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ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA

ETHNICITY (TRIBE) AS A SOCIALIZING AGENT IN NIGERIAN POLITICAL
INTEGRATION: THE CASE OF THE IBOS

By

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ABSTRACT

This Thesis seeks to demonstrate that ethnic cleavages on the part of the major Nigerian groups (the Hausa-Fulani, the Ibo, and the Yoruba) coupled with the very nature of the British colonial heritage, made political integration impossible in Nigeria's first Republic. Nigeria was created artificially by the British to enhance Colonial objectives; there were not enough attempts by the Colonial administration to create a unified state. Moreover, 'Westernization' which has been usually associated with 'development' did not spread evenly across the country. The result, therefore, was competitive ethnic antagonism between the 'Westernized' Ibo and Yoruba on the one hand, and the 'non-Westernized' Hausa-Fulani on the other. This led to the ethnic political parties fighting bitterly to maximize their positions in national politics: elections were rigged, census figures distorted and undemocratic practices became rampant. The Army took over the government in a coup d'état in January, 1966 and its aftermath was a civil war that finally destroyed the first Republic (1966-70).

This work is therefore concluding with the argument that, given the fragile nature of Nigeria's political existence, there should have been attempts on the Nigerian ethnic groups to accommodate one another through a form of elite cartel at the centre. An arrangement of this nature is usually known in the literature as "consociational democracy" (elite accommodation). Perhaps such a measure might have saved the state from crumbling the way it did.

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INTRODUCTION

In the Social Sciences, especially since the end of World War II, scholars have shifted emphasis from the 'traditional' academic inquiry into the Euro-American world, to a world embracing other peoples - in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. A variety of reasons account for this shift:

- (i) the massive increase in personal communication amongst peoples from all parts of the world;
- (ii) the quest on the part of scholars to prove or disprove social predictions far beyond Euro-America;
- (iii) the achievement of formal independence by the colonial peoples and their entry into the same 'club' of nations;
- (iv) the quest for scarce economic resources that have been discovered, in great abundance, in the "Third World" and an insight into the governmental or rather, political arrangements that husband these resources; and, finally,
- (v) the nature of the new international politics which has divided the globe into two ideological camps - the East and the West, hence the need for political allies in the "Third World", to enhance the so-called "Balance of Power" politics. Nevertheless, there is some claim by scholars on the intrinsic merits of studying a section of the world population that has been neglected.

This thesis, therefore, is on the "Third World": an attempt to look at the societal setting of an ethnic group in a nation-state, that is

to say, the Ibos in Nigeria on the one hand, and Nigeria on the other. It must be pointed out that Nigeria has been accepted, rather hastily, as a symbol of British administrative skill in Africa - in fact a model:

Nigeria has been a prime example of our denial of African realities. As an anchor of British sovereignty in West Africa, as the arena for the most comprehensive colonial experiment in indirect rule, as the most populous and heterogeneous of the emerging African nations. Nigeria was celebrated as the model of colonial success ... In reality, Nigeria was the very model of a colonial failure; for Africa the critical model.*

This work will then pose general questions relating to the connection between ethnicity, socialization and political integration in a society such as Nigeria. It will also concern itself with specific questions related to the case of the Ibos such as:

- (a) Who are the Ibos**?
- (b) What was their earlier motivation in fighting for Pan-Africanism, Pan-Nigerianism?
- (c) Why is it that the Ibos have lately changed from a 'Pan-

* Stanley Diamond, "Nigeria: Model of a Colonial Failure" (New York: American Committee on Africa, 1967), pp. 5-6, in Cynthia A. Enloe, Ethnicity and Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1973), p. 90.

** I shall clarify one point: the name 'Igbo' has been spelled by European and American writers as 'Ibo'; this is probably to avoid the problem of battling with double-consonants like 'gb', 'kw', 'nw', etc. that exist in Igbo Language. However, I shall try to adopt this 'standard' version for convenience's sake.

Nigeria' attitude to a 'Pan-Ibo' attitude; is the cause part of the internal social environment in Ibo land or some experiences outside of it?

