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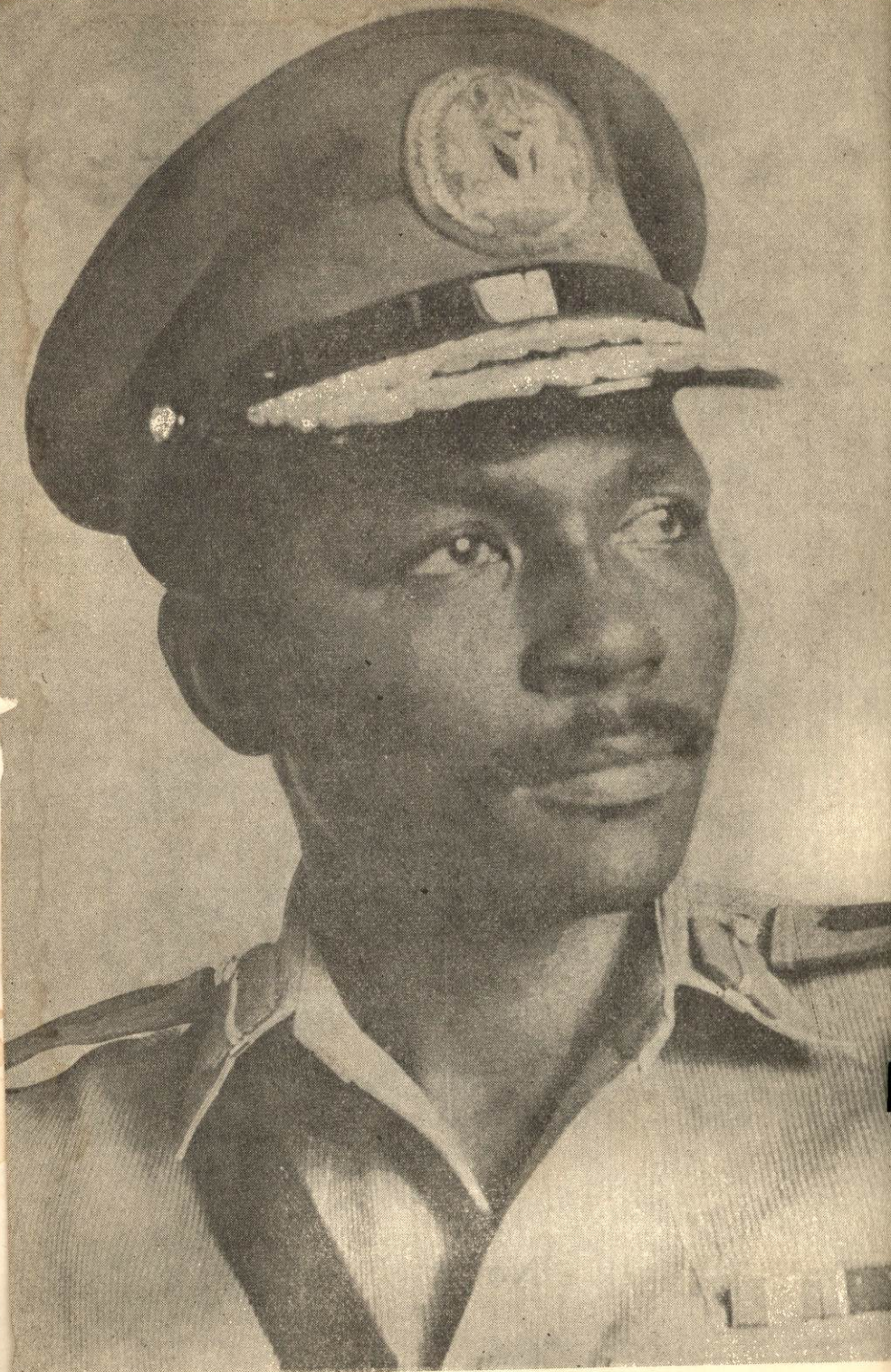


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TOWARDS ONE NIGERIA

No. 4



Major-General Yakubu Gowon, The Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces.

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PREFACE

Since the publication of No. 3 of the series of Newstalks giving detailed information and mature opinion on the Federal Military Government's efforts to crush Mr Ojukwu's rebellion, there have been great changes which have occurred in all the war fronts. The rapidity with which these changes have taken place is remarkable.

In all the theatres of the war, Ojukwu has suffered humiliating defeats. The invasion and inglorious occupation of the Mid-West State by the rebel forces which aroused great emotions in all Nigerians have been speedily brought to an end. Ojukwu's forces have not only been driven out of all the corners of the Mid-West, but the Federal Forces have since liberated many important towns in the rebel held territories.

Enugu, the rebel Headquarters has fallen to the gallant Federal Forces.

There is evidence to support the opinion that the determination to achieve victory, on the part of Federal Forces, has created nightmares, regrets, and panic amongst the rebel leaders. There have been innumerable allegations of planned coups and counter-coups in the rebel camp. And Ojukwu has shamelessly executed some of his top-ranking rebel officers whom he blamed for all his defeats.

There is a widespread feeling now among the rebel forces that Mr Ojukwu is riding a great wave on a surf-board and will soon be drowned.

We are grateful to all those people who have contributed in various ways to this publication which is number four in our series.

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March 1968.

NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE CENTRAL- EASTERN STATE

By

John Igbozue

It is now clear that the rebel gang in the East-Central State are in a dilemma. They will now have to choose a new leader in order to be able to negotiate a settlement of the present crisis with the Federal Military Government. But so far, Ojukwu's associates in the rebel high command and his civilian collaborators are yet to realize fully the extent of the disaster already wrought on the East-Central State by his evil leadership. Until this is realized the new opportunity offered them for an honourable surrender will not be appreciated. This is the extent of their dilemma: to surrender and seek honourable peace under a new leadership or fight to total destruction under Ojukwu's incompetent leadership.

The Federal Military Government cannot be more generous in its approach to a peace talk. As Ojukwu has declared himself openly as a sworn enemy of the territorial integrity and unity of Nigeria, it is only logical to call for another leader that will accept this as the basis of a negotiated settlement. Even if Ojukwu personally renounces his secession and other treasonable acts, there are other activities that disqualify him as a possible negotiator for the East-Central State. And, in fact, any negotiator presented by the rebels can only represent the East-Central State and not the other two Eastern States who have their own legal government.

There is no doubt that Ojukwu is no longer qualified to negotiate on behalf of the East-Central State. Firstly, he has been dismissed from the Nigerian Army with ignominy and from his post as Military Governor of the State. To sit on the negotiation table with him may imply an implicit reversal of these decisions of the Federal Military Government. And knowing him for what he is, Ojukwu will also try to exploit such a situation as meaning the recognition of his illegal regime.

Secondly, Ojukwu's illegal secession has been declared as a treasonable act, a crime which he is yet to account for. To negotiate with

him while such a crime hangs over his head might imply an indirect pardon. Thirdly, Ojukwu is known to have declared total war on the fatherland, an act which he later proceeded to carry out by military invasion of other component states of the Federation for no just cause. To seek a peaceful settlement with Ojukwu as the principal negotiator would imply that the Federal Military Government has been unable to crush his armed rebellion. This may also be interpreted to mean that Ojukwu has sustained his rebellion and thereby maintained the territorial integrity of his dream empire, all of which he has been unable to do.

Apart from these facts, there are certain crimes committed in the name of Ojukwu's illegal secession and rebellion or which he approved of and master-minded. Ojukwu and his henchmen must account for these crimes carried out by their agents. Such crimes include hi-jacking of planes, piracy, looting of state treasuries and banks, planting of bombs and explosives which later resulted in the loss of several lives, illegal seizure of Federal properties, illegal mining concessions, illegal importation of arms and ammunition as well as a number of other serious criminal offences. To parley with Ojukwu while these crimes of his agents, supporters and collaborators are yet to be accounted for would definitely not be in the interest of all the people of Nigeria, including the Ibos.

However, Ojukwu's incompetence, failures and inconsistency disqualify him almost as equally as his many crimes against the nation. Right from the outset of military rule in Nigeria, Ojukwu is known to have been totally opposed to the return of civilian administration for many years. He is also known to be implacably committed to military dictatorship in Nigeria. His ambition to become the Head of State of the Nigerian Federation after the army take-over of January 1966 is as much an open secret as his stubbornness and indiscipline when he was a member of the Nigerian Army. It was as part of his political ambition that Ojukwu assumed his so-called post of Head of State in his dream empire after his illegal secession. This ambition also prompted him to promote many of his henchmen in the rebel high command while he retained his rank in the hope that a permanent dictatorship will enable him to consolidate his power. But Ojukwu admitted his failure as a military leader and also his political incompetence by recalling such discredited civilians as Mike Okpara, Chike Obi, Mba, Mbu and Louis Mbanefo, all of whom he had earlier condemned.

In view of these facts, one may ask: who is likely to emerge as an

acceptable leader among Ojukwu's associates in the rebel high command and among his civilian collaborators? It is known that some of Ojukwu's fellow-officers in the rebel army have for long been considering the question of honourable surrender in the face of consistent military defeat at home and diplomatic disgrace abroad. But they have also been doubting their own acceptability to the Federal Military Government as competent negotiators on behalf of the East-Central State. One of the candidates seriously tipped for such a role is Police Commissioner Okeke, who is strongly supported by other senior officers of the Police Force of the former Eastern Region.

Some of the civilian collaborators of the rebel gang sent out as envoys are also reported to have been putting out feelers as to their acceptability as negotiators on behalf of the East-Central State. They are understood to be in doubt because they are not accredited members of the regime in the state.

The Federal Military Government has made its stand clear. If the rebel gang and their collaborators sincerely desire a peaceful settlement to the crisis, the onus is on them to produce a new and acceptable leader that will renounce their illegal secession, pledge his loyalty and that of his men to the territorial integrity of Nigeria and accept the new structural arrangement as the basis for negotiation.

THE PEACE TERMS OF THE ENUGU REBELS

By

Oladimeji Adekunle

The Enugu rebels now want to complete the full circle of their abortive attempt to secede from the Nigerian Federation. In spite of their failure to win a single military victory, some rebel envoys are now globe-trotting with a document containing what they call peace terms. The desperate diplomatic moves are just a practical demonstration of Ojukwu's recent boast that he now holds the initiative in the current Nigerian crisis. However, as is characteristic of them, the Nnewi clique have again mixed up their priorities, for they are merely trying to claim, once more, that they are wiser than the rest of the world.

Out of sheer foolhardiness, Ojukwu and his henchmen have refused to learn from their past mistakes. They know that their certain defeat is a matter of time. Yet, instead of throwing in the towel like honest losers, they are putting all their human and material resources into the last stage of a fruitless gamble. As they run from pillar to post with their worthless document, the rebel messengers have only met with cold rebuff. It is understood that they are being advised that what they should draw up is not a peace plan but a surrender memorandum, and that their first port of call should be Dodan Barracks, Lagos; and not London, Washington, Paris, Addis Ababa or Kinshasa, where their still-born Republic is both unknown and unrecognized.

Nevertheless, let's examine this latest brain-wave of Ojukwu, called peace terms, in relation to his rebellion. It will be recalled that Ojukwu declared his secession because the very generous concessions of the Federal Military Government in the early days of the crisis did not satisfy his personal ambition to rule Nigeria, and thereby secure the domination of the Federation by the Ibos. It will also be remembered that the foremost demand of the Nnewi clique in those days was for a Confederation.

Recent and past events have shown that a Confederation would have meant the perpetual enslavement of the people of the South-Eastern and Rivers States, and the selfish employment of their natural resources

for the development of Iboland. Having failed to achieve this objective, Ojukwu declared total war on the fatherland. Now, after eight weeks of wanton waste and destruction, Ojukwu, in the manner of a spoilt child, has renamed his proposals for a Confederation, peace terms. What he failed to achieve by intransigence and force of arms, he now wants to secure through the back door of diplomatic pressure.

In their so-called peace terms, the rebels are pleading for a form of political association that will cover all the fields of governmental functions except practical politics. Such fields include Railways, Harbours, Roads, Merchant Shipping, Civil Aviation, Inland Waterways, Posts and Telegraphs and Meteorology. Others are Currency matters, Customs, Cultural Relations and Common Citizenship. It is obvious from these terms that after nine months of feverish war preparations followed by eight weeks of consistent military defeat, the Enugu rebels have discovered that their rebellion was ill-conceived from the outset. Apart from the fact that the old Confederation proposals have been deceitfully renamed peace terms, all the governmental functions covered, show that the rebel's moribund Republic could not have survived or maintained a semblance of sovereignty even if the secession attempt had succeeded. In trying to be clever, Ojukwu and his advisers have only exposed the truth that their treasonable acts were motivated by selfish ambition.

Briefly, what Ojukwu and his collaborators are demanding through the so-called peace plan is that the Ibos should keep what they have and also share in the resources and wealth of others. This is how they have been cheating the South-Eastern and Rivers people for decades. For instance, it is clear that the dream empire of the rebels could not have been able to run such services as Civil Aviation, Inland Waterways, Railways and similar projects as viable concerns without the whole of Nigeria open to them. On the question of common citizenship, since Ojukwu has expelled every other Nigerian, apart from the Mid-West Ibos, from his area, he hopes that his impoverished kinsmen would, once more, spread their tentacles all over the Federation while effective barriers are placed in the way of others who want to enter the Eastern States. Indeed, the plan for common citizenship and cultural relations contradicts Ojukwu's oft-repeated but false analysis that the Ibos have been too aggrieved by recent events to be able to live in peace again with fellow Nigerians.

Another point of irony in the so-called peace terms is Ojukwu's realization, after nine months of fruitless efforts, that there could still be

close political relationship among the people of Nigeria. The only way this can happen is for Ojukwu to renounce his secession and accept the new structural arrangement of the Federation based on twelve States.

NIGHTMARES OF THE ENUGU REBELS

By

Muhammad Sanni

The rebel regime in Enugu has now mounted the last stage of its propaganda warfare against Nigeria at home and abroad. The stock-in-trade of the Enugu radio now is barefaced lies and reckless distortion of facts regardless of whether the world believes them or not. As usual, however, the secessionist regime is not resting on its lies alone. It is also backing them up with a desperate diplomatic offensive in spite of the fact that recognition is just as elusive as military victory.

Most countries of the world, like Nigeria, have seen through Ojukwu and his fascist tactics. But there is no doubt that a few world media of information have been taken in by the rebels' high-powered but false propaganda. For once, one finds usually reliable radio stations and newspapers woefully or deliberately failing to differentiate between factual reports and propaganda pieces. As it appears to keen observers, many foreign radios and newspapers are not only helping on their own to boost Ojukwu's faded image but also playing down the Federal Government's achievements just to help the rebel gang create the impression they want the world to believe about the present crisis.

However, it must have now dawned on many that the Federal Government, unlike the rebels, is actually fighting a double war. It is a war to crush the rebellion of the Nnewi clique just as much as it is a war to ensure that equality becomes a permanent feature of Nigerian life while domination by any particular group is completely eliminated. To this end, the Federal Government has solemnly declared that it really has no animosity against the Ibos as a people but against Ojukwu and his rebel gang. In fact the government has gone as far as devising means of protecting the Ibos still resident in other parts of the country from molestation because of the actions of their evil leaders.

As a practical demonstration of this policy, the Federal Military Government refrained from involving innocent civilians in the current conflict until the rebel gang began to bomb thickly populated residential areas. Though many members of the terrorist gang from the East-

Central State have been caught red-handed, the rebel radio has always attributed explosive and bomb planting incidents to so-called Yoruba freedom fighters.

