9) US War College:*** - Buhari left this College in 1980. He has in his Wikipedia page that he was offered a Master Degree in the same college in 1980. ***(10) The US War College*** has confirmed that they started their Master program in the year 2000 and there is no way Buhari would have gotten a Masters degree in that college in 1980. Again, no certificate was issued to him. There are veritable facts. ***(11)*** Buhari has just received an attestation certificate today, after donkey years! They gleefully took a picture, claiming the officials took the attestation certificate to him. Sorry Nigerians! You have just been deceived and ***scammed again. (12)*** Conclusion: No doubt according to Edrees Abdukareem, “Buhari is the most successful fraudster” in the History of Nigeria.”

CHAPTER 13

BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION - UNMITIGATED DISASTER AND NIGERIA'S STIGMA OF SHAME

> For we are reduced, O Lord, beyond any other nation, brought low everywhere in the world this day because of our sins. We have in our day no prince, prophet, or leader, no holocaust, sacrifice, oblation, or incense, no place to offer first fruits, to find favor with you. *(Daniel 3: 26ff)*

Teacher: Name the 5 most corrupt countries in Africa
Student: Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Somalia and Sierra Leone
Teacher: What about Nigeria?
Student: When counting sinners, do you include Satan?

Corrupt Practices ever on the increase.

They seemed to have become approved way of life, especially since the end of the civil war. Like an epidemic, corrupt practices in Nigeria and in every sector of the economy tend to have affected a disproportionately large number of individuals, youths, political, traditional and even religious leaders. Reports of looting of public treasury, in millions and billions of naira by public officials have become the order of the day. One may not secure a job without first paying part of an expected salary ahead before an interview. Has bribery and corruption become a way of life? No wonder, some politicians decided to give it a priority attention; in fact number one item in their political campaigns and agenda – "Fight against Corruption! It is an unbelievable tragedy as Nigerian political leaders , steal, loot the country's treasuries; deposit the stolen millions and billions of naira and dollars in local and foreign banks accounts in London, New York, Swiss banks. Americans and Europeans use the monies to develop their countries while Nigeria languishes in pain and poverty. We have no basic amenities such as constant electricity power supply, potable water, industries, roads etc. Unemployment has become a 'no-go-area'. Youths languish in poverty. Crime rate continues to grow and state of insecurity scares both visitors and owners of the land!

Nigerians remember still some years of honest military campaigns, when the slogan was "War against Indiscipline".

Indiscipline was identified in various forms, including greed, disorderly behavior, irresponsibility, callousness, lack of caution, disrespect for public order or guidelines, and of course rule of law. There was so much confusion in public life in Nigeria, that one military Head of state made "Crusade for sanity' and restoration of order and discipline his capital agenda in order to restore discipline in the nation. It was necessary, even to use whips and water cannons to teach Nigerians, young and the Old, drum it into their hearts and minds the importance of observing social and public rules like queuing up at bus stations, at restaurants, banks, and collection centers. Unfortunately, the campaign looked like a child's play in the eyes of Nigerians. Most could not comprehend the usefulness of the exercise as they were already, from childhood brought up to be undisciplined. Some complained, uttering such statements like *"We are not Europeans and Americans!" "Go to America and United Kingdom, if you want that type of scenario!"* The police and army employed to execute the job named the task "war', because at times they were provoked to pull the trigger of their guns to instill the so-called discipline in the Nigerian psyche! But the best 'war' must yet be fought with 'military tanks, grenades and bombs. This is 'War against bribery and corruption!'

I am sure most Nigerians must have been shocked to the marrows when one Nigerian Daily, *The Sun,* June 15, 2011 in an editorial asserted that election rigging had become an institutionalized political norm in Nigeria. That was at the heat of the debate whether the results of the elections of 2007 and 2011 were in any way credible by any standard or were the exercises just another sham. Sure the Nigerian Daily was writing from the experiences of the 2003 election and the latter ones. By that assertion we Nigerians were being reminded of the realities of the ugly situation associated with dishonesty, bribery and corruption, injustice, fraudulent activities and total loss of direction by the people and the leadership in our fatherland. Can the ugly monster referred to as fraud, bribery, malpractice, and cheating be rooted out of our nation's history and life? As far as cheating is concerned, can this despicable lifestyle of Nigerians even change in any foreseeable future? A person can be said to have become an 'institution, in a very admirable sense when he has become well known to everyone because of long service, knowledge and integrity. Of course people revere him as one who should always be consulted in important matters. He is a well-established person. In a negative sense a 'personified institution'

is one that must be hated and feared. Although abhorred by any decent person, there is little doubt that society cannot do much to change this 'establishment.' What a terrible thing to imagine!

Has fraudulent practice become an institution, well entrenched in Nigeria that we have all become addicted to the killer-drug which we must always sniff at all times in order to survive? My fear is that we are all in trouble and there is need to raise the alarm louder and louder to see if the kite can drop the chick it intends to devour. Our Children, grandchildren and the future generation we are leaving behind should not be allowed to imbibe such a terrible culture we are teaching and letting them to copy. The stunning story of the encounter between a "Flying Examiners", who are said to be 'anti-exam-malpractice-squad' or 'EFCC' of the West African Examination Board, and students of one Nigerian Secondary School during the June/July 2011 WAEC examination offers nice food for thought. In a nutshell, the students were violently protesting the visit or presence of the so-called 'Flying Examiners' , very well known corrupt officials, who 'fly in' to collect dirty money, from students, even at the presence of any exam supervisor. They warned the Flying Examiner and his men never to approach their examination hall if the authorities concerned would not like to lose their dear lives. The students' contention: *"You people rig elections, steal ballot boxes, take bribes, fix up fake results, swear in any 'winner' you like into office and think we young boys don't take note of the evils you perpetrate."* The students maintained that no one should disturb them during their exams. They should be left alone to steal, copy from books, call in friends to help and write their exams! Who will stop them then? The students came to school with daggers to deal with any intruder and they were serious! Alas! The hounded examiners could not throw stones to those they caught in examination malpractice! The flying examiners had arrived to collect their own share of the fees the principal and supervisors might have reserved for them. But the students had stubbornly refused to pay anything!

If the *'Trouble with Nigeria is Leadership'* it is true to add that *'Bribery and Corruption'* ***(Awufu, Iri Ngari)*** is a well known factor that clearly determines or measures the seriousness or magnitude of the trouble Nigeria must put up with. Some Nigerian writers, alarmed by the grave consequences of bribery and corruption on Nigeria's political image and economic development try to trace the origins of this evil, its growth and spread since Nigeria came into existence as a united

nation. Was the practice already there among the hundreds of ethnic groups, tribes or communities that had their ways of lives like other nations of the world before the British colonization? In short, one would ask "how old is bribery and corruption in Nigeria?" Other investigators actually may want to know when the evil called bribery and corruption began in Nigeria.

Corruption–A world-wide phenomenon

Citizens of all nations, especially the poor, and the oppressed vehemently condemn corruption in all its ramifications as it is practiced by their leaders, specially stealing from the public treasury. Angered by the factually alleged corrupt practices of one of the public ministers in the government of Ukraine, the people had grabbed one of shameless thieves and threw him into a public street trash-bin full of dirt and poisonous rot. Most presidents and ministers of great nations are impeached or forced to resign as a result of heinous crimes of corruption. In great nation the United States of America during elections which most times are rigged, like in Nigeria, South Korea, Argentina, Mexico, Egypt and some other European countries, the word or expression for election malpractice is 'Lobbying'. In Nigeria and elsewhere 'Bribery' is used.

If a politician or a political party must win an election, an unbelievable sum of hard cash must be at their disposal to accomplish the task. Supporters and possible voters must be persuaded to come out and perform their civic duty and receive a pay. Voting machines are manipulated, figures are falsified and unregistered and illegal aliens are allowed to vote for the winning party. Who says the system is not corrupt and that corruption is not deeply rooted in the entire system? In Nigeria during elections, Northern Nigerian rulers 'import' neighboring citizens from Chad and Niger republic to vote, and millions of under-aged kids count as registered voters too! World body like FIFA has known a lot of corruption charges and scandals! What of Olympic Games and World Boxing Championships?

Another name for corruption is 'scandal'. It assumes this title when the level or magnitude goes beyond description or imagination. "Watergate Scandal", marks USA perhaps as the great center of corrupt practices in all its ramifications. Electing a new president in USA is like a world war. There is no type of maneuvering, tricks, lies and deceits that are not employed by opponents to win. And in a more serious note, for

accommodating corruption in its political and economic system, USA and its great ally U.K. are known to be international centers of corruption. These two countries accommodate thieves and corrupt politicians and business men and women from third world countries who stash their stolen monies in American and U.K. banks! How many billions of dollars, Euros, and pounds are deposited in UK, USA and SWISS and in many other countries' banks by Nigerian and other African thieves who regularly empty their countries' treasuries while the British, the Americans and the Swiss enjoy fruits of the labor of the Africans? Whatever the case may be, however wide spread the evil of corruption is, there is no reason why we should blame the white man for our own troubles. An adult should know how to refuse evil and fight it to maintain a clean society.

When Bribery and Corruption began

Most Nigerians are familiar with the following piece, said to be 'Yakubu Gowon's advice to Muhammadu Buhari. It provides some 'answers' to the origin of corrupt practices and as well how almost impossible the problems of corruptions can be easily resolved.

"There was corruption in Nigeria when Awolowo built Cocoa House, TV station and the first university in Africa There was corruption in Nigeria when Ibrahim Babangida built Third Mainland Bridge, built Aso Rock, National Assembly Complex, turned Abuja into our Federal capital territory. There was corruption in Nigeria when Obasanjo brought GSM, banking reform, police reform, and civil defense, There was corruption in Nigeria when Jonathan introduced BVN and PVC, built 12 new federal universities, revamped railway lines, made our economy fastest growing in Africa and the third in the world.