(d) Is Stanley Diamond right in his assessment of Nigeria?

These are some of the issues this thesis will attempt to probe.

The concept 'ethnicity' will be used interchangeably with 'tribe' in this work. This is deliberate since most Euro-American writers prefer to use 'tribe' to designate groups in Africa, Asia, China, Latin America, and of course the 'native' peoples of the Americas and Australia. But, I prefer to use the concept ethnicity in this thesis rather than tribe. In fact, one might ask what really is a tribe? "The Romans identified tribula (tribe) as political units."¹ Lewis Morgan "regarded as tribal those societies that exhibited social institutions but lacked political ones; Henry Maine, on the other hand, saw the distinction in legal terms, with tribal societies basing their laws on status rights rather than contractual rights".² Today, however, every ethnic group in Africa, as elsewhere in the so-called 'Third World', is referred to as tribe regardless of any form of social development, hence my particular preference for ethnicity. At least ethnicity does not possess the derogatory meaning attached to tribe by Lewis Morgan and other writers.

Furthermore, it is no omission on my part to recognize that ethnic grouping is legion in Nigeria - that is to say, that besides the three major groups - the Hausa/Fulani, the Ibo, and the Yoruba, there are still many 'minor' ones. But, for simplicity's sake, and in fact, recognizing that politically three major groups have been the main contenders for poli-

tical influence in Nigeria, I shall emphasize and recognize the Hausa/Fulani, the Ibo, and the Yoruba. However, the Nigerian principal ethnic divisions are shown below with their populations:³

Former Region	Major Tribe	1963 Population (in thousands)
North	Hausa	11,653
	Fulani	4,784
	Kanuri	2,259
	Tiv	1,394
East	Ibo	9,246
	Ibibio	2,006
	Ijaw	1,089
West	Yoruba	11,321
Midwest	Edo	955

Figure 1

Nigerian Main Ethnic Groups and Populations

(Source: Adapted from Etienne Van Valle, "Who's Who and Where in Nigeria", Africa Report 15, No. 1 (January, 1970), p. 23.)

FOOTNOTES

1. John Friedl, Cultural Anthropology (New York: Harper's College Press, 1976), p. 393.
2. Ibid., p. 383.
3. Population Figures in Nigeria are not accurate because of Ethnic political power struggle; this will be explained further in the chapters. But, at least the figures can help in any study of the peoples of Nigeria.

CHAPTER I

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS: ETHNICITY, POLITICAL INTEGRATION AND SOCIALIZATION

A. Ethnicity: Like most of the concepts in the social sciences, ethnicity has meant many things to different scholars. As nationalism, it refers to a bond separating groups of people from others not considered as members. Professor Cynthia Enloe sees ethnicity "... [as] a particular bond among persons that causes them to consider themselves a group distinguishable from others".¹ Accordingly, the package of the 'bond' is shared culture - which "... is a pattern of fundamental beliefs and values differentiating right from wrong, defining rules for interaction, setting priorities, expectations, and goals".² The ethnic group as the bearer of culture therefore equips the individual with a sense of belonging; it positions him in society.³ Paul Mercier, would "schematically" present an ethnic group "as a closed group, descended from a common ancestor, or, more generally, having the same origin, sharing a homogeneous culture, and speaking a common language".⁴ That is to say in the context of Africa generally, and Nigeria particularly, the Ashanti in Ghana would be an ethnic group, the Buganda in Uganda also an ethnic group. In Nigeria, the Ibos, the Hausas, the Yorubas and the Tivs are ethnic groups - all possessing different cultures and speaking different languages. These groups "grow out of man's recognition of the distinctiveness of their own standards of behaviour and prizing of those standards

to the extent that they feel most comfortable and secure when among persons sharing [the same bonds]".⁵ For the purpose of this thesis, I will use the term 'ethnicity' to mean culturally defined linguistic groups. By this is meant those groups of people who possess particular cultural characteristics and express these characteristics by use of their language. That is to say while they speak the same language, they at the same time have the same culture. Take for example the Blacks, Chinese or Asian Indians in the West Indies: they do speak English as the official language and many a time the only language. But they are not culturally English. My clarification is simply that speaking a language (part of a culture) does not necessarily mean that one belongs to the "whole" culture of some other people where one is not naturally a member. The Quebecker in Canada, for instance, is born into the French culture and so speaks that language; so is the Ashanti of Ghana, or the Kikuyu of Kenya. But the Anglo-Saxon born in Quebec can speak French, yet he is not French culturally speaking.