It is in the light of these facts that the latest propaganda stunt of the Enugu radio must be viewed. The reckless propagandists of the rebel regime are reported to have alleged that an East German ship is on its way to Nigeria with defoliation chemicals, poison gas and lethal germ cultures. The rebel radio also alleged that these deadly materials are going to be introduced into the current campaign.

It must, however, be recalled that while the Federal Government has committed itself to the preservation of the corporate existence of Nigeria it is the rebel gang, as the sworn enemies of the fatherland, who have engaged in indiscriminate destruction as a means of achieving their objective.

It is the rebels who have resorted to all sorts of desperate methods in their attempt to win a war that has proved to be beyond their military capacity. Such methods have included sabotage, bomb and explosive planting, hi-jacking of planes, pillage, looting of state treasuries and banks, illegal mining agreements, scorched earth tactics and the forcible conscription of youngsters into the army.

But while the rebels have always indulged in these despicable tactics they at the same time turn round to point accusing fingers at the Federal Government in a bid to cover up their crimes.

But Ojukwu and his henchmen will be better advised to think twice about defoliation, gas warfare and lethal germ culture which they are already known to be contemplating.

Already their attempt to poison the Iju water storage tanks has been thwarted and their sabotage of the Asaba electricity supply woefully failed to have the desired effects.

Gas warfare can only have the desired effects in a war between two distantly placed countries. In the case of Nigeria where all the twelve states are geographically contiguous, *the three Eastern States now forcibly occupied by the rebel gang cannot* escape the immediate results of defoliation and poison gas. It is an elementary geographical knowledge that the winds will blow back and distribute the gas and chemicals to affect areas including its source of escape, perhaps more disastrously.

It will be recalled that earlier in this war Ojukwu and his gang called on villagers in the areas liberated in the East-Central and South-Eastern States to poison their water and food in order to kill the Federal Forces. Fortunately, this advice was not heeded because the inhabitants of the

liberated areas would have poisoned only themselves as the Federal forces did not rely on them for their rations.

If, as part of his total war, Ojukwu and his gang think they can use poison gas, defoliation and lethal germ cultures to achieve the military victory they failed to achieve in open combat, then the so-called military technologists of the rebel army had better think twice. Such tactics can only result in open genocide against the people of the East-Central State.

WHY FEDERAL FORCES WILL WIN THE WAR AGAINST THE REBELS

By

Horatio Agedah—Radio Journalist

In the last few days there has been increasing outcry from the so-called friends of Nigeria for a cessation of hostilities against the Enugu rebels.

One argument against continuation of the war is that as a result of the Mid-West treachery, the magnitude of the conflict would mean total ruin for Nigeria if pursued to an end. Another and a more common opinion is that no side will win this war.

The Mid-West gamble of the rebels can be dismissed briefly as a gross miscalculation. As some observers have said, the Mid-West problem will soon resolve itself without much disaster. This belief is based on the fact that after their initial success in robbing the Mid-West Treasury and plundering the banks in Benin City, the rebels are now faced with defeat not only militarily but also morally and psychologically.

The Mid-Westerners are not fools. They know that since the creation of their state four years ago, threats to their autonomy had come only from the eastern side of the Niger River. From there came the Okonkwos, the Okekes, the Chukwumas and the Okerekes who flooded the state's civil service as well as the public and private sector of the Mid-West economy under the pretext that they were from Asaba Division. The Mid-West State itself became virtually a satellite of the former Eastern Region under a scheme of common political leadership. Never in the history of the Mid-West has either the Fulanis or the Hausas aspired to what they know does not belong to them. Indeed, there was no cause for them to do so because there was enough room at home to accommodate all their human and material resources. This is why the slogan of liberation is so irritating to Mid-Westerners who have resorted to civil disobedience against the rebel army of occupation. Benin markets have been closed since the arrival of rebel forces there.

Top civil servants have refused to report for duty. Helpless employees of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation in Benin are held at gun point to stay in the studios and eat their meals in Broadcasting House lest they never return if allowed to go home.

Among the rebel leaders themselves disagreement has erupted into open conflict. Lt.-Col. Okwechime is nursing a bullet wound which he received during a duel with a fellow officer. The other officer has been missing since the quarrel. Troops in Warri have mutinied. They are refusing to go to the battle front where a few ambitious young men want to use them as suicide squads. For how long can the rebel leaders in Benin survive in such circumstances.

The other fatuous argument that no side can win this war shows that many people still pretend not to understand what the Federal Government is fighting for.

Like the United States President, Abraham Lincoln, who fought a war against secession in 1861, General Gowon is fighting to preserve the national integrity of Nigeria and to save more than 5 million non-Ibo people now enslaved under Ojukwu's rebel regime. And as Lincoln won, so will Gowon. For in as much as the Federal Government succeeds in sustaining the territorial integrity of Nigeria and in giving autonomy to the people of the South-Eastern State and of the Rivers State, the war is won. And after spending nearly two weeks with Federal Forces in the war-front, I am emboldened to proclaim that their discipline, experience and efficiency inspire pride and confidence.

To those who speculate about post-war bitterness, the American example is again the answer. A Southerner, Mr Lyndon Johnson, is today President of the U.S.A. If post-war bitterness were as consistent as our friends are trying to emphasize, there should have been no co-operation today in any respect between the Germans and the French, or the Americans and the Japanese. As a matter of fact, France should not be opposing Britain's entry into the European Common Market when Italy is a member of the community. No, there is too much of common interests involved for bitterness to endure. This is why the Federal Government will certainly win the present war, not only militarily but also morally.

THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY AND THE NIGERIAN CRISIS

By

Felix Ani

The Principles which govern the Organization of African Unity are clearly stated in Article 3 of the Charter of the Organization. The most important clauses in this section are Clauses 2 and 3 which enjoin member countries to accept the following principles in the conduct of their activities within the Organization. They are:

- (i) The sovereign equality of all member States;
- (ii) Non-interference in the internal affairs of States;
- (iii) Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and its inalienable right to independent existence.

Earlier, another Article of the Charter states that it shall be a cardinal purpose of African States within the Organization of African Unity 'to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence.' In the light of these clear and unequivocal principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States and the determination to maintain and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State, one cannot understand the persistent demand in the Press and Radio of certain African Countries that the O.A.U. should interfere with the Federal Military Government's determination to end Ojukwu's rebellion and guarantee the territorial integrity of Nigeria. If these countries were sincere in their proclaimed desire that peace should return to Nigeria, they should in fact urge it upon the O.A.U. to assist the Federal Military Government to end Ojukwu's rebellion and thereby defend the territorial integrity of this country. Where they are unable to give such physical assistance, the least Nigeria can expect of all countries faithful to the purposes of the O.A.U. is moral and political support.

The secessionists in Enugu and their Allies in Western Europe, having failed to secure the intervention of the United Nations Organization, have now turned upon the O.A.U. The Western Press and Radio

who have hitherto not demonstrated their love for the Organization of African Unity, are strongly urging some African members of the Organization to get the O.A.U. to mediate in the crisis on terms which will give to Ojukwu the sovereignty which he cannot secure by force of arms. Their objectives, without a doubt, is to create dissension among African States and in the process to kill two birds with one stone; that is, to destroy the O.A.U. and to secure the disintegration of Nigeria. Surely, no African country should want this to come about.

The overwhelming majority of African States who are behind the Federal Military Government will stand strongly by the provisions of the Charter of the O.A.U. Many of them realizing that the West European and American conspiracy against African independence has entered a sinister phase are becoming alive to their responsibility to fight back. This fight may sometimes be a direct challenge as the Congolese now fighting white mercenaries can testify as can also the Africans of Southern Rhodesia, South Africa, Angola and Mozambique. The fight, as in Nigeria, can also assume an indirect and more subtle form, whereby, the Neo-colonialists seek to destroy African independence by financing and arming secession and rebellion. It was Moise Tshombe in the Congo yesterday, today it is Ojukwu in Nigeria. Tomorrow it may be the Ashantis of Ghana, the Bugandians of Uganda, the Zanzibaris of Tanzania, the Lumpas of Zambia or the Luos of Kenya. One does not require a roll call to realize that every African State has within it, elements who can be exploited for the purpose of destroying the nation's territorial integrity by secession.

In this situation, Congo Kinshasa as the host of the next O.A.U. Conference has a special responsibility, which informed circles in Lagos believe she will carry out ably. Nigerians expect the Government of the Congo to ensure that all unwanted agents of confusion capable of disturbing the Kinshasa meeting are completely excluded. Nigerians also expect that the agents of the secessionists who infiltrate the Republic of the Congo will be promptly arrested and handed over to the Nigerian authorities. Just as the Congolese expect the Algerians to hand over the traitor Tshombe, Nigerians expect no less from the Congolese in respect of the traitor Ojukwu and his henchmen.

THE GHANAIAN PRESS AND THE NIGERIAN SITUATION

By

John Igbozue

Most African countries appear to be fully aware of the threat which Ojukwu's attempted secession poses for the rest of the continent. A few however have failed to realize that it is in the best interest of all that this rebellion should be crushed. In this handful of African countries, the Press and Radio have allowed themselves to be used as tools in the neo-colonialist plot against Nigeria. A noted and distressing example is the Ghana Press and Radio. The Ghana Government which has been fully informed about the current situation has recognized that Ojukwu is an implacable enemy of his country whose territorial integrity he is bent upon destroying for his own selfish ambition and that of his kinsmen. In full appreciation of these facts, General Ankrah has given his full support to the Federal Government's determination to preserve the territorial integrity of Nigeria and its desire to do justice to all the ethnic groups in this country, however large or small. But sections of the Ghana Press and Radio which appear to be dazzled by their newly regained freedom, moving in the opposite direction to their Government, are now writing with uncharitable irresponsibility and obvious prejudice on the situation in this country.

Such newspapers as the *Ashanti Pioneer*, *The Daily Graphic*, and *The Legon Observer*, have been urging negotiations upon the Federal Military Government in ways which suggest that the Federal Military Government should recognize Ojukwu's claim to sovereignty. To support this line of argument, they have been feeding their readers with the false claims of the rebel radio on the current military operations and have been clamouring for an O.A.U. intervention in a dispute which their Government and all other African Governments recognize to be an internal affair of Nigeria.

These Ghana agents of the plot against Nigeria's integrity should know that however hard they try, they will not win for Ojukwu by their

propaganda, what he cannot win for himself on the battlefield. By encouraging Ojukwu to think that he has support in Ghana, they are merely prolonging this conflict which cannot end until Ojukwu renounces his secession and rebellion and submits to full Federal authority.

It is interesting to note that one of the arguments used by the Ghanaian advocates of a one-sided cease-fire is that it is taking the Federal Government too long to end the rebellion. They seem to suggest that because Ojukwu and his gang have put up a desperate but hopeless fight so far, there must be some merits in their cause. This is like arguing that because Ian Smith has so far successfully withstood Britain's economic sanctions, his Unilateral Declaration of Independence should be recognized and acclaimed. This, of course, is rubbish. If the Ghanaians were in Nigeria's place, they would fight no matter for how long, to see that their fatherland is not broken up merely to satisfy one man's bid for power.

To Nigerians, the painful truth about the antics of the Ghanaian Press and Radio is not far to seek. Their advocacy for a cease-fire on the conditions sought by Ojukwu, which is the recognition of the so-called Republic of Biafra, is being done for very selfish reasons. *The Ashanti Pioneer* in particular is using the Nigerian situation as a smokescreen for fighting the ignoble and lost cause of Ashanti secession. The tactic appears to be that if the former Eastern Region of Nigeria is allowed to secede, then the case for Ashanti secession will be indisputable. One hopes that the other peoples of Ghana, who will never countenance Ashanti secession will silence this dark voice of divisiveness and unreason. Nigerians also suspect that there is a more unworthy motive for the agitation against Nigeria now being conducted by the *Legon Observer*, *The Daily Graphic*, *The Ashanti Pioneer* and the commentators of the Ghana Radio. It lies in the revival of the old and discredited Nkrumah line that Ghana's desire for pre-eminence in West Africa can only be achieved through the destruction of countries like Nigeria. No doubt, the majority of Ghanaians, by their criticism of Nkrumah's African policy, have shown that they do not share these selfish hopes. It is for them to silence these enemies of understanding between Ghana and Nigeria.

One would have thought that enough is happening on the Ghanaian scene to keep the Ghana Press and Radio fully occupied for the next five years. The problem of internal stability is evidently not yet solved. The hopes for a rapid improvement in the standard of living of the ordinary Ghanaian are yet to materialize. The Ghana Press and Radio

would more profitably spend their time in searching for solutions to these problems.

Nkrumah's fall came at the moment when he ignored the distressing economic problems in Ghana in favour of a glamorous peace mission to Hanoi. In their unsolicited attempts to solve Nigeria's problems, Ghana's Press and Radio will do well to recall the lesson of their recent history.

In conclusion, it must be stressed that the Federal Military Government is prepared to end its military operations at any time that Ojukwu renounces his secession. It is not too much to hope that the Ghana Press and Radio will understand this simple idea.

AMBASSADORS OF TREACHERY

By

Osimua Ifidon

It is quite certain now that the path Ojukwu has chosen can only lead him to certain destruction. It is on record, however, that a number of misguided men and women of Ibo origin have been helping in clapping him on all the way. Among these are some Ibo people who live and work outside Nigeria.

These people are practically everywhere—in Africa, Europe, the United States, the Far and the Near East. Those who in Africa had turned themselves into unholy ambassadors of rebel Ojukwu are mostly traders who have made most African capitals their home, and civil servants who are on secondment to other African countries. Those who are to be found in both Africa and other world capitals are students and government officials who are serving in Nigerian embassies abroad. It is sad to relate that many of these people, since the crisis in Nigeria began, had turned themselves into a propaganda machinery to discredit the Federal Military Government in the places where they live.

These Ibo traders-turned-evil propagandists whose duty is to sell Ojukwu's wares of disintegration are found all over Africa, especially in Ghana and the Congo (Kinshasa). These traders do not stop at anything in putting across the views of the secessionists. They are ready to influence newspapers and radio men in these countries by buying them drinks in club houses that some of these traders own. It is not surprising that the writings that sometimes emanate from these countries are invariably biased. A number of Nigerian newspapers had had occasion in recent weeks to correct the distorted views that had appeared, to mention a few, in some Ghana and Congo newspapers. All these point to the fact that these rebel agents have been achieving some measure of success in their nefarious plans.

Another group of people who have been doing their utmost to discredit Nigeria and show up Ojukwu as the defender of an oppressed people are civil servants of East-Central State origin who are on second-

ment to some African countries, especially those of East Africa. There are reports of a number of secret parties they throw to which they invite highly placed citizens of these countries and influential business-men with the sole aim of selling their guests distorted views of the Nigerian crisis. This has made it almost impossible for a lot of people in many of these countries to appreciate the real issues involved in the war Ojukwu had declared on the Federal Military Government.

There are also continuous reports of students of Ibo origin studying abroad—most of them enjoying scholarships awarded by the Federal Military Government—who had thrown away their books and had formed themselves into propaganda units created to publicize Ojukwu and his ill-fated secession. These youngmen and women paint their country in most lurid colours and never pause for one moment and reflect that they are biting most wantonly the finger that feeds them!

The most shocking aspect of the whole matter is that there are some officers of Ibo origin serving in Nigerian embassies abroad who help overtly or covertly Ojukwu's mad attempt to break up Nigeria. It is true the numbers involved in this might be small, but the fact that a few saw it fit to aid rebellion, like helping to distribute pamphlets emanating from the secessionists, is most treacherous. It is a height of criminal betrayal for anyone to help in fostering a rebellion against a government to which he had taken oath of loyalty and a constitution he had sworn to defend.