"If anyone tells you the reason Buhari is not working is because he inherited corruption, tell them great leaders don't blame people and events for their failures. They simply accept responsibility and move on. Ask them, what Buhari has done after all the fake promises of fixing power in 6 weeks, reducing pump price to 45 naira, making one naira equal to a $1, stopping Boko Haram etc. It's a shame. The inferno truth is, corruption started from heaven when Satan violated a privilege given him. That never stopped God's works. He waited for God to create

man and brought his lawlessness and corruption into the Garden of Eden. If anyone tells you the reason Buhari is not working is because he inherited corruption, tell them corruption is rooted in the DNA of homo sapiens because we are just mere mortals infected with a virus of good and evil. Yet, great leaders don't blame people and events for their failures. They simply accept responsibility and move on." *(sic)*

As important as the present topic is today in Nigeria, I have my own input, contribution to make, in the present investigation. I have my own personal experiences as well to share. Although a worldwide phenomenon, and vehemently condemned by Jesus in his teachings as sinful, the evil seems to be as old as the origins of the universe, and most people and societies, ancient and modern, admit the existence of the cankerworm and try to accommodate it. As a type of 'ritual' if one fails to perform or conform to the norms, the likeliness of success is never there. The colonial masters in Nigeria and Christian missionaries were aware of the existence and practice of offering a bribe or, NGARI, AWUFU in Igboland. As the Christian missionaries chose to address the sinful practice, I still remember the verse from IGBO PRIMER, a vernacular Igbo Reader we used in Primary Schools in Owerri Province, Eastern Nigeria in the early fifties. The small book, like "Katekism nke Mbu" (First Igbo Catechism Book) was published in Dublin, Ireland in 1952 by the White Holy Ghost Missionaries and the Holy Rosary Sisters. The nursery rhyme we committed to memory in our Infant Two Class those days, no doubt addressed "Bribery and Corruption" which the missionaries witnessed in Nigeria and Igboland those days and tried in various ways to combat it. The title was ***Awufu/Iri Ngari.***

1952 Igbo Nursery Rhyme-Awufu-Iri Ngari: Ndi Eze Ufodu N'eri Ngari

"EZEKAOHA bu nnukwu eze obodo Inyi no na ala ibo. Ezekaoha kporo ndi eze ibe ya ogbako ukwu di mkpa n'obi ya. Otutu ndi eze na ufodu n'eri ngari m'obu awufu. Nkea bu ihe ojoo buru ibu n'ihu mmadu na n'ihu Chukwu. Iri ngari m'obu awufu bu nnukwu ihe ojoo. Onwere ike iduba mmadu n'oku mmuo, oku ebebe. Na nnukwu nzuko a Ezekoha riooro ndi eze ibe ya. Ogwara ha ka ha kwusi iri ngari. Ndi eze na ndi ochichi nile bikonu kwusinu iri ngari. Ngari bu njo ma burukwa aru!"

"EZEKAOHA was the traditional chief-the ruler of Inyi community in Igboland. Ezekoha summoned his fellow traditional leaders, (Ndi Eze), to his palace for a very important meeting. Many chiefs and traditional rulers are corrupt and take bribes. This is a sin, a crime before God and humanity. Taking or accepting bribe is a mortal sin that leads one to hell fire. At their meeting (supreme council of Ndi Eze), Ezekaoha admonished his fellow leaders to stop the practice of bribery and corruption. Truly many traditional rulers as well as other leaders of the people accept bribe. Leaders of communities please stop this evil practice. It is a very grievous offense and sin"! (English Translation)

"If you can't beat them, you join them!"

From this old nursery rhyme, it is clear that bribery and corruption which in present day Nigeria is brazenly, that is, in a bold and shameless way practiced, has become part and parcel of people's life. It has become the worst 'cancer' destroying or hampering Nigeria's economic development. It has become an evil deeply entrenched in our national psyche and will continue to spread. There is no sector of our institution and society that is not affected, the civil service, educational institutions, the judiciary and even religious institutions. In Nigeria, lawyers and judges, magistrates, the police, the army, road safety Marshalls, and many others, like in the biblical times must be the most corrupt men and women in history. Civil servants may follow, as almost every serving official must ask for bribe before performing a simple task for which he or she is paid. They are too many to name - from the security man (gateman), the typist, the file-officer, the driver, and finally the biggest boss the Permanent Secretary who signs or appends his signature at the bottom page of a document! Examples of corrupt practices in Nigeria may take volumes to explore or unfold and any Nigerian who claims to be ignorant of the system and how it works or even claims not to be part of the system must be ignored. There is no doubt that bribery and corruption has had its most devastating effect on Nigeria's education system and sectors and the nation and people are paying heavily for it. What a pathetic appeal to Nigerians and Igbo leaders to stop bribery and corruption, already as far back as early 1950's, deeply entrenched in the local political, traditional and even the religious systems of administration in Nigeria.

One could find justice done to his case in court or even in the village communities by offering money to judges or arbitrators. Cases are decided and the highest bidder becomes victorious! Later in the years after, the following slogan summarized how impossible any "fight against corruption" was seen by many Nigerians as doomed to failure right from the start, long before the fight begins! "If you can't beat them, you join them!" So the evil has become widespread and very resistant to any type of treatment or medication! Since God created the world and according to the records of ancient myths and narratives handed down from generation to generation, evil existed right from ancient days and found all over the world, ancient and modern. And no matter the amount of efforts by political, religious and traditional rulers all over the world to control its spread, it is quite unlikely a solution is possible. The opposite is true. Evil continues to spread with an overwhelming speed. Investigations and probes of suspects and offenders usually take years to complete and often the so-called 'suspects' are found 'not-guilty!' They, too, offer bribes to regain their freedom! Though stringent laws tend to help in dealing with offenders and criminals and thus control the spread, in Nigeria one notorious and worrisome evil called "Bribery and Corruption" seems to have gained ground in the nation. Some investigators have not failed to warn troubled Nigerians that all the following and much more were parts of the crime right from Nigeria's independence! Emefiena Ezeani hinted the root causes of the recurring Nigerian crises in his book. He pointed at the following: (1)The rigged elections of 1959,1964 and 1965; (2) Rigged and annulled census of 1962 and 1963; (3) Workers' strike of 1962,1963 and 1964; (4) 1963 and 1964 western crisis caused by the northern power base represented by Ahmadu Bello, northern Premier and Tafawa Balewa, Prime minister in unrelenting subversion of Democracy. (5) Awolowo`s incarceration in 1963 (6) Quelling Tiv riots and the massacre of more than 3,000 Tivs on orders of the prime minister.

He further pointed out that "The six-year old nation, unhealthy since its birth on October 1, 1960, had, by January 1966, shown some terminal symptoms: a politicized 1962 census; the political anarchy in the Western Region; the bloody Tiv riots; a partially boycotted 1964 general elections; and other social ills such as ethnic chauvinism, endemic corruption, nepotism, economic stagnation, wanton arson, reckless actions of political thugs, and an incompetent leadership at the centre". ***(Emefiena***

Ezeani, in Biafra Africa Died, 3rd edition, 2014, Veritas Lumen Publisher, London UK. P. 29).

These, and much more show that injustices involving fraudulent activities are always signs of greater evils that provoke reactions from the oppressed. Therefore this picture shows that from day one after independence Nigeria was already in trouble. These and many other factors brought about the inevitable Nzeogwu-Ademoyega-Ifeajuna-Led Coup. How old is corruption in Nigeria then? From our old Nursery Rhymes and the following reports below it seems like the great ancestors of corruption are the ones fighting back today in Nigeria. The hydra headed monster which is Nigeria's biggest headache today had a great and long history. Very interesting! In a presentation reviewing late Professor Stephen Ellis book, **"This Present Darkness: A History of Nigerian Organized Crime",** Feyi Fawehinmi reveals more. He confessed that going through that book left him with several thoughts, most of them unpleasant. As he saw it, it is a fascinating phenomenon, not just organized crime, but the evolution of 'the Nigerian state!' At any rate, he shared 8 random items he found interesting in the book and left all of us to draw our own conclusions.

In 1947, late Chief Obafemi Awolowo wrote that *"Corruption is the greatest defect of the Native Court system."* He complained that not only did judges take bribes; people used their connections to enrich themselves and avoid punishment for their crimes. He also wrote that in the north, a new Emir always removed all the people appointed by the previous Emir and replaced them with his own people. He wrote all these as a complaint against the Indirect Rule system favored by the British. In 1939, a Nigerian businessman based in Ghana named Prince Eikeneh, wrote to the colonial government in Nigeria complaining about the number of Nigerian girls who were coming to Ghana to work as sex workers. He said the girls were usually taken there by a Warri-based Madam named 'Alice' who told the girls they were going to learn a trade or get married. He concluded that the trade was very well-organized and profitable for the ring leaders, syndicates, or groups of individuals or organizations combined to promote some common interest. In 1950, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa *said 'the twin curses of bribery and corruption pervade every rank and department of government'*. At that time, the word 'Awoof' was already being

used to describe how civil servants used their positions to enrich themselves. In 1952, an anti-corruption campaigner named Eyo A. Akak complained that Nigerians were abandoning farming for trade due to materialism and consumerism. He said that every ex-serviceman now wanted to own a Raleigh bicycle before going back to his village while every civil servant wanted to own a car. He even blamed women (partly) for this because all of them only wanted to marry rich men.