Looking at some of the ethnic groups in Nigeria, one finds clearly, that the shared bonds are within the groups rather than outside of them. The Hausa/Fulani, for instance, live in the Northern part of Nigeria; the bulk of the population in this zone is Hausa. But between 1804 and 1810, they were conquered by the Fulani in a jihad (Islamic holy war). Today, the core of the ruling class in this zone is the Fulani masters and the masses are the Hausas. Social relationships among the Hausa/Fulani are based on client-patron relationships, thereby inequality of status becomes a common characteristic. There is a sharp "division between the ruling and subject classes (Sarakuna and Talakawa); subdivision of Sarakuna into royals and nobles, eunuchs, slaves, and free clients whose differences in

status corresponded to an elaborate system of state offices and titles".⁶ In his discussion of Nupe (one of the Hausa states), Nadel calls attention to three different types of clientelism there: first, the type of personal identification that originates from the desire of an inferior to obtain the political protection of a superior; second, that which results from the efforts of "inpecunious craftsmen to obtain a prosperous customer"; third, that which "over and above securing material assistance, stems from attachment to a man of rank and influence", thereby offering the client a chance "of becoming somebody", "of being lifted from the ignominy of a commoner's life into the sphere of rank and importance".⁷ Whatever are the socio-economic rewards, in Hausa/Fulani land, the whole relationship is between a superior and a subordinate. "... The crux of the clientage relationship in all the emirates (Hausa states)", writes C.S. Whitaker, "is that patronage, economic security, and protection can be exchanged for personal loyalty and obedience."⁸ Again in Hausaland Islam, which prescribes social and political norms, as well as faith, go hand in hand. The People speak the Hausa language both as a language of administration of government affairs, and of commerce. During the British colonization of Nigeria, they, the Hausas, received a system of administration known as the 'Indirect Rule' - a notorious method of governance by which the British used the already existing Islamic power hierarchy to rule the masses. This perpetuated the already established feudal organization of the emirates (states). Each was autonomous and naturally headed by an Emir (chief) who had to be a descendant of the Fulani conquerors. "The emirates were divided into fiefs, each allocated to a Fulani, commonly a relative of the emir."⁹ The fiefs in turn were divided into villages, each under the control of a

Hausa headman as principal resident in his area. Even the headmen held their appointments subject to the approval of the emir.¹⁰ "The functions of this hierarchy were the maintenance of order, the organization of defensive and offensive forces, and the collection of taxes."¹¹

Generally speaking, the emir's position is very strong and commands tremendous reverence. Even among peers, the Hausa commoner adheres to excessive forms of politeness: "In the presence of the hakimi, or lord of the fief, a peasant removes his sandals, prostrates himself and remains bowed to the ground, keeps his eyes lowered, speaks only when addressed, and would never think of expressing a point of view contrary to that of the hakimi".¹² In this "... culture, woman [are] considered chattel, secluded from public sight according to the moslem practice of 'purdah'".¹³ The advent of the British did little to change this organizational structure; rather "indirect rule was studiously adhered to".¹⁴