It was freely suggested in some circles when the crisis began in Nigeria that the best thing to do was to recall all Ibo officers serving abroad as it was not easy to separate the sheep from the goats. But the government allowed them to stay on. Here again the Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces has demonstrated most remarkably his oft-repeated policy that he was not fighting the Ibos as a people and that it was the rebellion, personified by Ojukwu, that he was out to crush. It is this kind of statesmanlike gesture on the part of the Commander-in-Chief that one would expect these false propagandists to appreciate and reciprocate instead of embarking on activities that would only lead to their own destruction and doom.

These ambassadors of treachery who are aiding an unpopular cause, whether they are traders or students or civil servants abroad, should know they are playing an extremely dishonourable and most unrewarding role in the affairs of their country. The days of Ojukwu's rebellion

are numbered. Instead of helping to complicate issues further by engaging in false propaganda in the places where they live, they should join hands with other well-meaning and honest men who are giving of their best to see that Nigeria remains one country.

THE DISCLOSURES OF LT.-COL. KURUBO

By

Edet Jackson

Barely one week after declaring his illegal secession, Ojukwu announced the promotion of some members of the rebel high command. On the list, one found such men as Lt.-Commander Anuku heading a non-existent navy of Ojukwu's dream empire, while another former Federal Officer was promoted as head of a one-plane air force. While some of the officers of the rebel army were given double promotion others got triple elevation, for example, from the rank of captain to lieutenant-colonel.

Curiously enough, while the rebel leader was distributing these accolades, he refused to elevate himself. But it was later discovered that what this budding African dictator actually desired was political power. He later translated this ambition into practice when he assumed the so-called post of Head of State of his dream republic.

However, one name drew particular attention on the list of elevated officers of Ojukwu's private army. It was Lt.-Col. George Kurubo, the former head of the Nigerian Air Force. On him Ojukwu purportedly bestowed double honours, promoting him a Brigadier. But realizing fully well his own incompetence, Ojukwu told the whole world that he has made Lt.-Col. Kurubo, a crack officer, his second in command in charge of logistics.

But as usual Ojukwu failed to tell the whole truth. The rebel leader failed to disclose that, as it is characteristic of him, he was merely exploiting the physical presence of Lt.-Col. Kurubo in the East to serve his own ends. However, Lt.-Col. Kurubo himself made the world wiser recently—that he had never at any time ceased to be a Federal officer.

It is obvious that Ojukwu announced his fictitious promotion, most especially those of the non-Ibo officers in the Eastern States just to induce them to support his rebellion. In fact, many of them are known to have been later disarmed or removed from positions of responsibility where they might discover the plans of the rebel gang.

It will be recalled that the rebels' lying mouthpiece, their pirate

radio credited some statements to Lt.-Col. Kurubo, allegedly criticizing the Federal Military Government. But the refutation of such broadcasts could not have been better made than by Lt.-Col. Kurubo himself.

The Lt.-Col. was reported to have emphasized to a London Press Conference that whilst he regretted the events of last year he did not believe that the break up of Nigeria into sovereign nations was the answer to the problems. These are the words of a true Nigerian patriot.

With this open declaration of support for the Federal Military Government, there is no doubt that many non-Ibo officers of the rebel army are only waiting for an opportunity to make their stand known. Many officers of Rivers and South-Eastern States' origin in the rebel camp are in support of the Federal Military Government and are only acting under duress at the moment.

Similar methods were adopted in the Mid-West recently when the Oba of Benin was coerced into broadcasting a message to the people of the State after the treacherous coup of the Ibo army officers there.

It was reliably learnt that on his return to the East on leave, Lt.-Col. Kurubo, having learnt about Ojukwu's designs against the fatherland, strongly advised against it. On the basis of his strong opposition, he was hounded by Ojukwu's agent all over the Rivers State.

And when he would not yield to Ojukwu's persuasions Ojukwu's next tactics was to give him triple promotion and make him his next in command as a means of buying him over.

But like many other non-Ibo officers of the rebel army, Lt.-Col. Kurubo was all the while placed under strict surveillance and sent out with prepared statements and armed watchdogs on necessary occasions. Hence the reports carried by the rebel radio. On other occasions, prepared statements were freely credited to some of these non-Ibo officers. Such a method was also adopted in the Mid-West when the Olu of Warri, Erejuwa II was reported to have sent a congratulatory message to the Okonkwo still-born regime. But this was stoutly denied by the Olu after escaping to Lagos.

There is no doubt that Ojukwu used many despicable tricks in order to seek support for his cause in the other two Eastern States. But the people have not been fooled, knowing fully well that what the rebel regime is really after is the exploitation of the resources of the two other states for the benefit of Ibo land. It is true as Lt.-Col. Kurubo has said, that if the Rivers and South-Eastern States had not been blessed with oil and other resources, Ojukwu would not have dreamt of including them in his private kingdom.

DESERTION OF ENUGU

By

Osimua Ifidon

Enugu has been deserted by the rebels. A combination of circumstances which has led to this, focuses most cruelly, in more ways than one, the tragic dilemma of a secessionist regime which has been doomed, right from the outset, to fail.

Ojukwu's ill-fated secession was planned and executed in Enugu. Enugu has been the seat of the rebel government from where all the rebels' satanic plans had emanated. But the arch-plotter and the arch-rebel, Emeka Ojukwu, has deserted this city. For some time now, he has been on the run. He is running away from the devilish forces which he had blindly set in motion, forces which are now sure to catch up with him and destroy him.

It is quite certain that running away from Enugu will not save Ojukwu. With his get-away plane destroyed and Federal forces surrounding him and all the rebels on all front, he hasn't very far to run. It is even possible that he will be got first by his own rebel soldiers who have now realized that he had led them astray and had killed them in thousands since the war began. Whichever way it happens, Nigeria will soon be rid of a maniac who had broken all decent codes and had declared a war against his own countrymen.

The Enugu radio too is on the run. Now that certain defeat is staring the rebels in the face, they have completed plans to remove the radio station far away from Enugu to a place where they can continue their campaign of treachery and false propaganda. Umuahia is the destination. New frequencies have been tested and tried. Let the radio run. But the crushing of Ojukwu's rebellion which is imminent will silence for ever this lying voice of the secessionists.

Other people too have taken part in this shameful drama of desertion. Among those who have turned their backs on Enugu include Louis Mbanefo, Michael Okpara, Matthew Mbu, Bassey and Mba. Okpara campaigned fruitlessly in East Africa to obtain support for the rebels.

All the other rebel gentlemen who have deserted Enugu are dashing

from one foreign capital to another. They are carrying ostensibly their bogus peace proposals. But we know they had gone to solicit for arms. As regards the peace proposals, they have been asked to go back home and submit instead to the Federal Military Government papers of surrender.

From all indications these shameless globe-trotters who are supporters of a doomed rebellion now prefer to stay away in these foreign capitals because they know more than anyone else that their game is up. While they were still inside the East-Central State they were too afraid to speak their minds. Now they have seen their opportunity and, as it is now being whispered in foreign circles, many of them have concluded plans to stay behind. With these men and Ojukwu out of Enugu the desertion of the city was complete.

The only man of any consequence to Ojukwu's rebellion who was left behind in Enugu is Dr Francis Ibiam who assumed the post of Administrator of Enugu. One wonders how Ibiam would play successfully the new role which bizarre circumstances had imposed on him because he is now a very confused man. In his confusion he has started to throw away all the honours Britain had conferred on him. He is so confused that he doesn't even know who to blame for the military reverses the rebel regime had suffered consistently through their own incompetence.

At sixty-eight, Ibiam is a most pathetic figure. Here is a man whom most Nigerians had hitherto respected wasting all his last precious years on a cause he knew had no chance of succeeding. And he was left alone, absolutely alone, to 'administer' a city from which all the active participants in Ojukwu's rebellion had fled! No wonder he is such a confused man today.

Ojukwu's rebel soldiers too are on the run. They, however, are not running away from Enugu. They are running from paralysing military defeats. But what these rebel soldiers have in common with the secessionists who have frantically deserted Enugu is the lack of that zeal to stand and fight in the face of superior Federal forces who are now poised to deliver the finishing punch on Ojukwu's rebellion.

REGRETS IN ENUGU

By

Segun Owolabi

At the moment, there are deep sighs of regret everywhere in Enugu and other parts of the East-Central State. Regrets at the insult to the intelligence of the people of the East-Central State by a young rebel of thirty-three who wants to capture the moon and rule others from that elevated position.

Ojukwu used the Press and radio maintained with the tax-payers' money to make these same tax-payers hate their fellow Nigerians. To sound convincing, he raised their hopes by promising them a future of affluence. He promised his people the wealth of the Rivers and South-Eastern States. But the Ijaws, Ekois, Efiks, Ibibios and Annangs have told him over and over again that they would rather share this with Nigerians as a whole than surrender it to the exclusive enjoyment of the Ibos. This is why Doctor Okoi Arikpo, Mr E. O. Eyo, Chief Harold Biriye and Mr Wenike Briggs identify themselves with the cause of the Federal Military Government.

Ojukwu made many promising young men to quit their well-paid jobs in Lagos and other parts of their dear country. He forced college students from their classrooms. The tribal link was used to recall Ibo policemen from other parts of their country. When they answered his call, more out of the fear of being ostracized by their kinsmen than belief in Ojukwu's unnecessary struggle, he armed them with guns. They could not protest. Their hands were tied. Like an illusionist, he cast a spell on their reasoning, and like the enemy of society that he is, he imprisoned those who did not fall for his brand of propaganda. But what has been the result?

By the end of September, 1967, Nigerian Universities opened their gates again. Hundreds of freshers went into the universities at Ibadan, Zaria, Lagos and Ife. At about the same time hundreds of other students should have been going into the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. But they did not. They did not because Ojukwu has got many of them killed and he is rushing many more of them into a war the need for

which they can never understand. These young people don't know what Ojukwu wants. But he knows what he wants. Thousands of them may die leaving behind wailing parents, wives, fiancées and sisters. But Ojukwu does not care as long as his own family is safe in Europe and he fulfils his own ambition of getting an empire to rule.

Ojukwu and his clique brandished what they called military might before their people who believed them. But the many defeats the rebel soldiers have suffered in the hands of the crack Federal Forces on land, and sea as well as in the air, should be an eye-opener to those who had not seen through the hollowness of Ojukwu's claims. Only recently, the executive jet plane with which Ojukwu planned to escape was destroyed on the ground as a result of an air attack on Enugu. The Nigerian Air Force also damaged the notorious B-26 bomber aircraft and another plane, a DC-3 in the same bombing raid on Enugu Airport. For sometime, the inhabitants of Enugu were running helter skelter.

This kind of situation which is now widespread in the East-Central State is the result of the evil aspirations of Ojukwu who is trying to convince the Ibos that they are not wanted by other Nigerians. What nonsense! No other Nigerian wants the Ibos to suffer. Ibos in Lagos still keep their jobs and make their honest living. They still have every opportunity of making good in their country. Opportunities are there for every Nigerian under the new arrangement of twelve states in which no ethnic group will be afraid of suppression or domination by another group.

It has been said that Ojukwu does not represent the true interests of Ibos. This is true. He is an inexperienced young man born into affluence. He can never understand what suffering is. After the crisis he has his father's property to fall back upon. He has no intention whatsoever of returning to the barracks. That is why he has not given himself a higher military rank. But even if Ojukwu has thrown reason to the winds, let the people he now leads towards utter ruin employ their wits. They should tell him to go and manage his legacy and allow them to decide their destiny within their dear fatherland, Nigeria.

THE PRICE OF TREACHERY

By

Felix Ani

That the treacherous overthrow of Brigadier Ejoor's administration in the Mid-West was a fatal miscalculation on the part of the perpetrators of the coup is now beyond argument. Barely one month after their disgraceful breach of trust, most of the coup planners became victims of the chain of events which they helped to unleash. Indeed, treachery has only demanded its price.

The latest victim of the treachery of Ibo Army Officers in the Mid-West State is Lt.-Col. Okwechime. He has been reported dead by an eyewitness who saw his corpse at the mortuary of the Warri General Hospital. A fortnight after his admission into the hospital, Okwechime begged that the story be put out that he was only suffering from stomach ulcer. But it was latter learnt that Okwechime's stomach ulcer was in fact serious gunshot wounds sustained in a duel with a fellow-Ibo Officer. Even in his last breath, Okwechime hoped to cheat nemesis. But now he is gone—buried, unwept and unsung. And while treachery has extorted an appropriate price from Okwechime, Ojukwu's propagandists may tell the world that Okwechime is still alive, fit and performing wonders at the battle-front. Indeed, the rebel liars may even go so far as getting somebody to imitate Okwechime's voice on the radio or arrange for an imaginary Press conference with fictitious foreign journalists. This they did with Capt. Onyenkwe, Lt. Njoku, Lt. Ojukwu and a host of other rebel officers killed on the battlefield. But like those of the other dead officers, Okwechime's body will turn in its unmarked grave, while his soul wanders between hell and purgatory, cursing and blaming it all on Ojukwu's inordinate ambition.

Okwechime's last word on earth are worthy of note. He said he preferred peaceful death to a court martial, that is death on a soft bed instead of death by a firing squad. But in confessing his cowardice, Okwechime unwittingly prophesied the ultimate failure of his master's rebellion.

However, since the coup of August 9, it was not Okwechime alone

who has paid the price of treachery and cowardice. Before him, there was Nzefili. He has been reported missing for quite a while. But it has been gathered from authoritative sources that he was Okwechime's opponent in the fatal gun-fight. The duel was reported to have started after Nzefili's demand that he would like to know his status in the new set-up before volunteering to lead a suicide brigade to a battle. Though Nzefili was aggrieved for having been excluded from the conspiracy, from all indications, it appears he has paid the supreme penalty for attempting to reap where he did not sow.

Before Okwechime, and perhaps Nzefili, the first victim claimed by the Mid-West treachery was Lt.-Col. Banjo. He too has been reported missing since his ignominious dismissal from office shortly after the Mid-West coup. In fact, Banjo was a victim of double treachery; one was the treachery in which he participated and the other was that later executed against him.

It is now known that the rebel infiltrators led by Banjo would have used the Mid-West as a spring-board for an attack on the Western State. Ojukwu's plan was to impose Banjo on the West just as Okonkwo is now his administrator in Benin. But his onward push having been halted at Ore, Banjo decided to make do with the Mid-West. He consequently foisted himself on the State to which he does not belong on the pretext that he was still fighting for Nigerian unity. This was an unpardonable contradiction of his master's voice. For such an over-brilliant idea, Ojukwu paid Banjo back in his own coins by sacking him a few days after his self-enthronement. Today, the rebels' failure to capture the West is part of history. The usefulness of Banjo having been exhausted, Ojukwu has conveniently kept him in the cold.

So much for Lt.-Col. Banjo, the one-week administrator of the Mid-West State by the grace of treachery. And still, so much for Lt.-Col. Banjo, whose designs on his home state, the West, were also brought to nought, by the grace of treachery.

Yet, it is also so much for the late Lt.-Col. Okwechime, whose only reward for treachery and cowardice was the supreme penalty.

And so much too for Nzefili from whom greed might also have extracted the highest price.

But if treachery, cowardice and greed have demanded nothing but death from these henchmen of Ojukwu in the subversion of their home state what other fate awaits Albert Okonkwo, the pro-consul?

All those in the East-Central State and the Mid-West who have been mesmerized by Ojukwu's false propaganda and promises should now

read the bold handwriting on the wall. The D-day of Ojukwu's capture, dead or alive, is near. And if the price of treachery can be so swiftly claimed from his collaborators, surely Ojukwu will not escape with his long-standing and equally enormous crimes of treason, genocide and deliberate waste of public funds. True Mid-Westerners and patriotic Nigerians of the East-Central State should now desert the sinking boat of Ojukwu's rebellion before it is too late.