"In 1959, there were 60,000 school graduates in the Western Region. By the following year, the number had increased to 200,000. However, this led to a now familiar problem. By 1963, primary education was turning out 180,000 graduates a year but only 80,000 of them could find jobs, according to the Regional Minister of Finance. The same minister also said he was 'looking for a method to crackdown on school principals who were collecting money from students for a variety of services'. In 1968, a Polish-British sociologist named Stanislav Andreski coined the term 'kleptocracy' to describe the system of government he found in Nigeria. He said 'Nigeria is the most perfect example of kleptocracy since power itself rests on the ability to bribe'. 'Kleptocracy' truly means a government or state in which those in power exploit natural resources and steal, rule by a thief or thieves! In 1975, a report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the shortage of petroleum products found that a lot of the petrol being imported into Nigeria (due to the inability of the Port-Harcourt refinery to meet up local demand) was being smuggled to Chad and Niger. As soon as NNPC was formed, people swarmed around it and all sorts of people got crude oil lifting contracts. The US Embassy in Paris reported in 1973 that a random American walked into the Embassy and showed them a contract he had to lift 2 million tons of Nigerian crude oil. He told the Embassy that "a great deal of under the table payments" were taking place in Nigeria to obtain crude oil' *(sic)*

Around 1979, a British bank, Johnson Matthey collaborated with the Central Bank of Nigeria to export huge amounts of FOREX from Nigeria on behalf of politicians like Alhaji Umaru Dikko in contravention of foreign exchange controls. The bank later collapsed due to unsecured loans to Nigeria and had to be bailed out by the Bank of England with £100m in 1984 – the first time the Bank of England had ever rescued a private bank in British history. It also led to the passing of the Insolvency Act by Margaret Thatcher's

government in 1986. One of the directors of the bank, Vasant Advani, ran to Nigeria in 1986 but returned to the UK in 2008 for treatment when he was diagnosed with cancer. In 2011, at the age of 67, he was sentenced to 16 months in prison for the fraud that brought down that bank. No official on the Nigerian side, to the best of my knowledge, was ever convicted. What do these stories tell us? Is Nigeria hopeless or cursed? Can things ever change? Have we always been this way or is it a recent thing? *(sic)*

Forex Fraud

The FOREX fraud has continued unabated in Nigeria till today. What is FOREX? This is "Foreign Exchange (FOREX), and refers to the foreign exchange market. It is the over-the-counter market in which the four currencies of the world are traded. It is considered the largest and most liquid (clear and free-flowing) market in the world. A liquid market is a market with many bids and offers, low spreads, and low volatility. In a liquid market, it is easy to execute a trade quickly and at a desirable price because there are numerous buyers and sellers. In a liquid market, changes in supply and demand have a relatively small impact on price. There are simple answers to all of these questions, but Nigerians don't take our problems seriously enough. None of our challenges can withstand the power of sustained thinking if we really apply them. But we start by misdiagnosing the problems and then naturally applying the wrong treatment. Or run to church. As a result, the hand of history remains strong on Nigeria. While we were seriously tracing the origins of corruption and how long it has been promoted or practiced in Nigeria, especially by the elites and political leaders, at my request a Nigerian friend and well-informed writer and analyst promptly sent me the following information which I didn't doubt its originality and its worth. The document is titled:

History of Corruption in Nigeria at a Glance

"The term kleptocracy applies correctly to the country called Nigeria and applies to systematic corruption and thievery by the state or state-sanctioned corruption. It is for a state with ties or aid from organized crime syndicates. It is like a mafia. Literally it refers to "rule by thieves", is a government with corrupt leaders, (kleptocrats) that use their power to exploit the people

and natural resources of their own territory in order to extend their personal wealth and political power. Typically this system involves embezzlement of funds at the expense of the wider population." (Stanislav Andreski)

Corrupt Practice Galore – "John Zibiri Testimony"

Is it gang-up agreement by disgruntled individuals to destroy the image of Nigeria, now beyond repair for their selfish reasons or, is there any atom of truth in what they are saying? This is the heart of our investigation. Who is John Zibiri? But so many like him have been quoted thousand times, so many like him, sons of the soil have even said worse things about Nigeria and Nigerians and no one has ever challenged them, publicly or privately. Someone has only recently said about Nigerians and corruption and only begged to remain anonymous. No one has challenged such 'reckless' assertions, quoting John Zibiri. It is all about corrupt practices, now spreading world-wide, as a mark, a stigma by which Nigerians are identified! Here comes John Zibiri:

"I worked and lived in Abuja for 18 years. I ran my own private company from 2001 until 2014.Two million of the likes of Buhari cannot change Nigeria. Everything is wrong with Nigeria. The Director won't give you contract except you pay up front. The banks won't give you loan except you concede a certain percentage. The man supervising the contract won't pass the job except you play ball. The clerk won't pass your file for payment except you rob his palm. The accounts department won't raise your payment voucher or cheque unless you see them. I can go on and on. The worst thing is that it has become a norm that nobody sees anything wrong with . If you think otherwise, they begin to think you are sick and not normal. If you try to stand in their way, you put your life at risk. If you get killed there is no justice system in place to seek redress and bring the perpetrators to book. The police is corrupt. The Judiciary is the same. Even the religious circle is not spared. Everything in Nigeria revolves around corruption. Nobody cares about anybody. No law and order. I looked from my left to right; everybody is only desperate about one thing "money". They will kill anybody and anything that stands between them and money. I am an electrical engineer with MNSE and COREN. The system doesn't care about my qualifications. Distribution and transmission jobs are given to Alhajis, pastors, friends and relatives without any basic skills. I

started asking myself, how do I convince my kids that education or hard work is rewarding? When fools, agberos and touts are running the country from the local government to the Presidency! Is this what my four sons will also go through? In 2014 I decided I have had enough. I decided I was leaving. I migrated to Australia with my family. Don't put yourself in harm's way for any reason. The problem of Nigeria is in the hands of Nigerians living in Nigeria. Try starting a gate house in your village; everybody wants to profiteer from it. The bricklayer, the carpenter, the mason and even your brother who claims to be supervising on your behalf will dupe you! They are corrupt, morally bankrupt and selfish. Everybody there thinks about himself and nobody is thinking about Nigeria! You don't have to be the one to go there to change anything. Let those under the hammer start the revolution! Surely John Zibiri was not talking nonsense!

Corruption Bonanza – "Breaking News" all the Way!

It has been one explosive breaking-news, after another, in Nigeria, and headlines continue coming in succession. The dollar was exchanging for 750 naira! A bag of rice was selling for 30,000 naira! But the most shameful news was that trunks of money in various foreign currencies including dollar, Euros, and British sterling belonging to one former federal minister were discovered in a private apartment, somewhere in a remote village. The trunks contained not less than 50 million dollars. Somewhere near Ikoyi, Lagos some huge amounts of money, about 48 million dollars were discovered in another private apartment or office complex. Up till the time of filing this report, the owners of the huge wealth had not been discovered. In breaking news, usually heard Only in Nigeria, millions of dollars and naira had been reported hidden in an abandoned grave somewhere in Nigeria. The chairman of the EFCC was reported to have confirmed all the reports, including those that had been circulating as 'rumors'. Sources from reliable high quarters confirm that high political leaders, past and present were involved in the scandals that have shocked most Nigerians to the marrows. At the airports, land borders, sea ports, Nigerian ministers have been caught carrying or exporting millions of dollars, British Pounds, and Euros to Europe, America and other countries and continents of the world!

"Where is Nigeria heading to?" This same question continues to stare at every one. Have our leaders descended really so low? Are they as primitive as that? Storing money in trunks, too? If Nigeria is as rich as this, how do we expect other nations to come to our rescue? One young man did not hide his feelings. He strongly believes that Nigeria cannot be salvaged. He confessed: "The demons in Nigerian leaders who steal the nation's wealth are inbuilt, pre- installed, and it is unlikely these evil spirits can be delivered.' He continued: "The irresistible urge in the psyche of Nigerians to steal and accumulate wealth is in our DNA".

Quick Way to Prosperity – See the Differences

Nigerian youths and Igbo youths as well are not amused when they see and hear of scandals everyday committed by Nigerian leaders and lawmakers. They are not amused when it is confirmed by government officials and EFCC that a certain officer, minister or politician was caught with millions of dollars hidden in wooden and iron trunks and buried in underground constructions for safety, when millions of college graduates are roaming the streets in search of non-existent jobs. Just to win elections, aspirants are always ready to send their bribes in trunks of naira and kobo to electoral officers, who always make millions by simply helping the wrong candidates, win the elections. Huge amounts of money are there in the hands of private individuals when many stranded youths and starving Nigerian families could have benefitted from such enormous wealth only at the disposal a few Nigerians. It is easy to compare and contrast, see what people do to make money, while others languish in perpetual poverty. You take the decision. Watch the difference! They all make the same amount, but the time and circumstances are quite different.

A Footballer in One Week makes $300,000
A Graduate in 100 Years makes $300,000
A 'Yahoo Guy, Swindler in one week makes $300,000
A Teacher in 500 years $300,000
A Social Media Worker in 6 months makes $300,000
A Drug Dealer in 2 days makes $300,000
A Politician in 24 hours makes $300,000
An Armed robber in 10 minutes makes $300,000

Additional "Commandments" for Nigeriand

Truly the history of political misrule in the post-war Nigeria cannot even be summarized in a book such as this. Posterity will have to learn more from historians and from other sources competent enough to tell the entire truth. The consequences of abandonment of education in favor of aggressive search for wealth and prosperity anywhere they could be found, has produced chaotic scary scenarios where every type of evil thrives in Nigeria today. The frightened elders of the people would not stand and watch the nation become another *"Sodom and Gomorrah"*; hence the emergence of new *"Commandments"* such as the following. 'Sodom and Gomorrah's sins were not limited to sexual aberrations and promiscuity, but include corrupt practices of all the hues of the Rainbow! Even the magnitude of the sins of the modern world has overtaken that of the mythical old Sodom and Gomorrah! The following are however not produced by our lawmakers. This is our conceived and most convenient way of throwing light to the enormity of the shadows of uncertainty that have continued to circulate around a nation of evil and decadence, called Nigeria. Nigerian youths should take note if there should be genuine moral and ethical revolution that could bring back sanity to the nation and the future generations:

1) "Thou shall not engage in drug business, or follow in the footsteps of military generals who introduced the evil in Nigeria and taught the youths to traffic in drugs.
2) "Thou shall not steal from government or public treasury and lodge such monies in foreign banks. Another military leader stole so much incredible amounts of money and lodged it in foreign banks. And his name will go down in history as one of the worst criminals that ever served as military leader. Though he died in mysterious circumstances, thou shall not take to his ways; otherwise the punishment that awaits you will be most disastrous."
3) "Thou shall not cheat anyone or engage in fraudulent activities known in Nigeria as '419' or in the kind of online fraud referred to as 'Yahoo' scams, meant to deceive people and accumulate massive wealth. You may be executed or face life-prison sentences if convicted."
4) "Thou shall not get involved in kidnapping operations, meant to lure victims into paying millions of dollars,

pounds, Euros and naira as ransom or kill any kidnapped victim, for if caught and convicted thou shall pay with your life; your property, including buildings may be demolished as a deterrent or harsh punishment to let the public know how evil kidnapping is.