The Yoruba is another ethnic group in the western zone of Southern Nigeria. Historically, the Yoruba have a hierarchized system of authority like the Hausa/Fulani, except that the Yoruba employed a different power structure that did not resemble the Islamic hierarchy. The Rev. Samuel Johnson, the celebrated historian of the Yoruba, described an empire that, at the height of its power stretched from the land to the west of the Niger River to the frontiers of the Ga of the Gold Coast, now Ghana.¹⁵ Across this empire, the King of the Yoruba, the Alafin, established a power structure, "... an elaborate and semi-oriental court of priests, officials, and eunuchs".¹⁶ He had a standing army which was drawn mainly from the "Esho" - a praetorian guard and "[i]n the metropolis, the Oyomesti (the nobility)

shared supreme power with the King, and in the provinces, into which the towns which formed the core of the empire had been grouped for administrative purposes, dependent Kings ruled under the protection of the Alafin".¹⁷ The King had the "Ilari" or intendents sent to the remote parts of the Yoruba Kingdom to supervise the "Bale" or headmen and to collect tribute for the Alafin.¹⁸ The power hierarchy still goes further to embrace smaller communities which could be described as towns. At the head of every town was an "Oba" who should be looked at as the ultimate source of justice. He was also the High Priest of his own town. A description of the Yorubas is never complete without a brief mention of their secret societies which almost functioned as sovereign units and often resorted to use of 'secret' violence.

The 'Ogboni' cult is a typical Yoruba secret organization. The cult in actual fact, holds major power in the town.¹⁹ According to Biobaku, the cult is "[b]riefly ... a society of wealthy and influential men and a few old women who could be relied upon to place duty before sentiment and to maintain secrecy".²⁰ The 'Ogboni' became such a multi-dimensional institution that its influence was seen in every aspect of town life. It constituted "... the civil court, the town council, and the electoral college for the selection of the Oba from candidates nominated by the ruling houses".²¹ Frederick Schwartz, Jr., writing on Nigeria, maintains that "[t]he Yoruba chiefs appeared to have the same sort of autocratic power as did the Fulani emirs or the Tudor monarchs ...".²²

'Indirect Rule' was introduced for this ethnic group as was the case in the North, but the British miscalculated - not because the traditional power structure did not exist as in the North, but because "... the

British were unable to understand the system of chiefly rule²³ of the Yorubas. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, analyzing in 1947 the effects of indirect rule upon his Yoruba people, wrote:

"There is no doubt that in its original treatment of Paramount Chiefs the British Government mistook a part for the whole ... The dictatorial powers which some Yoruba chiefs are wielding today are the making of the British Government, who at the beginning misconceived the true nature of the Yoruba monarchy."²⁴

Perhaps it might be logically argued that the failure of the indirect rule in Yoruba land was functional, at least politically. It made the British modify the character of the system by being more "direct" in administration; that is to say, the Yorubas became more receptive of European political style through education. This style manifested itself in the "cry" for Nigerian independence by the educated Yorubas and Ibos.

The Ibos^{*} are a completely different people. They live in the Eastern part of Southern Nigeria. They number about eight million (in fact, no statistics on the Nigerian population are accurate) and speak the Ibo language. They are a traditionally decentralized people, "Whose

* The Ibos will occupy a greater portion of this work, hence the title of this thesis is framed as such. However, a brief mention will be made here of the people.

political traditions deprecate hierarchy and place an emphasis on participation, discussion and demonstrated abilities".²⁵ Analyses of the Ibo traditional culture have often noted their stress on individual initiative, material success, equality of opportunity, innovativeness and marketplace orientation.²⁶ Such attitudes are no accident, they stem from the traditional styles of socialization, prominent among them, 'learning by doing' in which the Ibo family is greatly involved. The paternal family - a man, his wives (for an Ibo could marry as many wives as he can look after), and children may be considered a political unit with the man as the head. He is expected by the traditional norms to educate his household and relate it to the political needs of the village. As a family head, and of course a political decisionmaker, he was expected to hold a staff of office, the "Ofo" which he must have inherited from his dead fathers. That is the source of authority and truth, and an Ibo does not play with that symbol of his family.