TRIBALISM, SECESSION AND AFRICAN POLITICS

By

Hezekiah Labinjoh

In a desperate bid to enlist sympathy for their destructive plan to break-up their fatherland, Ojukwu and his gang have now devised the mischievous method of slanting statements made by African leaders on Nigeria and the Nigerian situation to satisfy their own evil designs. One example of this trick is the prominence given by the rebel radio to a statement allegedly made a few years ago by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia that Nigeria was too large and diversified a country to remain one and united.

By playing up this alleged statement the rebels have sought to lend weight to Emeka Ojukwu's baseless theory that Nigeria's size is a threat to political stability on the African continent. One thing however which the rebels have failed to prove through reasonable argument is how Nigeria's size constitutes a threat to political stability in Africa. Before Ojukwu could make this his theory acceptable to Africans, he will first have to prove that countries in the Americas and West Europe find the size of the United States of America, a Federation of fifty states, a threat to their political stability. He will also have to establish that India, a country of 450 million people occupying a sub-continent, is a threat to the stability of other Asian countries. Africans will have to be convinced by this stubborn young man that because of the size of Russia, a Union of fifteen republics some of which are larger than the three Eastern States put together there has been no political stability in East Europe.

The truth about politics in Africa which President Kaunda would have realized by now is that too often politicians blame their own political failures on their tribal origins. It is this convenient excuse that Emeka Ojukwu is using in his attempt to bring about the break-up of his country Nigeria, having failed in an original plan to seize power in Lagos and rule the whole country.

The size of any country is no threat to political stability in Africa. The real threat is party politics based on tribal affiliations. Ironically

President Kaunda's country Zambia is the latest victim of the instability which tribal politics brings. Threatened by a wave of resignations from his cabinet, Kenneth Kaunda is now struggling to contain the tribal threat to his country's unity. Surprising is the fact that most of those involved in this game of tribal politics are Kaunda's long-time colleagues in the struggle for freedom from colonialism.

The trouble which began with the uplift of former Foreign Minister, Simon Kapwepwe, a Bemba, to Zambia's Vice-Presidency through party elections, has drawn a tribal wedge in Kaunda's cabinet. Arthur Wina, Finance Minister; his brother, Housing Minister Sikota Wina and Zambia's House Speaker, Wesley Nyirenda, all belonging to the Lozi tribe have threatened to resign because of what they think amounts to a Bemba tribe upsurge in the cabinet. The Labour Minister, Mr Sipalo also a Lozi has resigned from the cabinet, the parliament and the governing United National Independence Party, but President Kaunda realizing the disunifying implications of this move has not accepted the resignation. He, however, had cause to warn that he would take stern measures against any minister or U.N.I.P. member who insisted on resigning his appointment or membership.

It is significant to note that one of the reasons why Kaunda himself parted ways with his pre-Independence leader, Harry Nkumbula, before launching his U.N.I.P. was the charge that Nkumbula sought to introduce tribalism into Zambian politics when his popularity as leader of the African National Congress waned. Now Kaunda is faced with the same bogey of African politics—tribalism.

Kwame Nkrumah's overthrow in Ghana after several years on the saddle of a strong dictatorship, brought to light the fact that he belongs to the minority Nzinma tribe, a thing which did not give the more populous tribes, particularly the Ashantis who had once threatened to secede any measure of satisfaction.

Former President Hubert Maga's overthrow in Dahomey apart from some of his mistakes had a great measure of tribal colouring. Sierra Leone had to make a last minute change in the leadership of her National Reformation Council by replacing Lt.-Col. Ambrose Genda who had flown from New York to nearby Las Palmas, with Brigadier Juxton-Smith to balance up the tribal composition of the Council.

These occurrences establish the fact that tribalism in politics is the evil that is responsible for the instability in many African countries. Balkanization, whether on tribal or religious basis will not bring stability to big countries like Nigeria. A living example is the case of India and

Pakistan who have been hostile neighbours since the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. Nigeria has realized the evil effect of tribal politics. An important aim of the current operation to crush Ojukwu's rebellion is to wipe out tribalism from the country's politics. Secessionists like Ojukwu and his collaborators find in tribalism adequate force with which to unite their people behind them in their unpat-riotic struggles.

Africa must fight to establish a political code of conduct which will ensure that when politicians fall they will not receive sympathy from their tribesmen—just for the sake of tribal oneness. If tribalism could be removed from African politics, potential secessionists will have been dispossessed of their greatest weapon. This is what Nigerians are fighting for. No African country can gain any advantage from the rebellion in Nigeria. This is because if secession succeeds in one place, the vice would have gained enough confidence to visit many more African countries. And nobody knows on whose door it will knock next.

THE EIGHTY-TWO SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

By

Horatio Agedah

Having lost most of their regular soldiers in battle and having failed to conscript more school children into their army, the rebel leaders in Enugu are now multiplying the number of their hired white mercenaries. Even in the days of Police action, several white mercenaries were killed as they fought on the side of the rebels. It is not surprising, therefore, that the rebels are now reported to be assembling more than eighty mercenaries in Europe who are preparing to travel to Enugu by way of Rotterdam, Lisbon, and the Portuguese Island of Sao Thome.

According to the reports reaching Lagos, the mercenaries themselves are making no secret of their mission. Many of them are looking forward to the voyage with excitement as it is going to be the first visit of some of them to Africa. Their hopes of gain are as high as those of the Merchant Adventurers of the seventeenth century.

Some of us may wonder that the name of West Germany is connected with this matter. This is particularly so as only a few days ago, the German Ambassador here gave an assurance that there was no mercenary recruitment or arms supply to the rebel regime. Indeed, the Ambassador emphasized that mercenary recruitment is a criminal offence in West Germany and that it would be ridiculous for Germany which is struggling for unification at home to think of blocking the path to unity in another country. The Ambassador, Doctor Gnodtke, need not be embarrassed by this story. Those who know him are unanimous in the praise of his honesty and sincerity. For it is reliably known that the mercenaries being recruited are men of dubious nationality, who are roaming the world with false documents and living on their wits and the ignorance of their victims. They are drawn mainly from the ranks of habitual criminals who subsist as paid killers. If they eventually arrive in Enugu, they should find good company among the rebel soldiers who are also recruited from the gangs of thugs and highway robbers who made intolerable, night travel on the roads between Enugu and

Abakaliki; Onitsha and Owerri; Aba and Port Harcourt. They are also assured of fun to keep up their happy-go-lucky spirits with the companionship of members of the Civil Defence Corps who are drawn from the brothels of the Gay Palace Hotel, Onitsha, The Atlantic Hotel, Enugu, the Honeymoon Travellers Inn, Aba and the Metropole and the Lido, Port Harcourt. Unfortunately for these adventure-seekers, the chances of their making the trip are disappearing. Enugu Airport no longer has landing facilities as a result of the successful raids by bomber planes of the Nigeria Air Force. Calabar and Port Harcourt harbours are well covered by ships of the Nigerian Navy. The Cameroun border is sealed.

However, the significance of this matter lies in the naked dishonesty and unscrupulous tactics of the rebel leaders. When they begin to contemplate a dishonourable action, their first move is generally to accuse the Federal Military Government of having taken that step. That was how we came to hear about arms from Czechoslovakia and other East European countries; the bombing of civilian populations which the rebels did in Ogoja, Lokoja, Idah and Gboko; the destruction of costly bridges on the Ogoja-Ikom Road, the Nsukka-Enugu route; and the Ore-Benin highway. A constant ruse has been the allegation of hiring white mercenaries.

The irony of the latest development about the recruitment of mercenaries by the rebels is that they themselves had said that in history, no war had ever been won by mercenaries. All that the mercenaries want are their fat salaries and allowances which must be paid in advance in safe foreign banks. They even went on to quote the instance of the Congo and the role of Moise Tshombe who hired mercenaries at a fantastic rate of £1,000 each per month, plus a life insurance policy of £5,000. The money went down the drain, because the materialistic incentive was no match for the patriotism and dedication of the Congolese people. And quoting from the World Press, the mercenaries were said to have regarded the war as a picnic and spent most of their hours in hotels. Others who felt that their allowances were not fat enough, spent their time selling Tshombe's guns back to Congolese soldiers. Mercenaries have no mercy or love-lust for their masters. That is why the rebels will have more sorrow than joy from the hire of mercenaries. They are now in a position to pay the fees of mercenaries because of the robbery of banks in the Mid-West. Soon the money will run out and the troubles will begin. For the mercenaries, too, it will then cease to be an adventure in paradise.

THE REBELS' PLAN FOR TOTAL ROBBERY OF MID-WEST

By

Agbewotie Feporo

The trouble with the Ibo man is that he shows his hand too soon. He is impatient and has no subtleties in his dealings with his fellow human beings. How else can one explain this latest plundering of the Mid-West?

The Enugu regime announced with fanfare the so-called Economic Co-operation Agreement between the former Eastern Nigeria and the Mid-West under which there will be free flow of persons and funds. This so-called agreement had been put into practice long before it was announced, because the rebel forces from Enugu had already taken away all the currency in the Nigerian Central Bank vault at Benin City. In fact, the so-called rebel administrator in the Mid-West cannot pay his civil servants or authorize any other expenditure without the prior approval of his masters in Enugu. Economic co-operation indeed!

The rebels in anticipation of the economic agreement, had taken to the East all the food and personal belongings they could lay their hands on the very day they entered the Mid-West. The plunder has since continued. Before retreating from Ore, the rebel soldiers looted and removed air-conditioners, refrigerators, electric plugs on the walls, and everything they could lay their hands on. We now know what economic co-operation with the Yorubas in the West would have meant if the rebels had succeeded in entering the Western State.

When one comes to the clauses of the so-called agreement dealing with the free flow of persons between the former Eastern Nigeria and the Mid-West, one can see what the Ibo man really means by advocating a confederation or common services arrangement for Nigeria. Ibos from the East-Central State are free to move into the Mid-West as they like. But since the ban on non-Easterners was imposed in October last year, non-Ibo speaking Mid-Westerners have been banned from setting foot on any part of the former Eastern Region. The Binis, Ishans, Urhobos, Isokos, Itsekiris and other non-Ibo Mid-Westerners are not allowed to cross the Onitsha bridge to the

other side. The ban on the non-Ibo Mid-Westerners showed the real intentions of the Enugu clique.

Superficially, the Mid-West gamble may appear to be a desperate act by the starving rebels to get food and money. If they came to plunder, they should have withdrawn from the Mid-West since. It is more than that. It is part of the Ibo gamble to dominate other tribal groups in Nigeria.

The Mid-West adventure may turn out yet to be the greatest political plunder of Ibo leaders in the history of this country. A military coup as we saw in the Mid-West on the 9th of August, is the beginning of a chain of events. More often than not, the plotters do not live to see the result of the coup. Already some of the principal plotters in the Mid-West coup are reported dead. Other traitors will follow as the Federal troops advance to take over Benin City. Then will come the day of reckoning.

The political consequences of the Mid-West gamble are far more serious than the plotters ever imagined. The rebels claim they had come to fight Hausa-Fulani domination in the Mid-West. How many Hausa-Fulanis were holding public offices in the government of the Mid-West? The answer clearly is *Ba-ko-da-ya* (None). But how many Ibos will soon be holding public offices in the Mid-West? Just wait and see. Starting from the Military Administrator, many Okonkwos and Okerekes will soon follow. The Ibos will soon take over all the jobs in the Mid-West as they tried to do in other areas of the country. After all there is free movement of persons from Enugu to Benin City.

The most significant aspect of the Mid-West gamble, is that for the first time in the history of this country, all the fifty million non-Ibo speaking Nigerians are united and are now firmly committed to the Federal cause of crushing the Ojukwu's rebellion. After Ore, no decent Yoruba man in the West is sitting on the fence any longer. They have seen what is in stock for them in the so-called unsolicited Ibo liberation. It is now clear to the whole world that people like Victor Banjo are fighting lost causes. He probably does not believe in the cause of the Ibo leaders who are using his recorded messages for their selfish ends. The Edos, Urhobos, Itsekiris, Isokos and other Mid-Westerners whose leaders were probably the most reliable allies the Ibos ever had, have been betrayed in the Mid-West. The Mid-West can no longer be the back garden of the Ibos from the East-Central State. The loss of the friendship and goodwill of the Mid-West people will be one of the greatest tragedies which have befallen the Ibos since 1966.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE REBELS

By

Hezekiah Labinjoh

When Dr Francis Ibiam was renouncing his British titles recently he made an emotion-charged speech part of which claimed that Christian Britain had betrayed Christian Biafra. Before and after this statement, the confused rebels in Enugu had told many unsuspecting foreigners that the Nigerian situation was a Christian-Moslem conflict. Since these secessionists are wont to parade themselves as great Christians, one would like to 'How christian are the rebels in Enugu?'

A good Christian will not take oaths which pagan priests administer. He will also not worship any other god besides Yahweh, Jehovah God—the one and only God who made heaven and earth and all the beings therein. But it is a fact that just before Christian Ojukwu declared his illegal secession in June, he called in some Ibo juju priests to administer the pagan Ibo 'Igbandu' oath of allegiance on every member of the rebel high command. 'Igbandu' is a potion prepared by mixing some ingredients with the blood of fellow conspirators who drink the concoction to symbolize their oneness in ritualistic terms. None of the conspirators can thereafter afford to deviate from the chosen cause no matter how evil. If any does, his minimum penalty is a swollen belly while the maximum penalty is mysterious death. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, a Christian accused Dr K. O. Mbadiwe, another Christian of trying to usurp his leadership of the banned N.C.N.C. after Mbadiwe had refused to partake in the 'Igbandu' blood oath with Azikiwe. And yet the rebels say they are Christians?

One of the tenets of Christianity which true believers in the faith adhere to is that which enjoins all Christians to 'love thine neighbour as thine self.' Jesus Christ, the Son of God severely criticized the Pharisees and Sadducees for discriminating against the Gentiles. But it is discomfoting that in the whole of Nigeria, it is only in the Ibo Society that the ignoble caste system is being operated. Ibos have in their tribe a class of people whom they contemptuously call OSU, an expression which literally means 'food for the ancestral gods.' These people are

often killed as sacrifice to these gods. No Christian Ibo man will allow his daughter to marry an Osu who, is invariably a Christian since the Osus, for obvious reasons, are easier to convert into the Christian faith. And these rebels who call some of their own people 'food for the ancestral gods', a statement which no Christian minister will dare defend, are the same people shouting from the roof tops that they are Christians fighting Moslems in Nigeria?

The unchristianly Osu system which makes this kind of man a slave among his own people, has been exploited with extreme fervour by Ibo writers of fiction. One other theme which predominates in the writings of Ibo novelists and intellectuals is the inevitability of ancestral worship among Ibos. Many of these Ibo writers who are looked upon with great respect have said openly a number of times that they are apostles of ancestral worship. What more do their foreign Christian friends need to see the emptiness in the rebels' claim to Christian martyrdom?

Ibos got into trouble with other Nigerians because of their propensity for acquiring material wealth through unfair methods as openly exhibited by most of them. Professed Ibo Christians like Dr Mbadiwe and Dr Okechuku Ikejiani enriched themselves through rotten deals, the type of which any Christian minister would decry as callous. Mbadiwe even built a 'Palace of the People' with funds which he said were got from 'known and unknown sources.' And yet Christians are warned in the Bible that 'it will be easier for a camel to pass through the needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.'

Millions of other Nigerian Christians are solidly behind General Gowon, himself a Christian, in his task of crushing the rebellion. Christians and Moslems in Ikorodu made a joint donation to the Troops Comfort Fund in Lagos recently. How would they have done this if Christians were fighting Moslems in Nigeria?

The rebels' propaganda of an alleged involvement of religion in the Nigerian crisis is another case of the devil quoting from the holy scriptures to support an unholy cause.