5) Thou shall not receive or offer bribe to anyone. If caught, both givers and receivers will serve jail sentences. Bribery and corruption has become the capital sin that has ruined the economy of Nigeria and more than half of the citizens participate in bribery and corruption.
6) As a government or public official, you shall not inflate contract fees to enrich yourself or a company of your interest.
7) Thou shall not engage in illegal crude oil transactions or collude with local or international oil companies to defraud the nation of its oil revenue and other benefits. If caught and convicted you will be prosecuted and if found guilty you will be jailed. You must report corrupt officials and businessmen who engage in oil bunkering in Nigeria.
8) Thou shall not engage in arms trafficking, or support terrorist organizations, like Boko Haram engaged in destabilizing the nation and causing untold hardship on innocent Nigerians. When apprehended and evidence proves you guilty you and your groups will be executed in firing squad.
9) Thou shall not try in any way to impose your religious beliefs on other citizens who don't belong to your religious organization or sect. Nigeria is a secular state and there is freedom of religious worship in our country. If you are found promoting religious hate and thereby persecuting non-believers or others who don't share your religious views you may be exiled to yet another nation or island where you may rightly belong.
10) Thou shall not engage in money laundering. It is a heinous crime and if you are caught you will serve long prison sentences and as well forfeit the sum of money involved. Out of prison, you may never get any job in government or serve in any public office.
11) Thou shall not engage in illegal minting of money, or printing of any currency or distribution of fake documents, including fake passports and travelling

documents. You may face life-jail sentence if caught. This is a grave sin.

12) Thou shall not engage in the manufacture and distribution of fake medicines or health products. The health hazards caused by fake drugs are enormous. You will be jailed.
13) Thou shall not engage in adulteration of any type of product, especially food. Because of the massive fraud in adulteration of Nigerian export products like palm oil, vegetable oils, and farm products, foreign customers have almost severed trade relationships with Nigerian exporters and placed embargo on Nigerian export products. Is it not outrageous and shameful! You don't know the amount of damage you are causing our nation and people's reputation. You will be jailed if you get involved.
14) While gay marriage and other types of modern sexual aberrations are legalized or practiced in many other nations on earth, such practices are not lawful in Nigeria. You will be jailed if you are found promoting such practices or engaging in some unnatural sexual acts.
15) Looting of the country's treasury at all levels has become stock-in-trade of most Nigerian political leaders since Nigeria embraced the presidential system of government. The level of bribery and corruption can no more be measured and Nigeria has become a laughing stock of other nations. Therefore extra measures are being taken to check the excesses of criminals in our nation. Anyone convicted now of this offence will face firing squad. Any president of the nation or governor of a state found to be abetting corrupt practices will be impeached.
16) Any Nigerian living abroad and commits any criminal offence leading to his deportation to Nigeria will languish in Nigerian jail for life.
17) Thou shall not engage in human trafficking, procuring human parts for sale to make money. Many Nigerian youths engage in the exportation of human parts of the body like kidneys, livers, and hearts for quick money. Innocent people are murdered and their body parts are assembled for overseas markets where these are sold to ready buyers for medical experiments and transplants.

Other Nigerians engage in ritual killings too. If you are caught you will suffer the consequences.

18) Thou shall not engage in Examination malpractice. There is no doubt that today in Nigeria education has little or nothing to do with excellence, hard work and knowledge. Students engage in various types of examination malpractice, never found anywhere on the face of the earth. As from now it will become a criminal offence to engage in any form of examination malpractice, in Nigerian public and private schools, from kindergarten to the universities. Any student caught will be expelled from the institution and will never be allowed to proceed with his or her educational ambition. Teachers, lecturers, professors and administrators convicted of any type of colluding in this shameful practice will be stripped of their titles or demoted to the least level of their grades or qualifications.
19) Lawmakers and judges; thou shall not accept bribes while executing justice as law demands.. The litigant who offers the largest quantity of bribe wins the case. This is evil. There is nothing like free and fair and free elections in Nigeria, and no one is ignorant of this fact. You lawmakers, judges, magistrates and your collaborators; you are the perpetrators of injustice in the country. Woe to you! What you sow you shall reap!
20) Lastly you shall not join any Occult and Satanic organizations, Ogboni, Freemasonry and many other secret societies. No matter your illicit wealth accumulated through occult practices, you will at last pay with your head. You will not reap what you did not sow.

Bribery, a 'ritual' that must be performed!

However one describes what many writers call as "cankerworm" ('evil', destructive worms or larvae that attack and destroy fruits), in reference to 'bribery and corruption', in its ramifications, this evil that has eaten deep into Nigeria's moral fabric, and definitely falls into the category of heinous crimes known as 'Corrupt Practices'. This evil is widely known and practiced by both young and old, in public and private places. It can be seen as a 'custom'. What can be seen, elsewhere as a 'tip' gratuity, a gift, or sum of money freely tendered for little services rendered or anticipated as in restaurants and hotels), becomes an evil custom in Nigeria.

If one gives money to the right person, party or quarters one gets what one may be looking for, whether the fellow qualifies for the 'request' or not. On the contrary, the one who fails to perform this 'ritual' suffers a lot of damages. One can lose one's job, suffer demotion, or promotion. Corrupt practices are brazenly embraced (marked by shamelessness or disrespectful boldness) in Nigeria. It is a duty to be performed by an applicant for a job and a right due to the officer (CEO). For security agents, like the army and the police, if you fail to give a bribe, you may lose your life! All worried Nigerians must join the crusade against corrupt practices.

The Sins of Nigerian Lawmakers further exposed

"You and your gang members are worse than Evans, the most notorious kidnapper!" *(Frederick Omoyoma Odorige), to the Senate leader; President Bukola Saraki.*

Frederick Omoyoma Odorige is known to be a student of the National University of Public Service, Budapest Hungary. He is from Delta State of Nigeria. He has a Masters degree in International Public Service Relations, a Certificate in Diplomacy and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from the University of Benin, Nigeria. He was the only Nigerian, perhaps in the most recent times, who has narrated the 'History of the Nigerian Law-making and law-makers' in a well-publicized address to the Nigerian Senate President Bukola Saraki and his fellow lawmakers. The speech or address was like a bomb shell, exposing without mincing words, the evils and scandals of the Nigerian elite, politicians and lawmakers. Most Nigerian youths were not amused. Everyone is familiar with Odorige's hardest and controversial statement to Saraki: *"You and your gang members are worse than Evans, the most notorious kidnapper!"*

The Exposé by Frederick Odirige

"Exposé" here means 'to exhibit openly', 'to unmask', a photographic display of 'discreditable information' about the unbelievable atrocities the Nigerian legislators, lawmakers have been committing against Nigerians. Some of the aggrieved senators, members of House of Representatives, to whom the Odirige addressed the distressful tirade (a long, angry speech of criticism or accusations) could not stomach it, as he called out

the names of the most notorious 'criminals' among them, the 'enemies of national progress and oppressors of the people. The tirade can be likened to seven 'Woes' Jesus pronounced on the Scribes, Pharisees and the chief Priests of his time. Most of us may still recall!

Odirige talked to the legislators, the ***"Scribes and Pharisees"***, perhaps from far-away Budapest, Hungary or Abuja Nigeria, who were staring at him, sitting and dozing in the well-furnished hall built with millions of poor tax payers money, those sitting on the front pews and other scattered in the large hall, not even caring about what goes on in the senate assemblies. They were in the 'synagogue', including grand leaders of deceit, corrupt, wicked and heartless leaders! It was time to tell them the truth about their wickedness and how they had squandered the nation's resources and scandalized the youths. The youth leader did not miss an important opportunity or occasion to deliver, simply deliver, recite, and rehearse the old sins and atrocities of Nigerian leaders and the so-called legislators. Many aggrieved and frustrated Nigerian patriots, including Nnamdi Kanu had nursed great grievances against the lawmakers. They had spoken out, but the Pharaohs continued hardening their hearts! If Odirige had failed to speak out fearlessly, at the proper time the so-called national elections (2019) were approaching, it would have been a regrettable tragedy! The manner of delivering the "Woes", no matter who were there or were represented was unique, together with what was said. I summarize the address of Frederick Odirige here (not much different from that of the IPOB leader, Nnamdi Kanu.

Have the Nigerian legislators, the "**Scribes and Pharisees**" not violated the rights of Nigerians and scandalized, abused and humiliated our youths? Nigerian graduates are driving 'Okada' and 'Keke', our retired elders and parents are ignored and some die in poverty. The young school and college girls take to prostitution in the dark streets of the metropolitan cities, at home and abroad, just to "make ends meet"; while some governors spend millions molding statues of the living and the dead foreign corrupt leaders (like Jacob Zuma of South Africa); building estates and mansions for families and selves; dictate who should take over from them at the end of the 8-year tenure as governor! How Nigerians and especially Igbos could tolerate such rubbish and turn their eyes away from impending catastrophes is incomprehensible. How could the Federal legislators, ignore the constitution, the rules and provisions

guiding salaries adjustments and pensions of three arms of government officials – executive, legislative, judicial - and fix or hike their pays at will? A Nigerian legislator earns 30 million naira monthly, (75,000 Euros) and about 3 billion naira annually (excluding other funny remunerations like wardrobe (clothes), newspaper, and furniture allowances?

How could Nigerians tolerate this type of daylight armed robbery, when a Nigerian senator earns twice the monthly salary of USA president, and 9 times that of USA senator? Why should Nigerians admit and sponsor the wicked political gimmick, whereby the same old dishonorable, corrupt political leaders ('their excellencies') are recycled each time and these continue to lead the country and states in new garbs – retired army generals, get 'elected' and 're-elected' as presidents, governors and commissioners; Governors whose tenure of offices expire at the end of 8 miserable years of unproductive governance, stoop low, and seek for election into the senate or House of Representatives? It is a result of unquenchable greed, to accumulate more wealth, operate accounts in various countries, and build estates and mansions in foreign lands, instead of at least investing or opening businesses in their fatherland to help create jobs for millions of jobless Nigerian youths.