The Ibo has no King or 'Oba' or 'Imam'; all the male citizens have equal rights in confronting the issues of the village, "... though the voice of the elders generally predominated...".²⁷ To the Ibo, therefore, any government that does not afford him an opportunity to participate is undemocratic and cannot be countenanced. The society is very receptive and open to innovations, hence they embraced Christianity and Western education through European contacts as a norm long ago. However, the Ibos did not accept the British concept of "Indirect Rule" because it was deemed nonconforming, undemocratic, and tended to alienate the individual - a fear that is very much shared by all Ibos.

B. (Political) Integration: This is a concept that has put many a scholar to task since no consensus has emerged among scholars as yet. Perhaps it is worthwhile probing different definitions from known authorities in the social science literature: In their book Issues in Comparative Politics: A Text with Readings, Jackson and Stein see integration as simply "making whole or complete by bringing together parts".²⁸ However, integration is a broad concept that encompasses togetherness economically, socially and even politically. In the case of ethnic groups, integration would mean sharing some cultural values among the inhabitants of a given group. Let us consider the example of the Yorubas accepting the Alafin as King. If all the towns and villages within Yorubaland accept the Alafin as such, then they are at least socially integrated in that they have one central legitimate authority within the ethnic group. Where this aspect of authority can transcend ethnic boundaries, as in the Nigerian situation, then political integration has taken place. The distinction between political integration and social integration is very necessary. "Social integration describes the process or condition of uniting distinct parts of a social system into a whole".²⁹ The defining characteristics of political integration are therefore: (1) the relationship of political parts to a political whole in a political system; (2) this relationship describes both an evolving process and a condition, namely one involving unity or oneness.³⁰ If a nation-state exhibits the above characteristics, Weiner would label it as "National integration" taking place; "... [it] thus refers specifically to the problem of creating a sense of territorial nationality which overshadows - or eliminates - subordinate parochial loyalties".³¹ Other scholars use integration to refer to the problem of esta-

blishing national units or regions which may or may not coincide with distinct cultural or social groups. Coleman identifies two types of integration; for him, while the term "national integration" is concerned with the subjective feelings which individuals belonging to different social groups or historically distinct political units have toward the nation, "territorial integration" (that is "national integration" in Weiner's terms) refers to the objective control which central authority has over the entire territory under its claimed jurisdiction.³²

Herbert Kelman, in a related but somewhat different sense, agrees with Coleman when he identifies two kinds of attachments to the chief source of political legitimacy, that is, the state; namely sentimental and instrumental attachments.³³ These he says, depend on an individual's place in society, his education, his religious and ethnic identifications, his personal history and his personality dispositions.³⁴

For Ernst Haas, political integration is "a process whereby political actors in distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their national loyalties, expectations, and political activities toward a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing nation-state".³⁵ Rosberg and Coleman conceive of political integration as the "progressive bridging of the elite-mass gap on the vertical plane".³⁶ Coleman and his associate are of the contention that bridging the elite-mass gap "... in the process of creating a homogeneous territorial political community"³⁷ is very essential in political integration. Furthermore, political integration "involves changing this focus of group loyalty from a traditional to a bureaucratic structure; this is,

supplanting a corporate unity based on loyalty to an authority legitimized by tradition with a corporate unity based on the acceptance of rationally chosen rules".³⁸ Kelman further looks at three types of integration, namely:

- (1) Ideological integration - An individual who is ideologically integrated is bound to the system by virtue of the fact that he subscribes to some of the basic values on which the system is established. These may be the cultural values defining the national identity, or the social values reflected in the institutions by which the society is organized or both. The ideologically integrated member has internalized these values and incorporated them into a personal framework. When he is faced with demands for behavior in support of the national system he is likely to respond positively, because support for the system is generally congruent with his own values.
- (2) Role-Participant Integration - An individual who is integrated via role participation is bound to the system by virtue of the fact that he is personally engaged in roles within the system - roles that enter significantly into his self-definition. He may be emotionally caught up in the role of national as such, with its associated symbols, and derive a sense of self-transcendence and compensatory identity from it; or he may be functionally caught up in various social roles that are central to his identity and whose effective performance depends on the national system. His integration into the national system is based on

identification in the sense that he has a stake in maintaining the system-related roles and self-definition anchored in them. [Examples of such roles would be bureaucratic, military, etc.] When faced with demands to support the system, the individual is likely to respond positively, because the system is part of that individual.