HYPOCRISY OF THE REBELS

By

Imohimi Ikhide

Rebel Ojukwu and his collaborators have, more often than not, proved clever by half and have always strived to take everyone else for a ride. They shout the loudest about principles and ideologies and basic tenets, but they are always the first to break, in the manner of out-laws that they are, the rules they proclaim.

Since the fighting in Nigeria began, the Enugu rebels have been most vociferous about the Federal troops not keeping to international conventions in their bombing raids. Quite recently the rebel radio had made some worthless statements about going to complain to the World Red Cross that Federal Air Force did not keep within prescribed international rules governing air raids whenever it made its attacks.

The truth of the matter is that it is the rebels who have consistently broken all military conventions and have made civilian populations targets for their bomb attacks. They have thrown indiscriminately their crude home-made bombs on civilian targets in Lagos, Ogoja, Idah, Okene and, most recently, Lokoja where they bombed a church, killing a number of helpless worshippers! If one compares these atrocities perpetrated on civilian populations by the rebels with the cautious way the Federal Air Force had concentrated all its air might on military equipment and installations in the rebel held areas, one sees clearly the unpardonable hypocrisy of the secessionists.

The Enugu rebels had tried to make capital out of the arms and aircraft which Nigeria purchased, on purely commercial terms, from Russia. The secessionists have accused her of going communist. This kind of wafted thinking can only come from a demented set of evil-doers who have suddenly discovered that they have cut more than they can chew. Instead of the rebels seeing and recognizing their abysmal folly in seceding in the first place and coming on bended knees to ask the Federal Military Government for pardon, they think that they can get over their difficulties by bringing into play the most notorious kind of hypocrisy. Nothing can be farther from the truth.

It might be pertinent to ask the rebels at this juncture, who is going communist? Is it the Federal Military Government which had only bought and paid for arms on the open market in Russia or they who have been wining and dining with self-confessed 'communist' states in and outside Africa? What can be a more public embracing of communist doctrines than that displayed by Michael Okpara who went, a few days ago, to the Congo through Tanzania, wearing a Chinese tunic? The Chinese tunic, as we all know, is the emblem of most African leaders who have been thoroughly soaked in the teachings of China's chairman Mao.

The ridiculous extreme to which the Enugu rebels can carry their hypocrisy has been demonstrated most remarkably by the fact that Ojukwu's emissaries are now in practically all European capitals, distributing at various press conferences their worthless peace proposals whereas they are really out to look for arms to replenish their arsenal depleted by their badly waged war against the Federal Military Government. Here again the rebels' hypocrisy is all there to see.

No day has passed since Ojukwu declared war against his countrymen that the Enugu rebel radio has not announced that the Federal Forces are led by white mercenaries. This has been the rebels' convenient way of accounting for their failure to win a single military victory since the war began. And the truth is that it is the rebels who have been fighting with white mercenaries. Their now destroyed B-26 plane was reported authoritatively to have been flown by a notorious white mercenary, Johnny Brown, who is of uncertain nationality. Here again we are face to face with a situation where the rebels are the first to shout loudly in an attempt to shut people's eyes to the fact that a large number of white mercenaries are serving Ojukwu.

And according to an authoritative report reaching us, Ojukwu went to acquire eighty-two white mercenaries from West Germany who are to be transported from Rotterdam to Enugu to join the large number of hired white fighters already being used by the rebels. And these are the people who are pointing fingers in a most shameless fashion at the Federal Military Government.

The Enugu propaganda machine which is manned by liars and hypocrites will soon be broken and silenced for all time when Ojukwu is brought to his knees. From all indications this will be pretty soon.

KINSHASA SPECIAL

By

John Igbozue

When Chief Obafemi Awolowo was leaving Lagos a few days ago to lead Nigeria's delegation to the O.A.U. Summit in Kinshasa, he expressed the hope that by the time he returned the Federal Forces would have accomplished what he called a Kinshasa Special. The Federal troops have not let him down. On the eve of his arrival back in Lagos, Federal troops recorded two significant victories in different parts of the battle-front. The capture of Ikom, a strategic town in the South-Eastern State, has cut off the route which the rebels had generally taken to escape to the Cameroun Republic. Ikom is also a big supplier of foodstuffs to Enugu. The other victory was at Ehor in the Mid-West which has completed the wiping out of the rebels from the Auch area.

Chief Awolowo himself returned from Kinshasa with more than one feather in his cap. He was able to disabuse the minds of African leaders about the true intentions of the Federal Military Government. He succeeded in ensuring that the O.A.U. stands by its charter concerning non-interference in the internal affairs of member nations and respect for the territorial integrity of member countries. In addition, Chief Awolowo saw to the ejection from the Congolese capital of the rebel envoys led by Dr Michael Okpara. There are reports that Dr Okpara and the others tried to resist the quit order. They argued that they were travelling with valid passports issued by another African country, but when threatened with arrest and possible detention they flew out of Kinshasa in disarray.

But perhaps the real Kinshasa Special for Nigerians is the projected consultative O.A.U. mission to Lagos.

Some ill-informed reporters have tried to suggest that the acceptance of this mission by Nigeria means that the O.A.U. has forced its will on Nigeria by discussing and taking a resolution on the Nigerian situation which was not included in the Summit Agenda. This is not so. The resolution makes it clear that the African Heads of State are only anxious to record their disapproval of Ojukwu's actions. It condemns any act

of secession in O.A.U. member states. In other words, the mission is coming to present to Major-General Gowon the text of this resolution and to reassure him that all his colleagues in the O.A.U. support the steps he has taken to safeguard the territorial integrity as well as the future peace and unity of Nigeria. The mission is definitely not coming to negotiate peace. The six Heads of State are coming to find out from General Gowon how they can help him to end Ojukwu's rebellion quickly because they are prepared to place at the disposal of the Federal Military Government all the facilities available to the O.A.U.

There is not a single Nigerian who wants the current crisis to continue indefinitely. No one wants any more bloodshed in Nigeria. But there is one problem. While General Gowon, in his magnanimity, is prepared to have mercy on the secessionists and to settle the conflict in a spirit of moderation, the rebels are not prepared to yield. In spite of the numerous and disastrous reverses which they have suffered the rebels are not willing to accept defeat. They say they are fighting to avenge last year's killings. This was an event which all Nigerians regretted and for which the Federal Military Government was anxious to make adequate reparations. In fact, nearly half a million pounds was spent by the Federal Military Government to assist Ojukwu before this reckless renegade declared secession. The number of people alleged to have been killed then was thirty thousand. What is the figure of those who have been killed in the present fighting? Ojukwu will never tell his people how many of his officers and men of other ranks as well as innocent civilians who have lost their lives for the battles of Gakem and Obolo-Eke, the shelling of Nsukka and the Bonny campaign. The rebel leaders have continued to feed their people with false stories and the empty boasts about 'no power in black Africa' being able to subdue them. Now that they are feeling the pangs of air raids they are blaming all their sorrows of foreign countries who have nothing to do with the operations of Nigeria Air Force. Many rebel leaders are still trotting all over the globe not only begging for recognition of their self-proclaimed republic, but also negotiating for the purchase of arms and ammunitions to sustain their rebellion. Even when they were appealing to African nations to intervene, they had the impudence to demand that a settlement should be on their own terms and that they would never renounce their secession. Their latest move is an open advertisement on their radio for the services of white mercenaries. And this came only a day after the O.A.U. Summit had condemned the role of mercenaries in Africa and have called upon those now in the Congo

to withdraw at once or face hostilities from combined African Forces.

Instead of hoisting in Enugu the white flag of surrender and peace, the rebels are producing more emblems of the *setting sun* simply because one young rascal wants to be addressed as Head of State.

Let's hope that having failed disgracefully to get a hearing at Kinshasa the rebels will now appreciate the futility of their rebellion and welcome the generous peace terms offered by the Federal Military Government, that is, get a new leader, renounce secession, accept the creation of states and join in building a new, happy, united and prosperous Nigeria.

THE NIGERIA WE WANT

By

Hezekiah Labinjoh

Whether the rebel regime in the Central-Eastern State likes to accept it or not, the laws of economics, sociology and history have made Nigeria one corporate and indivisible country. The merchants of Onitsha, the job-seekers of Owerri and the intellectuals of Nsukka would by now have realized the futility of the war of secession imposed on them by the miscalculations and demagoguery of a few self-seeking politicians who happen to lead them at the moment.

As long as Ojukwu the outlaw and his aides continue their defiance of the wishes of the people of Nigeria to live in peace one with the other, the Ibo-owned taxi cabs and lorries which ply the Lagos route will remain idle. The job-seekers in the Central-Eastern State will continue to increase in number and the Nsukka intellectuals will keep their positions as reluctant rebel fighters in Ojukwu's conscript army. This is not the Nigeria we want to build.

General Gowon in a recent nation-wide broadcast spoke the minds of all Nigerians when he said that the Nigeria most of us want is 'one strong forward-looking and prosperous Nigeria. A Nigeria in which no state and no tribe will be able to try to dominate the others. A Nigeria in which there will be communal harmony. A Nigeria which will then be assured of the stability necessary for economic development to uplift the dignity of man in this part of the world. This is the Nigeria which will be best able to assure peace in this part of the world to the benefit of everybody—Africans and others as well.

The Nigeria we want is a Nigerian Federation made up of twelve states under the guidance of a strong central authority. This is so because minority elements in Nigeria have for long expressed the desire to manage their own affairs in their own states within the Nigerian Federation. In the three former Regions there had been agitations which often took on violent tones for the creation of these states.

Nigerians expect all friendly countries not only to profess recognition of the Federal Military Government headed by Major-General

Gowon, but also to state in clear terms that they recognize Nigeria as one corporate, indivisible Federation of twelve states including the three Eastern States. One way of doing this is to give all possible support to the Federal Military Government in its task of crushing the rebellion and thereby keeping Nigeria one. All countries would be expected to refer to the three Eastern States by the nomenclature adopted by the Federal Military Government which they have professed to recognize. Such unspecified descriptions as 'those areas South of the Benue River and East of the Niger River' used by foreign radios and newspapers are totally unacceptable to the Federal Military Government and the people of Nigeria.

There is no alternative to a Federal Union of Nigeria. In the words of General Gowon, 'the only possible alternative is the emergence of several armed camps in this country and continuous fighting for many years to come. There will then be the chaos of an arms race and the confusion of one ethnic group fighting the other. There will be the type of tyranny and the petty dictatorships of war lords already exhibited by Ojukwu and his clique. In such a chaos Nigeria will be converted into a theatre for cold war and other disastrous adventures.'

If the Ibos of East-Central State allow Ojukwu's selfish ambition to continue unbridled then Nigeria will be transformed into a theatre of prolonged war with tribal chieftains and demagogues seeking their personal interests at the expense of their subjects who want to live as brothers with other Nigerians. Prolonged war does not offer the Onitsha merchant the peaceful era in which his vehicles could move freely in other parts of Nigeria and make good his investment. It will not grant the Owerri locomotive engine driver an opportunity to get his job back with the Nigerian Railways. In the event of prolonged fighting, the craftsmen of Awka will not get the opportunity of selling their products in other parts of Nigeria.

This world belongs to the younger generation. Nigeria belongs more to her young sons and daughters. It is the future of the younger generations in the Eastern States of Nigeria that Ojukwu and his fellow plotters are fiddling with. It is a future these youths can only enjoy in a Nigerian Federation in which no tribe will dominate the other. Their hopes will be ruined if they fold their hands and watch Ojukwu destroy the resources on which they would have built their future.

Ojukwu is conscripting this younger generation into his army to fight against the Nigeria they want. All they need to do now is to tell

Ojukwu to stay in his underground hideout and never come out again. The youths of the East-Central State should now rise like their counterparts in other parts of the country and fight for the survival of the twelve United States of Nigeria.

THE POWER STRUGGLE IN ENUGU

By

Samuel Abisogun

The marriage of convenience between the former civilian leaders in Enugu and Ojukwu is apparently breaking up. The disaffection between the two camps has for long been suspected. Sooner or later the physical parting of the ways will take place.

It will however be recalled that from the outset of his total defiance of Federal authority and subsequent armed rebellion Ojukwu was only giving practical expression to what the Ibo politicians lacked the courage and foolhardiness to do. What Dr Azikiwe, Michael Okpara and others failed to achieve through the ballot box, Ojukwu planned to accomplish with arms and high-powered but false propaganda. He played on the emotions of the Ibos and their supposed grievances. Ojukwu exploited the obsessive tribalism of the Ibos to a point of no return. Funds collected for their rehabilitation and compensation for their losses were diverted to the illegal purchase of arms. Ojukwu's objective was clear. Since the Ibos had failed to dominate Nigeria, they would content themselves with the mineral wealth and other resources of the people of the Rivers and the South-Eastern States.

In so far as this remained the primary aim of Ojukwu's total defiance of Federal authority, the Ibo politicians cheered him on. They even went further. They rubber-stamped his illegal secession in May and gave him a mandate, the full implications of which they did not weigh. But while Ojukwu paraded with solemnity, his messianic mission, his love of the Ibos and other narrow objectives, his real aim was concealed. But all the while many astute observers had known that the real spirit goading Ojukwu on was his reckless personal political ambition.

Ojukwu gave members of the old civilian brigade in Enugu the first jolt when he declared his secession in May. He promoted other army officers and retained his rank. His intention was obvious. Ojukwu knew he could not sustain his rebellion without a fight. While Ojukwu loved political power so much he was mortally afraid of the military responsibility involved. Yet he subsequently declared a war for which he

was ill-prepared and ill-equipped and against the best advice of more competent soldiers in the rebel high command.

The reasons for which Ibo politicians jumped on Ojukwu's hand-wagon of illegal secession are not far to seek. For example, the majority of them are still to account for their stewardship in the last civilian regime. They believed they could get away with their corrupt wealth if they fully supported Ojukwu and he should succeed. But such men as Dr Azikiwe, Mike Okpara, Chike Obi, Mbu, Okafor, Mba and others were aiming beyond such gratitude. Knowing the Ibo civilian leaders for what they are, self-seekers and incorrigible opportunists, they fully supported Ojukwu, hoping that despite his expected success, they could still wrest political power from him.

But after just over ten weeks of rebellion such hopes have faded. The rehabilitation and civil defence funds converted to other uses have proved to be money wasted. The Ibo civilian leaders are now totally disillusioned with Ojukwu's political leadership. His powerful but false propaganda has failed to elicit a single recognition. His military leadership and that of other members of the rebel high command have proved disastrous. The Mid-West adventure has turned out to be a big fiasco. And the Kinshasa Summit on which much of the hopes of the Enugu civilian rebels had rested, has refused to countenance secession how much more accord nominal recognition to the still-born republic. Rather, the cause of the Federal Military Government has been justified and supported by the O.A.U. resolution.

In view of these facts, the disenchantment among civilian rebels is not surprising. They are now ganging up for a showdown with Ojukwu, while appearing to be carrying out his errands all over the world. There is no doubt in the minds of most of the civilians rebel leaders in Enugu and their colleagues abroad that their still-born republic cannot withstand the combined forces of the Federal Military Government.

It is known that most of the civilian rebel leaders are in foreign capitals with a bogus peace plan while their real mission is to negotiate for fresh supplies of arms. A few of them are known to have salted away part of their errand money in personal accounts abroad against future eventualities. While some of the civilian rebel leaders are known to have expressed doubts about the wisdom of returning to Enugu at this time, others are determined to come back to Enugu at all cost.

Two prominent civilian rebel leaders now abroad are known to have said that Ojukwu has lost his evil charism with the people and only they can do the salvage work. In fact, they argue that the arms they are

going to purchase may not be used by Ojukwu. Who is going to make use of these new arms, the rebel civilian envoys refused to disclose.