It is possible "Only in Nigeria!' An army general who has served his people, though had scored 'zero', in terms of performance, in various capacities for more 16 years – as governor, minister, senate president, is still found sitting mute in a senate assembly! *In fact Nigeria needs a "Second Independence"*. The first one fought for by politicians like Herbert Macaulay, Mbonu Ojike, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Tafawa Balewa, Michael Okpara, Okotie Eboh, Obafemi Awolowo and few others was a failure. The struggle for the "Second Independence" is overdue. It has to be won, not by armed struggle, but simply by "voting out the recycled criminals, the true enemies of Nigeria, who had kept the nation under perpetual poverty and servitude. The bad situation has now become absolutely intolerable

CHAPTER 14

POLITICAL INSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL CRISES IN NIGERIA

"Dumb Politicians are not the problem. The problem is the dumb people that keep voting for them". *(Political Quote)*

"The people who cast the votes decide nothing. The people who count the votes decide everything" *(Joseph Stalin)*

"Vote" or "no Vote" – "We will win" *(Remi Fani-Kayode, alias "Fani-Power, Deputy Premier, Western Region, Action Group (AG),in the First Republic*

"I think for democracy to flourish (in Nigeria), only people who can accept the pain of rigging, sorry, of defeat should participate in an election" *(Adams Oshiomhole, APC chairman on television September 29, 2018)*

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs." (*Matthew 24:6-8) [The Harbinger of Death! "Election-Rigging in Nigeria".]*

"Even if Atiku is a direct descendant of Lucifer and a cousin to the devil himself and best friends with Judas, *we will try him*. Even if he is a paternal uncle to Cain, a distant cousin to Achan, Ananias and Saphira, an elder brother to Pharaoh, a nephew to Herod, Delilah's boyfriend or Portipher's wife's ex-boyfriend, *we will still try him*. If he ends up like "Baba nepotism, recession, 5 percent and 95 percent stereotyping", we will vote him out in 2023. We will keep voting out any error till we get the real deal. Aso Rock is nobody's permanent inheritance. We have tried *Mr Saint* and have seen what he stands for. For now, someone should

just get set to focus on raising cows in Daura*!*" *(Salami Temitope Stephen)*

"I held 250 town-hall meetings. I articulated solutions to our problems in my constituency. My opponent did not campaign at all. He gathered money and showed up one day for election campaigns. He distributed money. He won. Africans are not moved by ideas. Their stomach leads them" *(Professor Patrick Loch Otieno (PLO) Lumumba)*

The last 'quote' from a powerful, renowned Pan-Africanist and Anti-corruption Tsar (one having a great power or authority), PLO Lumumba touches the heart of our discussion here. Who is Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba? He is a Kenyan lawyer, who served as the Director of Kenyan **Anti-Corruption Commission** from September 2010 to August 2011 and then the Director of The Kenya School of Laws since the year 2014. An eloquent lawyer, he holds a PhD in law from the University of Ghent in Belgium. He is also a staunch *Pan-Africanist* and has delivered several powerful speeches alluding to or about African solutions to African problems. He is an admirer of *Patrice Lumumba* and *Thomas Sankara,* the deceased and assassinated revolutionary leaders of the D.R. Congo and the Burkina Faso, respectively. He is also remembered for his emotion-laden and energetic speech in Uganda at the third Anti-Corruption Convention. He has referred to and quoted them several times in his speeches. PLO Lumumba has been invited in various great occasions to speak on ***Good Governance and 'whither Africa'!*** The **ATIKU** scary and alarming piece shows how desperate, confused, miserable and hopeless most Nigerians feel with regard to political leadership in their fatherland. What is the guy saying? "Even if Atiku is Lucifer ……..we vote for him simply to get rid of Buhari!

Good governance is not for Africa! The good leadership candidates are not for Africa. Such figures or personalities do not qualify. They do not win elections! It is very sad. Pre-election periods in Nigeria expose what the future holds for the nation. Activities of the young and the elderly, the rich and the poor, leaders and followers, are foreshadows of future events, not far away, anticipatory signs of possible disasters and chaos. The moneybag politicians suddenly appear and share money. Many willing and idle youths, in festive moods get immediate

'employments'. Governors, lawmakers, chairmen (out-going and in-coming ones) begin campaign rallies in order to retain or regain political powers. They appear in churches and community gatherings and look for opportunities to publicize their political ambition. They become patriotic donors, good Samaritans at political rallies as they disburse funds for 'fake' community projects. They remember the abandoned poor and the widows. The smart and most devious ones, reading the 'signs of the times', and detecting the possible 'winning party', do not waste time in changing sides. They decamp and join the former or new parties. As these events unfold no one should wait to be told that some ambitious opposing political party leaders may be visited by hired assassins. These are only the beginning of greater crises and confusion in the country, the **'harbinger of death!**

"The people who keep voting for them" are not truly 'dumb', in whatever sense. They have been conditioned to voting wrongly. Truly it may be hard to change the situation. In Nigeria, for example, are you sure you are in your right senses, when you see educated youths, jumping up and down, campaigning for the real enemies of the people, the corrupt ignorant, wicked, and recycled politicians, who mount soapboxes, promising heaven on earth, if elected into offices? Why are the youths, the expected leaders, who should take over and lead remain 'dumb?' They have also been bought over with money and nothing more. Why should anyone grumble? That's how they have been brought up. Their parents and elders do the same. It is not poverty that has conditioned them to behaving like confused 'educated' men and women. The result is clear! What we sow, we reap. Such gruesome situations are bound to arise in Nigeria at the appointed time!

"The people who count the votes decide everything!" This cannot be always true, unless every human being in the city has joined the gang of cheaters! This ugly situation can easily change if there remain in the cities even a handful of men and women, who still have conscience and think about tomorrow, about their grand-grand sons and daughters. The bankers and cashiers who count depositors' monies in the banks don't 'decide' the amount deposited. In the modern times, there are counting machines and they are usually accurate. With the modern technology and the social media, it is possible today to separate the wheat from the cockle, the plastic fish and rice from the natural ones, fake or counterfeit currency from the genuine. Today anyone with a simple electronic gadget, a simple

smart phone can join millions of interested voters and watch voters cast their votes, and as well the vote-counters on the video via the internet!

However, you don't, you can't find the story in any History book but in unreliable records, in pamphlets, and social news media. The most feared, dreadful, and troublesome "singing bird" hovers in the air, like the vulture, each time political leaders talk about organizing general elections in Africa and of course **in Nigeria!** For the people of old, especially the Igbos the 'singing bird's music' portrays disaster. It is known to be a harbinger of evil! "**Harbinger"** is something that foreshadows a future event, especially evil. Through the activities of the singing bird, grandparents confirmed imminent danger, usually the death of a prominent person in the community. Most elderly people never doubted the singing bird's warning of imminent disaster. Is their belief a myth or children's fireside story?

Not only the people of the 'primitive era'; today and every time Nigerian political class and their supporters plan elections, talk about **INEC (Independent National Electoral Commission**), PVC (Permanent/Private Voting Card), registration of voters, voting machines, registration of old and new parties, most well-meaning Nigerians catch cold and some begin to suffer from unknown psychological ailments! Sadness fills the air. Are we again in for troubles, periods of turmoil and possible civil war? Does election mean anything in Nigeria? Is the exercise fre, fair, and reliable? Does it produce the desired honest, dedicated, political leaders, learned, qualified and truly ready to serve the people? Who emerge as winners after the polls? Are they, perhaps, crooks, fake, devious personalities, in perfectly rigged elections! By their fruits you shall know them. Definitely, they come to divide the people and nation and cause more havoc than the nation had earlier and in the remote past experienced. What is the use of spending millions of the nation's scarce resources in meaningless electoral exercises, campaign rallies, punctuated by the activities of organized thugs and bandits?

It is unlikely for anyone to believe that salvation will come to Nigeria through elections. It is the same old rustic, unpleasant music; same old fake news and fraud, the first manifestation of deadly evil that became part of a failed nation, Nigeria. More than 50 years after independence, not much has changed; rather the situation has continued to get worse!

Everyday thousands of Nigerian youths flee their fatherland in search of greener pastures in near-and-far-away lands, simply because the 'elected' political leaders have continued to oppress them and leave dark clouds over their future and survival in their place of birth. After fleeing in anger and frustration, these youths never think of returning to their fatherland again!

Beginnings of the Mayhem called elections in Nigeria

Many Nigerians have not forgotten the beginnings of the mayhem (needless or willful damage or violence) referred as 'voting' or 'elections' in Nigeria? It was "Election or No election", "Rigged" and "Not-Rigged", "North" and "South", "East and West"- dichotomies and politics that began the endless story of Nigerian tragedy. It began right from the Amalgamation event, right from 1953 to the Western Nigerian political nightmare and the formation of the "Limited Companies", they called "Political Parties" - NCNC, AG, NPC. Endless crises have greeted Nigeria's future with geat dismay. They later changed names of their "Companies" to NPN, NPP, UPN, ACN, APGA and what more!

The number of political parties continued to grow as more leaders continued to appear and form their own new 'companies' (registered or not). There were no rules, no guidelines or manifestoes, written statements of the beliefs, aims or objectives and policies of the emerging political parties. How qualified are the founders and leaders and the 'political adventurers," who seek political and leadership positions and offices in the federal republic of Nigeria? The offices or positions include, presidential, gubernatorial, senatorial, houses of representatives –federal, state, and local governments. Few people care to know their functions and responsibilities. In one state alone, during elections in Nigeria, it is possible to count more than **fifty 'registered' parties,** formed by various political adventurers, each struggling to win the leadership of any of the two or three known political parties! Wow! In Nigeria everyone wants to become a king, and to win, rule, and conquer, but only a few want to follow or be directed!

Western Nigerian Political Crisis and the end of the First Republic:

It sounded like 'fairy tales', how the 'play' developed into serious crisis in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the key players

were, Nnamdi Azikiwe , (Zik of Africa and Nigerian president 1963-1966), Tafawa Balewa (Nigerian first Prime minister), Akintola (Premier of Western region, 1959-1966), Michael Okpara, (Premier of Eastern region), Dennis Osadebey (Premier of Mid-western region and, Awolowo, first premier of Western region (1954 – 1960). Awolowo was the Leader of the opposition, hated by the North, and was known to be a torn in the fresh of the Northern cabal. Awolowo/Akintola-warfare led to Nigeria first coup and civil war. Akintola's disagreements with the intransigent Awolowo on the issues of political alliances with the North was at the heart of the political crisis!