- (3) Normative Integration - An individual who is normatively integrated is bound to the system by virtue of the fact that he accepts the system's right to set the behavior of its members within a prescribed domain. That is to say, accepting the system's legitimacy in its pure form, in which the question of personal values and roles has become irrelevant. Acceptance of the system's right to unquestioning obedience may be based on a commitment to the state as a sacred object in its own right, or on a commitment to the necessity of law and order as a guarantor of equitable procedures. The normatively integrated member regards compliance with the system as a highly proper and valid orientation.³⁹

These definitions are all explaining one thing: that individuals and groups learn to work together for common purposes and behave in a fashion conducive to the achievement of common goals. This is only possible through the possession of some common cultural characteristics.

The concept culture, therefore, becomes very crucial in this context; culture is "that complex whole", writes Taylor, "which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society".⁴⁰ Culture can help people who have

many "things" to share in common come together. The Islamic religion is a cultural 'thing'; it has helped the Hausa/Fulani come together. Oduduwa, the ancestral father of the Yorubas, has, when invoked, united the Yorubas as 'Omo Oduduwa' (sons of Oduduwa). The simple expression 'Olu Igbo' (Igbo - one voice) when employed by an Ibo means much to Ibos. It can affect the Ibos in a manner similar to Germans listening to the famous music of Wagner. All these spell clearly what culture is all about. But then what is political culture? It is, in fact, different from culture, generally speaking. It "consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place".⁴¹ For the individual citizen, political culture provides the 'code of conduct' within the political sphere. For the political system as a whole, the political culture provides "a systematic structure of values and rational considerations which ensures coherence in the performance of institutions and organizations".⁴² The degree of cultural homogeneity is one of the important determinants of the level of political integration. However, it is possible for a political system to achieve a level of integration quite out of proportion to its cultural homogeneity. India, Canada and Great Britain have achieved this level of political integration. Perhaps the "All India Civil Service" is a good example of political integration - where bureaucrats are more concerned with an Indian rather than a Punjabi, Muslim, or Hindu identity. The British for instance, have developed a mature and long lasting talent for absorbing needed social innovation into the fabric of their traditional political and social orders. Consequently, "British political life and culture, like other facets of the English nation, are a blend of modernity and tradition evolving within

a national setting where a strong sense of community and civic consensus prevail".⁴³

Almond and Verba have suggested three types of political culture, namely: parochial, subject and participant political culture.

- (i) Parochial Political Culture: "In these societies there are no specialized political roles: headmanship, chieftainship, 'Shaman-ship', are diffuse political-economic-religious roles, and for members of these societies the political orientations to those rules are not separated from their social and religious orientations. A parochial orientation involves the comparative absence of expectations of change initiated by political system. The parochial expects nothing from the political system. Similarly, in Centralized African chiefdoms and Kingdoms to which the political cultures would be predominantly parochial."⁴⁴

This category would very well fit the brand of 'political' culture one would expect in the Hausa/Fulani emirates, where the Sardauna of Sokoto played both political, religious and economic roles simultaneously and the masses simply were apathetic. He chose political personnel, his 'assent' was necessary in the choice of religious leaders, and allocation of economic resources was within the guidance of his throne.

- (ii) Subject Political Culture: "There is a high frequency of orientations toward a differentiated political system and toward the output aspects of the system, but orientations toward specifically input objects, and toward the self as an active participant, approach zero. The subject is aware of specialized govern-

mental authority; he is affectively oriented to it, perhaps taking pride in it, perhaps disliking it; and he evaluates it either as legitimate or as not. But the relationship is toward the system on the general level, and toward the output, administrative, or "downwardflow" side of the political system. It is essentially a passive relationship..."⁴⁵