The next few weeks in Enugu will be interesting to watch. Sir Francis Ibiem has not been making a daily roll call of those renouncing British honours just for nothing. And Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, the former ceremonial Field Marshal of the Nigerian Army has not become a mercenary recruitment officer and gun merchant just as a matter of adventure. Ex-Chief Justice Mbanefo has not become the errand boy of outlaw Ojukwu just because only so can he serve the cause of justice better.

Definitely, the Ibo politicians are not running around the world in order to entrench Ojukwu, the up-start of yesterday, as the Head of State of a still-born republic. But these men are only going about their salvage work the wrong way. Their new arms cannot put them in any appreciable position of strength to enhance negotiations with the Federal Military Government.

The rebel civilian leaders should rearrange their priorities. They should summon the courage to renounce secession first, accept the new Federal structure of the country and pledge their continued loyalty to the nation. The money they now waste on arms and for globe-trotting should be saved for their salvage work and reconstruction.

OJUKWU'S TYRANNY IN THE MID-WEST

By

John Kumolu

The agents of the Enugu rebels in the Mid-West State have mounted a fresh wave of tyranny and oppression. The latest orders issued by the Okonkwo regime have converted the areas still occupied by the rebel gang into a police state. Opponents of the illegal regime are now being witch-hunted under an order which makes the incitement of tribal dissension a punishable crime. The type of punishment is not specified. But if the arrests so far made are to be used as yardstick the range of punishment for formenting tribal dissension is limitless and may include indefinite detention after summary trial by any rebel soldier.

Another crime which now carries an unspecified penalty in the Mid-West is rumour mongering. From reports reaching Lagos, the so-called rumour mongers now being rounded up daily in the State are mainly members of other ethnic groups apart from the Mid-West Ibos. Generally, the basis of arrest seems to be an expression of one form of fear or another about their personal safety. The regime regards such personal opinion as loss of faith in the regime and a form of incitement.

In fact, Okonkwo and his gang are themselves in the grip of such mortal fear that they have made it an offence for two people to be seen together in public in certain parts of the state. Really, if the rebel infiltrators and their collaborators could have their way, they would convert the state into a vast concentration camp for the sake of convenience.

However, it is pertinent to ask: Why has Ojukwu ordered this sort of tyranny in the Mid-West? Why the sudden tightening of the violent screw of oppression in the state at this time? The answers are not far to seek.

The harsh orders in the Mid-West State are an eloquent admission that Okonkwo has discovered that his administration is a round peg in a square hole. The severe penalties attached to the new orders also underline the fact that civil disobedience in the Mid-West has succeeded

beyond all expectations. It may even be concluded that the illegal regime has realized that unless drastic measures, such as it has now adopted were taken, an open civil revolt might ensure at any time.

Apart from these obvious facts, a number of other reasons are responsible for the new reign of terror of the Okonkwo regime.

It is understood that part of the money looted from the Mid-West State treasury and bank was used to buy over some members of Okonkwo's administration. However, after less than four weeks in power, Okonkwo's dirty game has boomeranged against him. Most of the non-Ibo members of his administration, bribed or coerced, have now discovered that contrary to all assurances they have been relegated to the background. It is a fact that from the inception of the new administration most of these non-Ibo civilian members were just being kept on show as a means of ensuring the support of their people. As reflected in the composition of the real decision-makers of the regime, it has dawned on everyone that what Okonkwo actually desired was an all-Ibo show. It is these non-Ibo civilian members of the new regime that are now being suspected as among those who are secretly urging their people to continue their civil disobedience.

It is clear from these new repressive measures that the Ibos have found the domination of the Mid-West impossible. The conspiratorial tribal cohesion on which they have always relied in the East-Central State is absent from the Mid-West. The self-inflicted misfortune of the Ibos of the East-Central State which Ojukwu used as instrument of unity is totally absent from the Mid-West State. And the bogey of Hausa-Fulani domination has completely failed to register with sincere Mid-Westerner.

Mid-Westerners can no longer be deceived. The so-called Liberation Army can no longer conceal its real mission. It is an army of occupation which has only brought hardships in its wake. In fact, Mid-Westerners now know that efforts are being made to bring the Ibo domination of the state into reality. Thousands of applications are pouring in from the East-Central State for employment to fill vacancies that have resulted from the civil disobedience policy of Mid-West Civil Servants. This has only resulted in the intensification of Mid-Westerners' attitude of non-co-operation. Hence the imposition of tyranny.

It has for long dawned on keen observers that, as certain as his ultimate downfall, Ojukwu was bound to order repressive measures against Mid-Westerners. His ignoble cause had failed to appeal to the general masses from the outset of his adventures in the state. And

his unrelieved military losses as well as diplomatic rebuff abroad have further helped to consolidate the Mid-Westerners' total rejection of Ojukwu and Okonkwo, his colonial administrator.

While the new measures in the Mid-West were however not surprising, their severity was unexpected. The reason is clear. Ojukwu only intends to demonstrate his utter contempt for the majority of Mid-Westerners just as they have turned their backs on him. The Mid-West may now be an actual colony in all but name. But this will not be for long. True Mid-Westerners will yet have the last laugh on Ojukwu and Okonkwo.

THE MID-WEST VICTORY

By

Lawrence Ogbomo

In August, 1967, Mid-West Ibo Army officers staged a coup against the legitimate government of the state, disarming all non-Ibo soldiers and officers still loyal to the Federal Military Government. This betrayal of trust was synchronized with infiltration into the state by members of Ojukwu's rebel Army from the East-Central State across the Niger Bridge. The rebel radio in Enugu later described this combination of treachery and tribal conspiracy which facilitated the overthrow of Brigadier Ejoor's government as a military victory. The leader of the rebel infiltrators, Lt.-Col. Banjo, for want of a name for his band of brigands, called his men the Liberation Army. Apart from these, the rebels told more lies in an attempt to over-rate their worthless venture into the Mid-West and in the process exposed their real intentions to the world. Ojukwu fabricated obvious lies about Hausa-Fulani domination into the Mid-West and followed up by appointing a fellow-Ibo, Major Okonkwo, as his colonial administrator in a State where there are five times many more non-Ibos. On the military side, Ojukwu said he overthrew the Mid-West Government in order to prevent the state from being used as a base of attack on the rebel-held areas of the Eastern states. But only a few hours after seizing power in the State, Ojukwu converted the Benin Airport into a base from where his notorious B-26 bombers took off for savage raids on civilians in various areas of the Northern and Lagos States. Talking about liberation, the Mid-Westerners have been enduring for the past six weeks a practical demonstration of Ojukwu's version of this idea. Mid-West banks and state treasuries were looted almost to the last penny by the rebels. Lorry loads of food-stuffs were confiscated and transported to the East-Central State. Spare parts, salt and other various necessities of life were also seized and carted to the East. To legalize such daylight robbery and forced payment for a so-called liberation, Ojukwu and Okonkwo met in their tribal chambers and concluded an Agreement on Economic Co-operation. An agreement that must have really been worth only the paper on which it was written.

It is with this tragicomic show in mind that one can fully assess the full significance of the true liberation of the Mid-West by the Federal forces. It is clear that without the treacherous coup of the Ibo Army officers, the subsequent events in the Mid-West could not have happened.

Out of respect for the wishes of Brigadier Ejoor, the then Governor of the Mid-West, the Federal Military Government was reluctant to use the state as a passage to the East-Central State. But on gaining advantage in the Mid-West, by the grace of treachery, Ojukwu attempted an attack on the Western State through Ore, under the banner of the dead and discredited slogan of southern solidarity. With the attempted invasion of the West *via* Ore and the conversion of Benin Airport into a forward base, Ojukwu turned the Mid-West State into a theatre of war.

The Federal Military Government would have failed in its duty if it had not liberated the Mid-Westerners from the Ibo Army of Occupation and restored peace and normalcy to the state. Apart from the desperate economic situation of the East-Central State which Ojukwu tried to ameliorate by the occupation of the Mid-West, he also hoped to divert Federal Forces from the Nsukka sector of the military operations.

In view of these facts, the full military significance of the Mid-West victory of the Federal Forces cannot be doubted. Ojukwu himself has realized that his diversionary tactics have failed. In fact, the occupation of the Mid-West has been too short-lived to afford Ojukwu any ample time to recuperate or regain any lost grounds in the Eastern States as he had hoped and planned. But rather than admit once more his obvious military incompetence, Ojukwu, as usual, has shifted the blame. He has accused his colonial administrator, Okonkwo of betrayal for transferring troops from Benin to Ibo strongholds in Aboh and Asaba.

When Nsukka fell, it was reactionaries in the rebel high command who sold off Ojukwu's puerile military strategy to the crack Federal troops. When Ogoja was liberated, it was tactical withdrawal which is yet to be reviewed after eight weeks. And while Okonkwo tried to adopt his master's line with Benin by describing it as another tactical withdrawal, Ojukwu quickly exposed him to the world. When Bonny capitulated, Ojukwu accused some foreign firms based there of collaboration and boasted that his non-existent navy would soon recapture the island. But with the repeat performance of the Bonny operations at Koko and

Sapele in the Mid-West by the Nigerian Navy, Ojukwu padlocked his lips.

When the Enugu rebels, with the aid of treacherous Ibo officers in the Mid-West, seized power in the state some arm-chair strategists in certain foreign papers and radios made much ado about what they termed stalemate.

The ill-informed opinion of such foreign commentators, based on hasty conclusions, was that the rebels and the Federal forces were evenly matched. Now the picture has changed. The threat posed by the Mid-West teachery has been removed. The rebels in the East-Central State are surrounded from all sides.

With the liberation of the Mid-West, the Federal forces are now poised for total and swift victory over Ojukwu and his henchmen in the East-Central State. The roads to complete destruction of the rebels and other forces of disintegration in Nigeria is now clear. The rebels' foreign friends and collaborators should now give them the next best advice. If Ojukwu still loves the Ibo people, as he claims to do, he should surrender immediately. And if the Ibos still love themselves, this is the time to disown Ojukwu and avoid obstructing Federal forces on their way to Enugu. A word is enough for the wise.

TWELVE HOURS REPUBLIC

By

Imohimi Ikhide

Less than twenty-four hours after Okonkwo declared his ill-fated Republic of Benin in the Mid-West State, Benin has been taken in a lightening action by the Nigerian Federal troops. This has given a death blow to a republic which did not even have a shadow of a chance of surviving. This quick military victory by the Federal troops has snuffed out a weak rebel monster of a republic which shouldn't have been born at all.

There has been something positively crazy about the actions of the rebels since they made their ill-fated incursion into the Mid-West State. Since that day some treacherous senior Ibo Army Officers threw the gates of the State open to Ojukwu's rebel soldiers, the puppet administrator Albert Okonkwo hopped from one mad venture to another in a fruitless attempt to ram down the throats of the people his rebel overlord's unacceptable rule.

The name Okonkwo chose for his still-born republic was clearly a contradiction in terms. The name Benin Republic which one imagines embraced the whole of the Mid-West State was an obvious misnomer because there are other ethnic groups in the Mid-West who are not Binis. This deliberate attempt to make a part embrace a whole could have come only from someone like Okonkwo who had proved by his support for treachery that he is not a true Mid-Westerner. One wonders why Okonkwo did not call the republic the IBO REPUBLIC. This would have made more sense to the people who knew all along that Ojukwu's rebel army had come to establish an undisguised Ibo rule in the State.

Okonkwo had referred to his new republic as an autonomous state. This was clearly a crazy declaration. How could anyone in his right mind have called a state autonomous when all the appointments in that state were made from Enugu as it then happened in the Mid-West? How could the Mid-West have been said to govern herself when she was ruled from Enugu by Ojukwu's rebel gang?

The painful truth was that, under the puppet Okonkwo, the Mid-West no longer enjoyed any measure of autonomy. She was clearly the appendage of the East-Central State. This, of course, was not acceptable to Mid-Westerners who have always voted to be an integral part of the Nigerian Federation headed by General Gowon and who have always wanted Nigeria to remain one country.

Okonkwo's declaration of the Republic of Benin showed in its cruel nakedness the evils of secession which General Gowon had warned the nation against. He had made it clear that once a section of the country is allowed to break away, other sections would follow suit and the country would be left with a collection of hostile independent states that would be perpetually at each other's throats. The rebels had so quickly proved the Commander-in-Chief right.

As far as the Mid-Westerners were concerned, Okonkwo's crazy gamble when he declared the Republic of Benin, helped to rally them more than ever before to the banners of the Federal Military Government. The chances of the rebel regime succeeding in Benin were extremely slim and this was dealt a further blow by Okonkwo's subsequent measures which favoured mostly the Ibos. Certainly no Mid-Westerner was willing to belong to a republic which was ordered in such a way that non-Ibos in the State were made second-class citizens.

It was significant that what Okonkwo called the Republic of Benin was declared long after the Mid-West had been effectively plundered by Ojukwu's bandits who carried away all the food and money from the State. When her wealth was still intact and not yet stolen and Banjo announced the establishment of a Mid-West State which would be independent of Enugu rebel regime, he was promptly dismissed. The people needed no further proofs to establish that the Enugu secessionists came to use their temporary occupation of the State for their own selfish ends.

Benin has fallen and the rebels are scuttling across the Niger in complete confusion. Other parts of the State will soon be cleared of the rest of the stranded rebel soldiers and Okonkwo's twelve hours republic will be left only to be mentioned in future Nigerian history books with the total scorn which it deserves.

PANIC MEASURES IN ENUGU

By

Segun Owolabi

No one is now left in doubt about the imminent collapse of the rebel regime in Enugu. The ill-trained rebel troops having been swept out of the Mid-West, the crack Forces of the Federal Military Government have resumed their march on the rebel capital with renewed vigour from all fronts.

Like a drowning man, Mazi Emeka Ojukwu, is clutching at all straws to save himself. The panicky state of his mind is reflected in the number of desperate but ineffective measures which he has taken in the last few days.

On every other day the rebel radio broadcasts frantic appeals to the people, calling upon them to fight and die in order that Ojukwu can continue to be called Head of State. The people never knew the truth about the progress of the war until now, when Ojukwu himself has admitted that Federal Forces are at their gates. In order to sustain the dying flames of the people's morale, Ojukwu must find an excuse for lying to them that he was winning when, in reality, he was losing fast. Unfortunately for him, the only excuse he has to put forward in his midnight broadcasts is as stale as the pogrom stunt. The world is now sick and tired of phrases like 'treachery in the Rebel High Command', disloyalty among rebel officers, and information to Federal Forces by traitors. Even the Ibos themselves are tired of these excuses. They have refused to accept the latest propaganda about an attempted coup in Enugu. Thousands of Ibos have been swarming to the Secretariat buildings in Enugu, demanding the names of the so-called plotters. They are no longer prepared to accept Ojukwu's word for what it is. Surely, you cannot fool all the people all the time. But it is equally true that these people are crying in vain. For Ojukwu has no name to mention. However, it should not be surprising if in order to save his bearded face from the wrath of the people, this reckless rebel proceeds to execute non-Ibos who are still collaborating with him. This ambitious coward can do anything to cover up his failures. For instance, in a

spate of muzzled thinking, that is typical of him, Ojukwu believes that he can keep secession going by bringing civilians into his Government at this late hour. Besides, Ojukwu does not want posterity to blame him alone for the misfortune which his ill-motivated rebellion has inflicted upon the Ibos. So, in what was grandiosely called an enlargement of the executive council made up of twenty members, he has added more names and greater absurdity to the list of principal actors in his beer-parlour comedy of grappling with farce and fantasy.

But even in this exercise, dishonesty and the policy of undermining the interests of non-Ibos are shamelessly exhibited. A few examples will suffice.