This is the summary of all we have been told and read from newspapers. It is necessary that we highlight some parts of the story to help everyone reading this historical document or account capture our message well. In the month of May, 1962, (barely two years after Nigeria gained independence from Britain), the Western House of Assembly was set to remove Chief Akintola from power after the party had earlier passed a vote of no confidence on the premier in a party meeting. Akintola was seeking alliance with the North and that was 'anathema', a curse to the Awolowo's camp! Crisis erupted on the floor of the house. We know how the scenario looks like when lawmakers disagree. They exchange blows. They turn tables and chairs upside down. Heavy and light pieces of furniture in the rooms become weapons of war and missiles! The majority in the western house of assembly expelled Chief Akintola from the party. The then Governor of the Western Region, the Ooni of Ife, Sir Adesoji Aderemi demanded Chief Akintola's resignation as Premier and named Alhaji Dauda Adegbenro as his successor. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa led federal government intervened to curb the violence by imposing a state of emergency, and appointed Dr Moses Majekodunmi (the Federal Minister of Health) as Administrator (interim premier of the Western region) on the 29th of June 1962. This became the first imposition of a state of emergency in Nigeria's history due to heightened levels of violence.

Akintola and the Northern Region

Following an alliance between Akintola and Ahmadu Bello, the Sarduana of Sokoto and Premier of the North, Akintola was returned to power on the 31st of December 1962. By 1963, the plot between Chief Akintola, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa and Ahmadu

Bello was perfected and Chief Obafemi Awolowo was arrested for coup plotting or treason. His trial commenced in earnest and he was alongside some accomplices convicted for treason and jailed for 10 years. This again was the first alleged coup plotting and conviction in Nigerian history. Was Awolowo seeking for the disintegration of the federal republic of Nigeria? Had he the support of the army? Intent on totally decimating Chief Awolowo, Chief Akintola together with his Deputy Premier Remi Fani Kayode "Fani-Power" formed a new party, National Democratic Party – NNDP and went into a political alliance with Prime minister Tafawa Balewa's Northern People's Congress (NPC) and new political party known as the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) was formed

Nnamdi Azikiwe (UPGA) and Awolowo (AG)

Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe led-NCNC teamed up with incarcerated Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Action Group (AG), the Northern Progressive Front (NPF), the Kano People's Party (KPP), the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) and the Zamfara Commoners Party (ZCP), to form the United Progressive Grand Alliance **(UPGA).** As the political atmosphere was charged with 'North/South political battle' all we, students, and most Southerners were hearing during campaigns were about the political parties called **NPC/NNA and UPGA/NCNC!** The participation of political parties from the North in the UPGA heightened the interest of most skeptics. Perhaps Nigeria was still one nation, and not a divided country! But the stage was already being set for a bitter battle between NPC and UPGA. There was not much to worry about really, some people suggested. It was all 'politics'. It happens all over the rest of the Western world. Two strong opposing parties could do for the young nation, Nigeria, though most Azikiwe admirers, including my father, did not welcome the UPGA. My father's generation and most eastern Nigerian political elites were NCNC 'fanatics!' The outcome of the struggle proved disastrous for the future of Nigerian politics. As **1964, federal elections** approached, ethnic chauvinism (excessive or blind patriotism), intimidation and violence became part of the frenzied campaigning. Chief Remi Fani Kayode and Chief Akintola's campaign was almost entirely based on **tribalism**. When the elections were finally

held, the result was a victory for the Northern People's Congress (NPC).

"Vote" or "no Vote" – "We will win" (Remi Fani-Kayode) – January 15, 1966 Coup

The evils of election rigging did not start today in Nigeria. I remember clearly in 2007 and 2011 elections, how Nigerian government wasted billions of naira in the name of **"democratic, free, fair and credible"** elections! Security officers at one polling station in my local government area were guarding about 40 electoral boxes, till late in the night. Voting had been completed by the citizens who devoutly lined up early morning to choose their trusted candidates and political leaders. Who would convince the custodians of the boxes that the election results had been announced at the INEC headquarters hours earlier! The winners had been declared, **'voting or no voting!** Indeed Deputy Premier Remi Fani Kayode had famously boasted that there was nothing their enemies could do, whether they voted for their party or not, they, NPC/NNDP must win. This statement turned out to be true as massive rigging was orchestrated in the elections. Once again this became the first pioneering act of election rigging by indigenous actors in Nigerian electoral history. The announcement of the rigged election results quickly sparked off unprecedented acts of violence, arson, mass murders and general acts of lawlessness in the Western region of Nigeria.

Following the crisis, Dr Nnamidi Azikiwe requested the military GOC to intervene and reorganize the elections in the Western region to avoid catastrophe, but the military high command refused and Dr Azikiwe was briefly held in house arrest for making such a request. Without any resolution and with Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa and Ahmadu Bello as fellow conspirators with Chief Akintola and Chief Remi Fani Kayode in the massive election heist, nothing was done to curtail the violence which gradually intensified. Daily mass murders and arson became routine in the Western region. In the midst of the constitutional crisis, the elections to the Western House of Assembly were conducted on 11 October 1965. There was decline in constitutionalism, and of course disorder accelerated with this election. Ironically no state of emergency was declared; instead the Federal government sent security forces to support the victory of Chief Akintola and Chief Remi Fani Kayode's NNDP.

The violence and lawlessness in the Western region was to continue from 1964 until 1966. It was under these conditions that a section of the military finally struck and overthrew the government on **15 January 1966.**

Britain rigged elections before Nigerian independence

It was Britain, the colonial master of Nigeria that schooled Nigerian politicians in election-rigging! The evil which has continued to ruin the democratic process referred to as 'election' or 'voting', free selection of the leaders by the people began with the British colonialists. They too master-minded the rigging, falsification of first census figures in Nigeria. The British also hand-picked the Northern leaders they wanted to succeed them after independence. The British assigned to the North the highest census or population figures the North required to dominate the rest regions of Nigeria, and so to reap where the Northerners never sowed – the mineral and natural resources of Nigeria – past and present!

Nigeria's tragedy surely started with elections and parties. The elections were rigged, even before the independence. Till date, no one can confirm that there has been any single election, local, state or national that had ended peacefully. Right from day one, as the elections are announced, candidates and their henchmen begin **plans to rig the elections**. Even after announcement of results, losers engage in endless litigations to overturn results to their favor! Often our ebullient youths become electoral tugs in the hands of politicians and innocent lives are lost. It is not worth it. But Nigerians need to think. As foolish as we are, we have continued to repeat the same horrific errors each time, all in the name of "modern democratic process of choosing our political leaders!"

There is nothing new and embarrassing about the facts. In a BBC documentary one British journalist by name **Barry Mason** affirmed that even **"Britain rigged elections before Nigerian independence"**. His story is interesting. It is not today that the British intrigue (the practice of engaging in secrete schemes) started. The program cited files held in the British National archives, covering the periods leading to independence in 1960. **Harold Smith,** the British colonial officer, in several interviews admitted that **he fixed the results of the pre-independence elections as well as the census figures in favor of the North!** There is no doubt that the pre-

independence North, with its Islamist culture, was very conservative and had enjoyed a close relationship with its British colonial rulers and the British had ruled through the emirs by the famous system of ***'Indirect Rule".***

Awolowo and Nnamdi Kanu

Their vision of Nigeria as both are seen as 'political agitators', is the same! There was nothing 'abominable' Awolowo did not say about Nigeria, right from the nation's birth, right from amalgamation to independence, and thereafter. You must have read or heard about them - Nigeria, a zoo, jungle, impossible union with Hausa-Fulani. There was nothing monstrous Awolowo did not say about Tafawa Balewa government after independence. They appeared in many British and Nigerian newspapers. Most Nigerians might not have easily forgotten the one-time 'Breaking News', direct from the BBC World Service. Once, Awolowo's anti-Balewa outburst, while in London, so angered the gentle Tafawa Balewa, that he, the Prime minister was forced to break his silence! He was quoted as saying to Awolowo: **"Enough of you now! Shut up and return home!"** He vowed to deal with Awolowo. Surely that incident must have contributed to Awolowo's punishment. He was later accused of treasonable felony and was thrown into the Kirikiri prison for ten years!

Nnamdi Kanu, did not only dismiss **Buhari** as an impossible leader of Nigeria, and did not even care for any dialogue with the head of state over the self-determination of Biafran state. Surely Buhari's anger and frustrations with Kanu led the president to the extreme thoughts of ordering that "Kanu must be captured, dead or alive!" ***(See "Operation Python Dance").*** As for Awolowo, it was alleged that part of his own people, the Yorubas he had been 'leading', later turned their backs against Awolowo and took sides with the federal government. What had the Eastern governors not done to discredit Nnamdi Kanu? The Igbo 'traitors' were the first to suggest the proscription of **IPOB "as a terrorist organization,"** simply to safeguard their political interests with the Northern cabals! But if election would mean anything in Africa in general, Biafran nation will device a meaningful, even primitive, but most suitable electoral system for Africans in general. Adopting or following sheepish so-called western democratic system, without any cultural moderation is simply an

avoidable tragedy. Barely two years after independence from Britain "leadership war" broke out in the West. Military rule dominated and matters got worse. Then former military rulers removed their military uniforms and continued on party systems. Some turned to dictators and wanted to be presidents-for-life, 'election or no election'. Party politics and election have turned into tribal nightmare in one united Nigeria!