Ojukwu, whose still-born Republic has not been recognized by any country in the world, has named a Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. And called upon to take this facade of a post is Matthew Mbu, the Ogoja rebel. Knowing fully well that no country in the world has dealings with the secessionist regime, Mbu should ask Ojukwu whether his Foreign Ministry would be establishing diplomatic relations with flying saucers in outer space or with submerged kingdoms in the Pacific Ocean! The truth about Mbu's latest appointment is that Ojukwu has seen that as Chairman of the Public Service Commission, Matthew sought to give non-Ibos a chance to get jobs in Enugu, a thing which the selfish grabbers of Nnewi don't like. And so, Mbu must go.

A constant victim of Ibo treachery has been Professor Eyo Ita of Calabar who led the sit-tight ministers of Enugu in 1953. Now that the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, is no longer under the control of the rebels, Ojukwu has appointed Professor Ita as the new Chancellor of the University. This is not strange. The Ibos have always succeeded in making Professor Eyo Ita a laughing-stock. And there is the poor fellow, Effiong of the Army, who the rebels style Brigadier, and who they are now suspecting of having planned the so-called abortive coup. Effiong has been disarmed under the pretext that he is now Chief of Logistics, which is a desk job. He is now tasting what was formerly planned for Lt.-Col. Kurubo. In actual fact, even his colleagues now refer to him as 'O.C. Requisition', because his main duty is to sign requisition forms.

Ojukwu's gimmicks cannot stop the Federal Forces who are now on the last stages of their march to Enugu. Civilians in the East-Central State, be they rebel Commissioners or not, have been warned to keep off the path of the advancing troops. The only honourable thing for them to do now is to call upon Ojukwu to leave the stage and surrender.

THE ALLEGED COUP IN ENUGU

By

John Igbozue

At this stage of the military operations to crush his rebellion, Ojukwu's allegation about an attempt to overthrow his illegal regime has not come as a surprise. The rapidity of the alleged judgment and the secrecy surrounding the names of the supposed plotters have only helped to lend an air of total mystery to this latest plan of Ojukwu to consolidate his slipping hold on the East-Central State. One cannot but doubt the authenticity of the alleged coup after a thorough examination on the basis of relevant facts.

It is clear that Ojukwu is now near the end of his fruitless adventure faced with such an imminent downfall, Ojukwu has put out the story of the plot mainly as an attempt to whip up the last round of sympathy for himself. But confronted with the people's demand to produce the plotters Ojukwu jumped one step ahead to announce the execution, without naming any of the plotters yet. For how long does Ojukwu think he can insult the intelligence of the Ibo people? There is no doubt that most of the people of the East-Central State have now become wiser to Ojukwu's deceitful tactics everytime he suffered a major defeat. Hence their recent vehement demand that Ojukwu should disclose the alleged coup planners. When Nsukka fell, Ojukwu accused some reactionary elements among his closest colleagues in the rebel high command of having disclosed his strategies to the Federal Forces. With the liberation of the Mid-West, Banjo and Okonkwo to whom Ojukwu personally entrusted the job and who were later routed by superior forces, are now the culprits. The people of the East-Central State must have asked Ojukwu to reconcile his stories of sabotage and subversion with his own admission of the cowardice of his soldiers who always fled whenever confronted by Federal troops. And the artful liar that he is, Ojukwu only tied the loose ends of his stories together to present it as a coup plot.

It will be recalled that earlier when Ojukwu sought to build up excuses for the imminent fall of Enugu, his propagandists, to provide a

backbone for their lie, said this was what was meant by the term 'Kinshasa Special'. But now that Benin has been recaptured before Enugu, the barefaced liars of the rebel capital have again changed Kinshasha special to mean a coup against Ojukwu which will be synchronized with the infiltration of the Federal Forces into Enugu. Such an operation will only be an imitation of what Ojukwu and his henchmen did in the Mid-West.

Such inconsistency has been the stock-in-trade of the Enugu radio. The rebel propagandists should by now have realized that the Federal Military Government will not stoop that low as to employ treachery, as Ojukwu did in the Mid-West, to do a job the Federal Forces are competent enough and well-equipped to do.

However, if there was indeed a plan to overthrow Ojukwu's illegal regime, as he alleged, aren't there enough reasons for this to happen? Does Ojukwu think the people of the East-Central State will continue to bear the heavy toll of disaster his personal ambition is causing every man, woman and child in the state forever without raising a voice of protest? Thousands of youngsters have been sent to their untimely death by conscription into the rebel army. Wives have been deprived of their husbands at the most needy moments and many children have lost their fathers. Countless number of people, in spite of the economic hardships raging in the State, have been forced to contribute to illegal funds supposedly meant for their well-being but later diverted to the illegal purchase of weapons. And in the war itself, Ojukwu's untrained boys have only been able to record one defeat after the other. But instead of throwing in the towel, Ojukwu has summoned the aid of the former politicians he had earlier condemned himself. What more do the Ibos need to prove Ojukwu's military incompetence and political inexperience? What else do some of Ojukwu's close associates in the rebel command need to become disillusioned about the cause that has failed to profit anyone of them in any way? They have endured his insufferable arrogance for so long. He has betrayed his mock humility by promoting others and retaining his rank but only to elevate himself as Head of State of his still-born republic. Ojukwu has never believed he was wrong. And rather than admit his fault or failures he would pass the blame to others or fabricate untenable excuses.

It is only seventy-eight days since Ojukwu embarked upon his mad adventure of sustaining by armed rebellion a still-born republic and disintegrating the fatherland at the same. Every step taken to sustain the ill-motivated cause based on personal ambition, has proved

disastrous not only to Ojukwu but to all the Ibos on both sides of the Niger. The hopeless cause has not only ruined his own military career but also that of other Ibo and non-Ibo officers as well. Ojukwu has also used his mad ambition to crush the legitimate hopes of the Ibos and jeopardized their security and future for nothing.

Latest reports now show that the people of the East-Central State are actually boiling in anger against Ojukwu. But they are powerless to do anything in the face of hundreds of armed rebel soldiers who have taken up strategic positions in the state capital.

Really, Ojukwu's overthrow by any group of officers or people will be ill-timed if done by now. His imminent end already stares him in the face. His luxury get-away jet aircraft has been damaged beyond repairs. Anyone who topples Ojukwu now will be doing him a great service. If he should escape death from such a violent overthrow, Ojukwu will go about boasting that he was not allowed to finish his task; a task that has brought ruin to many. To overthrow Ojukwu now will also rob the advancing Federal Forces of the final fruit of their well-earned victory. The people of the East-Central State will be advised to keep calm until the Federal troops march in. That will be their finest hour as was the case with the true Nigerians of the Mid-West recently. They should then rise in concert to give full support to the Federal forces whose sole aim is to arrest Ojukwu and his henchmen and free all the Ibos and other Nigerians of the Eastern States from the tyranny of the ambitious upstart from Nnewi

THE EXECUTIONS IN ENUGU

By

Lawrence O. Ogbomo

Ojukwu is reported to have executed four of his senior rebel Army Officers in Enugu for plotting to overthrow his rebel regime. The executions were said to have been carried out early on Saturday morning by a firing squad at the Enugu Army Barracks. The Officers were said to have been tried, found guilty of the alleged offences and sentenced to death by a special tribunal headed by a High Court Judge.

Since the war he declared against his own country began, rebel Ojukwu has suffered many paralysing military defeats which would have driven a less ambitious dictator to a quick surrender. But not demented Ojukwu. However, since he lost the Mid-West, the rebel leader had shown in words and in deeds, in spite of himself, that he was a very confused and disturbed man, a man on the verge of complete madness. And as is usual with all demented dictators, rebel Ojukwu has started to pick indiscriminately on rebel scape-goats on whom to blame what has clearly been his personal failures.

In the circumstances it won't be a surprise that the arch-rebel would make up false charges and execute fellow officers. The next people who would come under his axe in this systematic liquidation would be the rebel civilians whom the rebel leader would no doubt make to taste the full bitterness, when the time comes, of a deposed dictator's wrath. These thoroughly misguided men would have nobody but themselves to blame.

But knowing rebel leader Ojukwu's duplicity and dishonest methods, this is about how far one could go in giving any credence to the alleged execution of these four nameless plotters.

Even to the most credulous, there appears to be a number of unanswered questions which make this mass execution story not easy to accept at its face value. For instance, for a long time now, courts have not been sitting in all the rebel occupied areas in the three Eastern States, especially in the East-Central State where practically every sphere of life had come to a standstill. Besides that, most important

personalities in this State, including High Court Judges, had been in hiding since it became clear that Ojukwu had no chance of winning a war he had stupidly declared. From where then was a Judge acquired overnight who was made to head this tribunal which condemned these alleged plotters? Furthermore, was the tribunal held as was alleged in Enugu which is now virtually deserted or was another venue found for it?

So far rebel Ojukwu had not announced the names of the executed men. But knowing the dishonest rebel leader for what he is, a shrewd guess is that when he comes to announce these names, he would make sure they are those rebel officers whom the Federal forces had already killed on the battle-field. This contention becomes even more plausible when one remembers that Ojukwu has so far not admitted that any of his rebel officers had been killed by the Federal troops. This would be a grand opportunity for the rebel leader to declare dishonestly as plotters men who had been killed long ago.

On the other hand, if the story were true, it would mean that Ojukwu wants to destroy all his senior Army Officers. He knows that the Federal Military Government has called upon the people of the East-Central State to name a leader following his dismissal from the Army with ignominy and his removal from the office of Governor. In order to make this difficult, Ojukwu wants to kill all his senior colleagues who are in a position to succeed him.

It is for the world to judge whether the present action of Ojukwu supports the claims that all the people of the East-Central State, let alone those of the South-Eastern and Rivers States are solidly behind him. The rebel leader himself knows that his people are tired of him. They want to live and not to die because of the mad ambition of one man.

What Ojukwu is trying to achieve with his execution story is to instil fear into the people of the East-Central State who have seen through the arch-rebel and are fully poised to overthrow him. But by this story he had inadvertently succeeded in causing untold panic in the State where he would least want panic to reign supreme. Parents are now wanting to know if their sons were involved in the executions and wives are running hysterically all over the place trying to ascertain whether their husbands were among these officers executed.

The rebel leader himself has helped to increase the panic already reaching fever point among the rebel populace who are very much in

the grip of mortal fear because of the military encirclement of the East-Central State. The Nnewi maniac had prepared a handy noose with which even his own disturbed people would quickly hang him. More than ever before Ojukwu's days are definitely numbered.

APEING ADOLF HITLER

By

Hezekiah Labinjoh

From the beginning of the Nigerian crisis, it was clear to many Nigerians that Ojukwu was a poor student of history who drew inspiration from the worst breed of rulers, history had insulted humanity with. This view needed only time to establish itself beyond all doubts. The performance of Ojukwu and his rebel gang has now made the time ripe for observers to conclude that Ojukwu's antics in the Nigerian crisis have been nothing but copy work, lifted and learnt by heart from the pages of history books.

Hitler would be happy today in his unmarked grave that the dangerous records he left behind have plagued the mind of one young Nigerian who has become as thoroughly insane as Hitler himself was in his last days.

S. E. Ayling, the British historian, described Hitler as a supreme actor who was able to convince his chosen audience in almost any of his roles. He could command the roar of the lion (for home consumption), the subtlety of the fox (for soothing the fears, say, of the Poles, or for contriving always to put the French in the wrong), the wickedness of the serpent (inciting assassins, for instance, to murder the Austrian Chancellor and then disowning them), and the mildness of the dove (as when he cooed to the British his horror of war, and his profound longing for peace—once certain wrongs had been righted.)

Ojukwu exhibited the 'mildness of the dove' when he expressed his longing for peace in Nigeria if only General Gowon would promulgate Decree No. 8 which followed deliberations in Aburi. General Gowon kept his word and Decree No. 8 which virtually turned Nigeria into a confederation was proclaimed. But soon after, it became obvious that Ojukwu was only acting and playing for time when he made that demand. He rejected Decree No. 8.

It is remarkable that it took several delegations seeking peace in Nigeria, including one made up of Bishops to induce Ojukwu to meet his former colleagues in the Supreme Military Council at Aburi. When

one remembers that former British Prime Minister Chamberlain flew twice to Berlin to have talks with Hitler over the future of Czechoslovakia, and that it was Mussolini of Italy, who succeeded in getting Hitler to meet his European counterparts over the same issue, one comes to the irrevocable conclusion that Ojukwu is nothing but a pocket-size carbon copy of Hitler in Nigeria. Just as fruitless and unsatisfying as the Munich meeting over Czechoslovakia was to Hitler, so was Aburi to the raging paper-tiger of Enugu, Mazi Emeka Ojukwu.

Nigerian leaders came back from Aburi and reacted as Chamberlain did after meeting Hitler in Munich foreseeing 'peace in our time' without realizing that Ojukwu, to misquote Hitler, went back to Enugu to shout joyously: 'Children, kiss me, this is the greatest day of my life. I shall go down in history as the greatest ruler of Ibos.' But despite Ojukwu's evil designs, Nigerians are lucky that while Britain needed a Churchill to silence Hitler for good, the same man who played Chamberlain in Aburi is playing Churchill today. Having realized that Ojukwu wanted and needed a fight, General Gowon is giving him and all that the bearded rebel leader is gaining from it is defeat after defeat as Federal forces are now knocking on the door of Enugu.

During a six-week occupation of the Mid-West the people of that state had a taste of 'the wickedness of the serpent' for which only Ojukwu and his gang are capable. They blew up bridges and road and wantonly destroyed the property of innocent civilians after killing many of them. To complete Ojukwu's definition of 'liberation', Albert Okonkwo carried off £2 million from Benin to Asaba.

Before Ojukwu declared war against his country, Nigeria, a foreign correspondent rightly observed that Ojukwu was like Hitler, 'a supreme actor' playing himself up as a Messiah of the Ibos while deep down he was nursing the ambition of getting an empire to rule. While Hitler relished in the inglorious peddling of his autobiography, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle) which he scribbled during a short spell in jail, Ojukwu has been resting on his Fourth-class Consolation degree from Oxford.

Albert Okonkwo, Victor Banjo and more recently, the four unnamed plotters who Ojukwu executed, have gone under his evil hammer. Ojukwu's execution of these four unnamed plotters reminds one of Hitler's infamous 'night of the long knives' when a number of his aides including Rohm and General von Schleicher and his wife were murdered on Hitler's orders. The General and his wife were shot as they answered the bell at their home in Berlin. Germans called Hitler 'Fuhrer'

(Leader); Ojukwu instructed his unwilling subjects in the Eastern States to call him 'Our Head of State'. While the Russians were shelling Berlin in 1945, Hitler was still claiming victories for his forces. In the same manner, Ojukwu is now claiming victories for his forces and shooting his colleagues as Federal forces are around Enugu. But will Ojukwu copy Hitler to the letter by committing suicide? The guess is that he will not, because unlike Hitler, he is a cowardly rat.

The Ibos should now realize that the aftermath of Ojukwu's reign will bring them nothing but a chain of misery, sorrow, economic depression, and widespread and unnecessary bereavement. They should start planning how to reconcile with fellow Nigerians as they await the hour they will be liberated by the gallant Federal forces.

NIGERIA'S DUBIOUS FRIENDS—GHANA AND GAMBIA

By
Atiomo Alegbe

Not only Africa but the world as a whole received a terrible jolt recently when it was reported that Ghana and Gambia attempted to raise the question of Nigeria's internal problems in the General Assembly of the United Nations. As the report went, the Nigerian delegate, Chief Simeon Adebo, promptly objected to this clandestine move, making it abundantly clear that it was 'incompatible with respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Nigeria and not a step calculated to promote Africa unity.'

This was an extremely fitting answer to a treacherous move by two countries who have been regarded all along as the traditional friends of Nigeria, a friendship which dates back to the colonial era. Ghana's Harley and Gambia's N'Jie were clearly traitors at the United Nations to the Commonwealth and the Organization of African Unity, when they attempted to raise the Nigerian question because these two bodies have seen and accepted the conflict in Nigeria as that country's internal problem.

Since the crisis in Nigeria began, almost all Ghana newspapers have been giving out distorted version of the events in Nigeria. The papers have always tried to show up Ojukwu as a defender of an oppressed people whereas this is far from the truth. The papers have been suggesting recently a negotiated peace which, if accepted, would amount to accepting Ojukwu's rebellion. All along it was thought in Nigeria that these papers were expressing opinions which the Ghana Government did not share. But the fact that Mr Harley attempted to take a stand which obviously had government backing in New York, puts the whole issue of Ghana's attitude in a different perspective.

This raises more than ever before the question of the suitability of General Ankrah as a member of the group of the six heads of State who are coming to consult Nigeria on the crisis. The inference one can draw from what happened at the United Nations is that General Ankrah has clearly taken sides. Won't such a man, if allowed to come

to Nigeria, be coming only to fish in troubled waters? Will such a man be fit and proper person to represent an Organization which his delegate at the United Nations had blantly betrayed?

What is happening now leads genuine friends of Nigeria to wonder what the General was actually up to when Nigeria met at Aburi and he acted as a peacemaker. The painful conclusion one is led to come to is that General Ankrah was in fact wanting to preside over the disintegration of Nigeria, a country Ghana has always envied for her size and potentials.

If, as people have now started to believe, this was the role General Ankrah had assigned himself to play, the General needs reminding that one of the forces which worked against Nkrumah and which eventually helped in his overthrow was his subversive activities against other African States. The question might be asked, is Ankrah trying to take up from where Nkrumah ended? Certainly the Chairman of Ghana National Liberation Council would not want to go the same way as the dictator he had helped to overthrow.

Gambia's own attitude is also very difficult to understand. It is extremely baffling what this micro-state which has a population not larger than that of Lagos was up to. It is equally baffling why the leaders of a country which has proved unable to open and maintain an office at the United Nations since she obtained her independence years ago would want to engage in subversion. One would have thought that the country's leaders would think more about their unprogressive economy which Britain still helps to prop than dabble in the internal problems of another more progressive country. This is clearly the case of a rat wanting to give lessons about survival to a fully grown elephant.

It cannot be ruled out that Ghana and Gambia are being used by unfriendly foreign powers to achieve their selfish objectives in Nigeria. Should this be the case, these two countries should know that they are playing a role which is not only shameful but dangerous. In an attempt to help bring about the disintegration of Nigeria—which God forbid!—Ghana and Gambia will only succeed in destroying themselves. Nigeria is too big a bone two small dogs can toy with.

Africa and the world have seen and accepted Nigeria's temporary problems as strictly internal. General Gowon is solving them in a way that will bring the greatest good to the greatest number of Nigerians. It is only rebel Ojukwu who is trying fruitlessly to destroy the great and happy future that lies ahead of one united Nigeria. In spite of

Ghana and Gambia and any other country who would openly support rebellion, Ojukwu is on his way out. In spite of Ghana and Gambia, Nigeria will continue as one united country which will remain the hope of democracy in Africa.

THE TRAGIC ADVICE OF SIR FRANCIS

By

Olumide Thomas

At 68, Sir Francis Ibiem must have had countless occasions to advise many people in his lifetime. This is both by virtue of his age and the respect he formerly commanded but which he is now wasting on a hopeless cause. In his official capacity as adviser to Ojukwu, Sir Francis is also one of the rebel leader's closest confidants. Recently, Sir Francis' voice trembled over the Enugu radio; he was still advising. This time a very tragic advice indeed.

While Enugu was being bombarded from land and from air, the ungallant knight of the rebel gang was exhorting the civilians, unarmed and untrained, to stay on and fight. But unlike Sir Francis, the general masses are still in full control of their senses, despite the panic and confusion that have now gripped the rebel capital. It has finally dawned on most of the people of the East-Central State that Ojukwu's hopeless cause is now absolutely beyond redemption. The nearness of the all-conquering Federal Forces has convinced them beyond any doubt that the end of the costly gamble is in sight. Rather than sacrifice more lives to satisfy the personal ambition of the tin-god from Nnewi, the people have been fleeing Enugu, seeking refuge with distant relatives or finding their way out of the East-Central State by any means. This is a conclusive proof that they are fed up with Ojukwu's war and can no longer be deceived by the disastrous lies of the Enugu radio. By their mass exodus to the villages and bushes of Iboland, the people of the East-Central State have practically all turned their backs on Ojukwu. But because of the desperate gunmen of the rebel army still roaming most of the rebel-held areas, the common people are powerless to voice their disapproval of Ojukwu and his henchmen.

With the whispered fears now being expressed by every other person in the East-Central State, Sir Francis himself is aware that the end is near. But Sir Francis is suffering from delusions; the delusions of old age and frustrations. For a man who has connived at too many lies recently,

Sir Francis seems now to be totally unable to tell the people the truth any longer.

Though the grey-haired civilian rebel still poses as the last of the braves making heroic but empty speeches over the radio, he himself is known to be miles away from Enugu. His last mournful appeal was tape-recorded and beamed over mobile transmitters.

In his speech, Sir Francis catalogued the woes and tribulations caused by Ojukwu's mad ambition. And while the people are now in full possession of facts and figures about Ojukwu's wasteful and futile adventure, Sir Francis was still striving to convince them with sweet words about a happy and grand tomorrow in a dream empire that will never come true. Herein lies the transparent dishonesty of Sir Francis' plea.

But beyond the dishonesty of an old man, Sir Francis' speech was also worthy of note because of the picture of the personal tragedy painted by his exhortations.

As a medical doctor, Sir Francis should be irrevocably committed to saving life, no matter at what cost. And as a self-proclaimed missionary, Sir Francis who believes himself to be the most pious of the so-called Christian rebels should know the differences between Christian martyrdom and hopeless heroism which he is calling on the people of the East-Central State to perform. But apparently, Sir Francis has lost his bearing in the two fields in which he has spent most of his life. The ageing rebel has dined and wined too much with the evil dictator Ojukwu that he could no longer differentiate between Christian martyrdom and blind heroism. In fact, for a Christian that he claims to be, Sir Francis no longer has sympathy for human life, knowing fully well that it is sheer suicide for non-combatant civilians to face crack soldiers who are armed to the teeth.

At 68, Sir Francis Ibiem has enjoyed the best part of his life. The future of the East-Central State does not lie any more with people like him. The future of Iboland is in the hands of the younger generation of Ibo people who can no longer have any confidence in the misguided leadership of Ojukwu and his henchmen like Sir Francis.

If Sir Francis can no longer tell the people the truth, he should call it a day. His rest has been well earned; this much many Nigerians will grant him. Perhaps Sir Francis needs to be told some home truth. He is only undoing himself and ruining his own reputation by failing to abide by reason when a hopeless cause has been totally lost. And by inciting the people to suicidal heroism, Sir Francis should realize

that he is only doing a great disservice to Christianity and undermining the future of the East-Central State where as many hands as possible will be needed on deck for the job of reconstruction.

The people of the East-Central State should continue turning deaf ears to the appeals of people like Sir Francis. They will do well to heed the warning of the advancing Federal forces. All the civilians in Enugu and environs should keep within the confines of their rooms. The useless home guard tactics taught them by Ojukwu and his gang are no match for the crack Federal forces. No amount of resistance can stop the Federal soldiers from accomplishing their sacred task. The people should assist the soldiers of the Federal Government to capture Ojukwu and his gang and thereby liberate them finally from the tyranny of evil leaders.

A MOMENT OF DECISION FOR THE IBOS

By

Segun Owolabi

When rulers make mistakes, it is their subjects who suffer the consequences. When Ojukwu made the outstandingly bad blunder of declaring his illegal secession, all reasonable men knew that he was exposing the Ibos to the perils of an inevitable war. But Ojukwu did not care. He did not care because he looked at his fellow Ibos only as the pestle with which to pound his lethal yam of illegal secession.

On the other hand, General Gowon had always realized the unnecessary sufferings secession and the war that was bound to follow it would bring to the Nigerians in the Eastern States, particularly the Ibos. And this was why he made so many concessions to Ojukwu; in fact, almost giving him everything Nigeria had in the hope that the rebel leader would thereby be brought to the path of rectitude. The Ibos had some understandable grievances and General Gowon had full sympathy for them as fellow Nigerians. He made sincere efforts to compensate the Ibos. But glorying in his dangerous search for power by all means, Ojukwu grabbed all the concessions made to him by General Gowon and like Oliver Twist, Ojukwu was always asking for more.

He ridiculed his former colleagues in the Nigerian Army, scorned all appeals for restraint and boasted that no power in black Africa could subdue his illegal regime. But while Ojukwu was playing too clever, did it ever occur to Ojukwu that he was setting light to the taper of a dynamite which exploding, would take only the lives and property of those people whose interests he claimed to be seeking?

Before ordering Federal troops to fire back at Ojukwu's rebel army, the Federal Military Government warned that innocent people would suffer and this, it sincerely regretted bearing in mind that these innocent people are Nigerians who have a right to their lives and property. More out of a realization of the disaster war brings than for any other reason, the Federal Military Government was reluctant to use force against Ojukwu until it became clear that he was a stubborn earthen idol which insisted on sleeping in the rain. And just as rain washes down the

earthen idol into nothingness so will the war Ojukwu has engaged himself in sweep him away for good.

The Nigerian crisis has produced the worst type of leadership imaginable in Emeka Ojukwu. Consoling, however, is the fact that the same crisis has given fruition to Nigeria's need of the type of selfless statesmanship represented in General Gowon's Government. For example in a statement of appeal to the people and troops in the Central-Eastern State recently, General Gowon restated that his Government recognizes the generality of Ibos as Nigerians equal in all respect with all other ethnic groups in the Federation. He also announced that Federal troops have been instructed not to molest civilians or anyone who is not hostile to them in the Central-Eastern State.

And following this statement the next day was an order which partially lifted the financial sanctions in respect of the liberated areas of the Eastern States. Nigerians leaving these areas (of the Eastern States) for other parts of the country can now take some money with them and vice versa. This order has definitely given the greenlight to Eastern traders to resume business with other parts of their country Nigeria. These are proofs that the present military operation is aimed at crushing Ojukwu's rebellion and thereby keeping Nigeria one, to the benefit of all including the Ibos.

Other Nigerians want the Ibos back and sympathize with them over the ill-fortune which has made them victims of selfish and insincere leadership. Today, over 17,000 Ibos are still residing in Lagos alone. Many more still live unmolested in other parts of Nigeria. These Ibos are realists who know that it is impossible for any part of an economic unit like Nigeria to secede and survive. They know Ojukwu's misadventure will fail and that it is only innocent Ibos who will suffer. But their sorrows will be shared by other Nigerians who only now wait for the moment they will be reunited.

General Gowon does not want the Ibos to suffer a day longer than necessary. While Ojukwu tells them to lay down their lives and not their arms, General Gowon urges the Ibos to lay down their arms and not their lives. Lives are more precious than arms! The war has never gone in Ojukwu's favour. His forces have been completely routed on all fronts and any moment from now, Enugu will fall! But before the city falls, the Ibos will be doing themselves and their country a lot of good by renouncing EMEKA THE MANIAC.

Having now reached a cross-road, the Ibos will be making a decision. They will be choosing between the straight and broad road of survival

by renouncing Ojukwu and remaining in Nigeria, and the winding, thorny path of certain destruction along which Ojukwu had led them for a long time now. Ojukwu is the only barrier between peace and Nigeria. He must be removed and the Ibos will be doing themselves a lot of good by dissociating themselves from the evil activities of this misruler who has brought them nothing but agony.

THE PRIVATE TRAGEDIES OF OJUKWU'S REBELLION

By

Abimbola Williams

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu will go down in Nigeria's history not only as the desperado who took up arms against his fatherland but also as the greatest enemy of Nigerian womanhood. While the rebel leader grapples with the realities of his crumbling regime of terror, he must be told what damage his inordinate ambition has done to many otherwise happy Nigerian homes. It was Ojukwu, goaded by his ambition to be a Head of State who separated husbands from their wives, mothers from their children, and turned many young wives into premature widows.

Banding the flimsy excuse that he could no longer restrain the Ibos from attacking other Nigerians of non-Eastern origin, Ojukwu expelled these other Nigerians from the Eastern States irrespective of their matrimonial ties and commitments. The result of this anti-social act has been the separation of couples who had vowed to share their lives and resources in common, just because they do not belong to the same tribe. Many of these wives so expelled have come back to their states of origin separated from their beloved husbands, exposed to the hazards of living without the protection of their husbands, and deprived of all means of communications with these husbands. Their crime for this undeserved punishment has been their progressive attitude of marrying those whom their hearts chose, be they Ibos or not. And yet this home-breaker called Ojukwu has been going all over the place parading himself as a 'progressive'.

Husbands affected by Ojukwu's decree of compulsory husband-wife separation have used the African social system which gives the husband the right of ownership over the children of a marriage to keep the children with them in the Central-Eastern State. This has brought a lot of sorrow to many Nigerian mothers. They have had to live away from their husbands and their children just because Ojukwu wants to become a Head of State. More depressing to these mothers is the fact

that they don't know whether they will be united with their children again since Ojukwu has been making use of thirteen-year-old boys in his conscript army.

Already, mothers whose sons have been conscripted into the army in the Central-Eastern State have begun to ask Ojukwu questions about the fate of these sons. Many of these sons have been sent to the front since Ojukwu attacked the legal army of his country, but only very few of them have returned since then. And these few who returned have been those who deserted having realized that Ojukwu was sending them to certain death for no just cause. This is why Sir Francis Ibiem, Ojukwu's aged adviser whose marriage is inter-tribal though his wife has not been expelled, has been making frantic appeals to deserting rebel soldiers to lay down their lives for the ignoble cause he and Ojukwu have imposed on the people of the Central-Eastern State. These mothers who have been asking questions about the fate of their sons have every right to do so since these young men have everything to lose by remaining in Ojukwu's army.

For many months Ojukwu has not paid the salaries of his rebel fighters. And anytime these young men whose future he is ruining demand their salaries, Ojukwu marches the ringleaders to the firing squad. One would definitely not be surprised to learn that one of the charges Ojukwu levelled against the four officers of his army he executed recently was their courage in demanding that the conscript fighters in Ojukwu's army be paid their salaries. Many of his untrained soldiers who have to send money home to their dependants have been disillusioned and are deserting in hundreds. They don't believe in Ojukwu's cause and he has not paid the salary he promised them. So they run back home to their mothers, jobless, penniless and bitter that Ojukwu has taken them for a ride.

It is a social fact that many eligible spinsters in the Central-Eastern State have found it difficult to get married because of the dearth of young men capable of paying the exorbitant bride price. Ojukwu has now worsened the situation by rushing many young men who would have married these spinsters to the death. He has now made it even more difficult for these young girls to have the opportunity of being happily married and securing the protection which marriage offers them.

The ambition of every Nigerian woman is to get married, have a happy home and live to cater for the children of such marriages. Anybody who deprives the women of Nigeria of this opportunity is their enemy. They also want to marry from any tribe or race they choose

and any man who deprives them of this basic right is an enemy of society. Ojukwu has done everything since he dreamt up his mad plans of secession to make every Nigerian woman look upon him with disgust. Love and marriage cut across tribal barriers and if Ojukwu thinks the Ibos and other Nigerians would forgive him for breaking their homes and isolating those whom God joined together, he would only be living up to his reputation of being society's greatest enemy.

TO KEEP
NIGERIA
ONE
IS A TASK
THAT MUST
BE DONE