The Political Dilemma

Most Nigerians don't know whether it is enshrined in the constitution or not, whose turn it would be to lead, each time general elections approached - the North, South, East or West, or rather which tribe should produce the next president? That is not the only dilemma facing the entire nation, the electorate and the contestants. That is only the beginning of the 'war!' Which party is going to clinch the presidency? How many new parties will be formed and how many of them will be approved or recognized by the INEC? How would the coalition or formation of alliances work out each time to assure victory at the polls? Is there any possibility that the (Christian) South could unite to face the dominant (Islamic) North to clinch the presidency? Initially all eyes are on the presidency! The tribe or party that grabs the presidency has the fate of the entire nation in its palms. Candidates of such tribe or party make a fortune, new found wealth or power. One immediately notices 'Carpet Crossing". A former 'Democratic Party' governor may readily cross over to a 'Republican Party', (in Nigeria, APC/PDP), if he sees some chances of retaining his seat. If misfortune greets his adventure, he could easily ***grab a seat in the Senate or House of Representatives! Most Nigerian ex-governors become senators after completing their 8-year tenure!*** There are many options for all politicians - old and new.

The Electorate and the Contestants

Even though the highest office is the presidency, in Nigeria, the more local offices or candidates attract the attention of the people. Who are coming out to contest for the State House of Assembly, House of Representatives and the Senate? The best personalities with the interest of the people and his region at heart, most learned, better experienced, honest and trustworthy don't come to mind immediately! Never! In most other countries

of the world, developed and developing, these criteria for the selection of best leadership are usually uppermost in the minds of the people. Not in Nigeria! In Nigeria, anyone can appear from the blues and declare his or her intentions to contest! Is money available? Is there a grand master behind him, to give him the necessary support? An idle Nigerian who had been living in Great Britain, India, United States of America or Canada could see an opportunity to return home and try his luck. At the least he could contest the office of a law-maker in his constituency, a job that opens his way to greater wealth, having failed to 'make it' in a foreign land for years! Every possible voter, including the under-aged has eyes on the money the emerging politician would share during the campaigns. This is the way it works in Nigeria!

"If I get your money, I vote for you"

In Nigeria, it is becoming obvious that only politicians who pretend to be 'generous' win elections. During the real campaigns, candidates address large and small groups, the clergy, workers, market women and youths. At each occasion large quantities of money are shared and each one receives his or her due. The gathering is never an occasion to educate the masses, sensitize the populace, expose the political and party manifestoes, analyze the nation's, the state's or local government's problems and how to resolve them. In few occasions the emerging politicians add a word or two on creation of jobs for the stranded youths', provision of good roads, portable water supplies, or the possibilities of establishing small scale industries. Most voters don't even know the names of possible politicians who represent them or make their laws. Once monies are shared at rallies and people grab theirs, many do not appear on the election day. The highest bidder wins anyway! Nigerian voters and politicians look like birds of the same feather. The ancients remind us that "birds of the same feathers flock together', and again 'like father, the same like son!' The politicians are like the families that raise them. Corruption is rooted in the families and that's why the evil of election malpractice may linger for long, and will definitely get worse. The ancient Romans had a dictum "Nemo dat quod non habet". (No one gives what he hasn't). The people are helpless and poor. The voters want money and have no faith in the system.

The East-West Political Alliance

As in the days of Nnamdi Azikiwe, Awolowo and Akintola, so has it remained till date in Nigeria? The South has never been able to unite and face the North in elections. Political alliance between the 'NCNC' and "AG' or today, 'APGA and ACN" has never worked. But the North, under whatever name 'PDP', 'APC' has remained united in their goal to conquer and rule the nation. The North has always succeeded in rallying round groups of disenchanted Southern political groups for what Nigerians refer to as "Majority" to win the presidency. Written or unwritten in the constitution, the so-called "Rotational Presidency" has never worked in Nigeria. But why 'rotational?' Why should such an 'arrangement' ever function in a democracy? This is one of the strongest reasons critics blame Nigeria for choosing a wrong system of government and seriously demand the restructuring of the country. They are not far from the truth, if peace would reign in the nation. Do Americans, the British, the French, the Germans practice 'rotational presidency?'

Igbo Presidency in Nigeria Politics – an Enigma – a bad Dream

> ***"As a politician of an Igbo extraction, an ex-Biafran, coming from the secessionist region that fought Nigeria in the 1967-70 civil war, Rochas Okorocha could not have clinched the highest political office in Nigeria, in spite of his popularity among other Nigerian ethnic groups, North, West and South of the nation….."***
> *(This author)*

But stop! Some Igbos however have not stopped expecting their turn in the presumed *"rotational presidency"* in the Nigerian system of political democracy! The name Rochas Anayo Okorocha comes to mind! The present writer has stated it times without number, that it is a dream to talk about Igbo Presidency in Nigerian Federation. The facts were first made clear when Rochas Okorocha, the then Governor of Imo state was 'seriously' trying to convince the Igbos and some of his followers that he would be the first Igbo president, come **2019 or 2023!** He was told without any mincing of words that he was wasting his time and energy.

This Igbo son was not pleased that this writer did not approve his mad ambition to become the first Igbo president of Nigeria! He later 'crossed over', joined the Hausa-Fulani APC, hence to increase his chances of becoming the next president of the federal republic of Nigeria. Rochas Okorocha offers the best example of **"Carpet Crossing"** drama in Nigerian politics, which really debases the status or esteem of political institution in Nigeria. Who will believe that the politician who first belonged to PDP, abandoned the party, and joined APGA, later abandoned APGA and became a strong adherent of APC! Carpet-Crossing is not only an important factor, but a tragedy in the history of political institution in Nigeria. This shows clearly that parties in Nigeria are like *'social clubs'*, with no manifestoes or ideologies. In Nigeria, politics is not for men and women of honor and integrity. This is why Africa produces the largest number of *'Presidents-for life',* and wicked dictators, who must murder political opponents and lead their nations into civil war, before dying in military coup or in exile.

The under-aged voters in Nigeria

In most countries of the world, including the United States and European nations, politicians are never saints. Election frauds and all sorts of voting malpractices are usually reported, most often by the losers. Nigeria may top the list of countries where election fraud is well documented, with facts and figures. The most worrisome is voting by under-aged boys and girls, especially in the Northern states of Nigeria! This is unacceptable, but unfortunately the so-called INEC has failed woefully to address the evil. No matter the achievements or successes the INEC claims to register in elections in the country, this singular malady, among so many others call for a total overhaul of the system of selecting political leaders in Nigeria. **If the gloves don't fit, abandon them!**

Signs of the end of Nigerian Federation

Elections or no Elections – with genuine Revolution Nigeria will crumble! The result will be chaos. There will be "signs and wonders" and false prophets will arise too. Not long ago we heard one Pentecostal Pastor-Prophet who announced that he had a vision! Muhammed Buhari, the anointed messiah had arrived to redeem Nigeria from the mess his predecessor,

Goodluck Jonathan led Nigeria into! Buhari had the divine mission from Allah to **fight corruption** and nothing more. There were many other prophets. Their 'prophecies' did not come to fulfillment. No one should listen to these so-called men of God in sheep's clothing. Our '**prophecies'** here are '**truths'** most Nigerians are aware of. The nation's problems could be resolved if honest and God-fearing people appear on the stage. Signs of the end are there:

1) The Islamization program under many guises does not know boundaries and the hitherto 'unconquered Christian North', including the Middle Belt regions would begin to receive the heat of Hausa-Fulani conquest!
2) Boko Haram terrorists with support of the military will intensify their activities to destabilize the nation.
3) Bad economic situation in the country, compounded by agitations by frustrated and disillusioned youths will surely trigger more mass exodus of youths to foreign lands and possibly increase in criminality, home and abroad.
4) Will the army intervene in the face on impending catastrophic situation, is not within anybody's guess. It is unlikely that the military would intervene because they, too, have benefitted from the massive loot of the nation's coffers. The leadership under the Islamic cabal will pursue its Islamic agenda and not that of a democratic state.
5) Possibly a middle course could be considered to save the desperate situation; a possible long-time and lasting-settlement of the Nigerian crisis, instead of ignoring it, or letting the 'sleeping dog lie'. It would have been best to take the bull by the horns, and calm the nerves of all the agitated Nigerians. The decision to suspend or postpone any elections and convening a Sovereign National Conference, to decide Nigeria's political future would have gone down well in history at Nigeria's worst hour of crisis.
6) Worse still, if the elections were eventually held and another northerner, member of the Muslim Cabal is returned to power, know that Nigeria would be marching towards a dead end.
7) When the "Operation Animal Dance" and military suppression of various uprisings in all parts of the federation dominate; Nigerian political wheel will be grinding slowly to a halt, as the Islamization agenda continues to receive concentrated attention! Behold End of times for Nigeria! "Abomination of Desolation" (Matthew 24.15)

True 'Messiahs' that can save Nigeria

They are not the Nigerian politicians, old, and the present. Right from the birth of the nation, politicians have been Nigeria's problems. When in peaceful marches and protests against agents of darkness; **no "Bishop Desmond Tutus", no "Martin Luther King Jrs", no "Nelson Mandelas"** of Nigeria rises in stubborn defiance, to face the Nigerian army and military tanks as the oppressors advance on them, one should know that the end of the nation is near. There are hundreds of men of God in Nigeria, bishops, clerics of every religious and Christian denomination proclaiming the gospel of salvation to millions of Nigerians who have not been drafted into Islam by the jihadists' conquerors. Nigerian Church leaders cannot keep mute while the poor and the helpless masses of the oppressed Nigeria cry for help! Desmond Tutu of South Africa was just a Bishop. During most of his agitation marches and rallies against Apartheid masters, **Rev Tutu, like Rev Martin Luther King,** was together with his entire family, wife, and children! Without Tutu and Mandela there would have been no democratic majority rule in South Africa today! **Martin Luther King Jr**. is great figure in American history today and everybody knows why. Finally we reiterate and recommend that to avoid any catastrophic demise of the Nigerian federation; 'abomination of desolation', the present Nigerian political leaders and lawmakers of all grades must think less about elections and tackle the **Restructuring Agenda**. In the old Prophetic times, an adjunct proclamation would follow "So says Yahweh!" But our recommendations have no divine injunction. They make simple common honest political SENSE!

Pathway to Peace and Stability: A Political Dilemma - Sovereign National Conference in the face of Nigeria's looming crisis.

"A stitch in time saves nine", is an old adage. Nigerian political leaders can do the nation a great service if they arranged and summoned a Sovereign National Conference, to decide Nigeria's political future. Final draft of 2014 National Conference Report, **Chapter One,** Introduction and Background "Agitation for national conference – A Historical overview", the Conference

Committee clearly, in the introductory part of the document stated the following: (please read carefully and digest well).

"A National Conference" is a formal platform for dialogue by constituent units of the nation convened by the national government of a country to discuss issues or problems that inhibit national progress or challenge national cohesion. A National conference is expected to proffer appropriate solutions that will assist in moving the nation forward" That was one held in **2014,** which was completely discarded by Buhari and the Hausa-Fulani Cabal.

"A Sovereign National Conference is the convocation of by and large, civil society organizations, workers' unions, political parties, professional associations, religious denominations, and government representatives to discuss and chart new ways forward for the nation. As the word 'Sovereign' suggests, the conference is not subject to the authority of the state and its outcome may supplant and sweep away existing order while heralding an entirely new order. It has the capacity to take effective and effectual decisions relating to the tenure, survival and/or limits of power of the existing regime. This means that a sovereign national conference is interpreted as a transitional phase in the process of a mass struggle to carry out system or regime change."

"Ethnic Nationalities Conference": Where the convocation of a sovereign national conference is unlikely, its proponents have advocated a conference of ethnic nationalities, particularly in an ethnically plural society. Representatives of the ethnic nationalities are convened on a common platform to discuss and make recommendations to Government about their common problems in order to achieve higher levels of mutual trust, understanding and integration in nation-building."The document further highlighted the need for a sovereign national conference, which clearly shows that It is the only pathway to the possibility of Nigeria's survival as a nation "The situation which leads to the convocation of a sovereign national conference arises from the thinking that the existing order or regime, is incapable of solving economic and political problems and the institutions of the state are rather weak or ineffective to assert authority while the democratic opposition is not strong enough to effect regime or system change". What next are Nigerian leaders waiting for? Should Nigerian leaders now not be busy organizing Sovereign and Ethnic National Conferences?

Averting the looming Nigeria's 'Third World War'

It might look like a false alarm, a joke, a child's play, a comedy piece. No! It is real. The **Nigeria 'First World War' started in the Western region of Nigeria in 1966** and the key players were politicians meddling in the affairs of a neighboring 'independent republic', Awolowo and Akintola's political arena. The consequences were great. Nigeria was originally a federation of 4 republics. Some political leaders from the Eastern and Northern republics', Azikiwe and Tafawa Balewa thought they could play 'international' politics like it was done in America and Europe or in other democratic nations of the world. They crossed borders to meddle in the political affairs of the West, naturally controlled by the Action Group (AG). They were mistaken. And the "Nigeria's First World" stated and the military boys intervened to restore order. It led to the death of prominent political leaders and ushered in a chaotic situation. The fragile unity of the young independent nation was shattered. It led to the **Nigeria's "Second World War",** well documented, and known as **"Nigeria-Biafra War".**

There are lots of disturbances and unrest all over the world today. Wars are going on in small and large scales in the Middle East and, terrorism, a new brand of terrifying war, and jihadist in nature, is raging all over the world and may likely trigger a global Third World War. These terrorist organizations, especially two most dangerous groups, (ISSIS and Boko Haram) have their headquarters in The Middle East and Nigeria, if not averted; a "Third World War" might be so devastating and may even bring the world to an end, many people fear, as nuclear weapons may be introduced. No one wants a Third World War, and though threatening to show off their supreme military might, the big nations that possess nuclear weapons (Americans and Europeans, including Israelis, China, North Korea and Iran), are slow in preparing for a Third World War. But what are Nigerians doing to avert the possibility of the regions' **looming third world war?** This is a disturbing question. Northern Even though the leader of the secessionist Biafra during an interview maintained that there would be 'no more Nigeria-Biafra war', many mistook his assertion. They thought Ojukwu's position at that point in time, was the end of Biafra movement! Sorry. Those people have never heard about '**restructuring',** 'reading the signs of the times'. "No victor, no vanquished" theory or policy or agreement was not put into practice. It was therefore only a

temporary cessation of hostilities, many concerned Nigerians, rightly observed.

A new generation of Biafrans, leaders and followers, would rise and ask questions, (call them, 'area boys', idle mobs, unschooled brigands, and Okada drivers, crazy and jobless sycophants, who understood nothing about warfare). And the issues they raise must be addressed by the elders; otherwise these very **elders and the elites** must be ready to accept the consequences of the results of their agitation for Biafra. Truly, most observers, local and foreign have traced the causes and roots of the youths' agitations to corrupt and reckless leadership of political leaders and their ministers, from the local to the federal level of government administration. There is absolutely no argument about this fact.

"Carpet-Crossing" and Political leadership in Nigeria

As Nigeria's Third World War looms, the leaders are doing little or nothing to avert it. The situation is frightening. But one thing is certain. The average Nigerian knows whom to hold responsible if another war erupts in this region of Africa. Precisely, the political leaders who fail to recognize the boundaries of political parties, who indulge in 'carpet crossing'. Nigerian politicians are most selfish individuals you find in the field of politics in the modern history of politics. As Nigerians copy the political systems of the so-advanced countries of the west, they fail woefully in the implementation of the systems. It is rare in the west to find 'carpet-crossing', to change parties and membership loyalties from one party to another, especially when one's party loses election. It is not easy to find a Democrat in American politics, cross or switch over to Republican Party, because the Democratic Party lost to the Republicans, in elections, or because one fails to grab a prominent post in one's party. No one hears about members of political parties, dissatisfied with some policies or activities of fellow members of Labor party in Britain decamp from the original party and cross over to Conservative party, just for economic or political gains. It is as well not too 'normal' for 'Socialists' in France decamp, and join the 'Democratic Movement for change'. Nigerians practice reckless, crazy and selfish brand of politics that continues to destabilize the nation and these half-baked politicians blindly fail to reckon with the monumental consequences of tribal politics in the third world countries, including Nigeria!

In Nigeria, politicians, abandon their parties at any time, decamp and join the 'winning party', pledging allegiance to their new party, where they hope to achieve their political and economic ambitions and dreams. In Nigeria a clueless political leader with no atom of remorse or shame abandons the electorate and his entire constituency and political party that voted him into power, and joins a 'winning party' or major party of interest and expects the people to follow him to an unknown territory! Some decamp and try their luck successively in as many new parties they wish without qualms. What a calamity! These Nigerian political wanderers are the real enemies of the people and the nation and are truly to be held responsible for all the evils that have befallen this nation. In their selfish aspirations for higher offices, economic and personal interests, they cause rivalries, dissension and confusion among old and new members, and as well block avenues for peace, unity, progress, and development of the country and their constituencies. Nigeria's political stability and future is permanently compromised and ruined as these arrogant and unrepentant sinners and enemies of the people stir up hostilities in their states and regions of origin, as they fish in troubled waters in the nation's headquarters in Abuja. They care little or nothing about their home states, nothing about development, education, healthcare, jobs and infrastructure. Their families and children are well taken care of abroad. The actions of the political elite can provoke instability and state of war.

Political alliances and not Carpet-Crossing

In Nigeria these political ingrates, who fail to recognize the political divisions that guarantee the country's peace and stability must be held responsible for any eruption of civil war in the present day Nigeria. Nigerian political system is not developed as in the west, where one remains a citizen of one's country, irrespective of place of birth, color of skin, or language. In Nigeria, politics is still in its primitive stage, and the three main parties have been NPC (North), NCNC (East), AG (West) or call them any new names. Only political alliances are possible if any party fails to win majority in national elections. Never 'carpet crossing!'This is how it is done all over the civilized world, Nigerians are copying from. If you claim to be an educated, smart politician, and don't know this, stay and mope, let an

ignoramus in international politics like me, teach and open your eyes!

Igbo Political Leaders! How long will you wander about in the wilderness?

"So Ahab sent to all the Israelites, and assembled the prophets at Mount Carmel. Elijah then came near to all the people, and said, "How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The people did not answer him a word". *(1 Kings: 18.21) (Great Contest and decision-taking at Mount Carmel)*

Igbo Politicians, these words are addressed to you today! Will you make up your mind? You have misled and disappointed the Igbo race for long time now. Are you preparing for the day of reckoning? If Nigeria is re-structured, no one will see any reason why **APGA/AGPA/NCNC** or whatever new name you give **the Igbo tribal party**, cannot remain a major party in the East, as **ACTION CONGRESS/ACTION GROUP (AG),** the **Yoruba tribal party in the West** and **APC/PDP/NPC) in the North**. Nigerian political foundation or affiliation has since the Amalgamation or Independence been rooted on tribalism. On the federal level any major party that fails to win outright majority in the polls must then seek for the favors of any other minority party anywhere in the federation. As it is unlikely to find any minority party in the North (APC/PDP being the sole party of the Islamic republic of Northern Nigeria), it is likely that any of two major parties APGA and CAN/AG will pick up alliance from any of the minority parties in the Middle Belt, or Niger Delta regions. Igbo politicians, who are unable to build up their own regional political party (NCNC), founded by their son and great father of African politics, Nnamdi Azikiwe and con-patriots, and rejuvenated by Ikemba Odimegwu Ojukwu, under APGA should be ashamed of themselves. They take delight in political jamboree. Today it is courtship with 'PDP". Next they decamp and pitch tents with 'APC!' Wow! Of course the Igbos remonstratively bemoan the ugly situation of one who has no sense of shame; when they say that the public shame is usually transferred to the relations of the mad person. ***(Ihere n'eme nwanne onye ara)!***

As it looks now and always, it is clear that what Nigeria needed imperatively, urgently and with no further debate should be **Sovereign National Conference.** Perhaps there may be need for **Ethnic National Conferences**. Both can run concurrently. Many well-meaning Nigerians strongly believe that each geopolitical region of Nigeria needs their conferences in the face of the present political impasse in Nigeria. There is no more room for political jamboree and opportunism in Nigerian politics. Those politicians who still care about principles or consequences of their selfish and poor political calculations, must have by now learnt some lessons from political mistakes that led to the first disturbances in the western region of Nigeria in 1966, that brought in the military and as well a total disruption of democratic system of governance in Nigeria. An overhaul of the system might still be a way out as well as complete political re-education of all Nigerian political leaders, men and women, who want to get involved, or seriously wish to embrace politics as a profession.