- (iii) Participant Political Culture: "The members of the society tend to be explicitly oriented to the system as a whole and to both the political and administrative structures and processes: in other words, to both input and output aspects of the political system. Individual members of the participant polity may be favourably oriented toward an "activist" role of the self in the polity, though their feelings and evaluations of such a role may vary from acceptance to rejection."⁴⁶

The general description of Ibo political culture will be dealt with in greater detail in the subsequent chapters. Presently, it is necessary to understand that in traditional Ibo society, the adult had sufficient cognition of what politics was all about, had sufficient attachment to the political system and had no mixed understanding of what was expected of the political man. Therefore, the type of "they" (chiefs, Sir, Imams, Obas, Ashantihine, Ogboni) and "we" (slaves, women, the young) relationship which characterized most colonial Africa did not exist for the Ibos.

As part of this political culture, possession of cultural symbols help greatly towards integration. By cultural symbols are meant those aspects of a people's life that depict some emotion when evoked. The

absence of this inhibits the process of integration in any nation-state. With this in mind, Wriggins has identified a problem in his study of Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He points out that when Ceylon cast around for a cultural symbol from her past, it was discovered that the past had no common significance for all the Cylonese.⁴⁷ This same problem in Ceylon is native to Nigeria because the peoples of the nation-state have had nothing in common - even the Colonial experience. Nigerians, therefore, can only recall battles won and lost from each other; what some remember as the hour of heroism may be remembered by others as the hour of humiliation. It is then clear that the quest for a symbol of identity from the Nigerian past could underline the inferiority and superiority feelings among the various ethnic groups.

Uniformity of language, generally helps create greater attachment to the claims of the nation-state. Some scholars would argue the contrary, especially those from the 'Federalist School', like K.C. Wheare. They claim that language differences would not deter nations from integrating.⁴⁸ But, a close look at the present political trends in Canada's Quebec, Kenya and even Spain where language groups are gathering momentum that could lead to separation, proves that uniformity of language is a core variable in political integration. A well-known Indian sociologist, B.R. Ambedkar, writing on the importance of a common language, has this to say:

The reasons why a unilingual state is stable and a multi-lingual state unstable are quite obvious. A state is built on a fellow feelings. What is this fellow feeling? To state briefly it is a

feeling of a corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are Kith and Kin ... It is at once a feeling of 'consciousness of kind' which on the one hand, binds together those who have it so strongly that it overrides all differences arising out of economic conflicts or social gradations, and on the other, [separates] them from those who are not of their kind. It is a longing not to belong to any other group. The existence of this fellow feeling is the foundation of a stable ... state.⁴⁹

In East Africa, Tanzania has been able to create national consciousness through the use of a common language - the Swahili language. This made it possible to form the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964 into what is today the Republic of Tanzania. Common language is therefore an aid to national integration.

C. Socialization: All social systems have special means through which their ideas, values and expectations are transmitted from generation to generation. This process by which each individual, over time, acquires the values of the society of which he is a member, and internalizes these values as his own, is socialization. Socialization takes many forms - an individual by his position in life, economically, socially, and so forth, and by his family background, his religious preference, his educational experiences, and by such daily influential apparati as the mass media, is presented with a picture of the world or a group of pictures of the world that help to form his basic value system.⁵⁰ In other words, the way an Ibo lives, or an Ashanti, a Hausa, or a Yoruba, does quite clearly affect the way he thinks. Among the Chaga of East Africe, for instance,

the family instills awe and reverence for the chief. There is much explicit instruction in proper deferential behavior and forms of address. The importance and almost superhuman qualities of the chief are continuously impressed upon the child. He is made to watch ceremonies in the home where the chief and his emissaries are honored. In short, the child is continually bombarded with examples and precepts that tell him to respect the chief and his authority.⁵¹ Some cultural rituals like initiation ceremonies and puberty rites compel respect and honor for social authority. Among the Ibos, for instance, the Ozo title, when conferred on a citizen is a spiritual honor which links the (Onye Ozo) titled man with the spiritual fathers of the land. Children are instructed to respect Onye Ozo and are also exposed to his spiritual influence. "Socialization", is therefore, "the lifelong process of inculcation whereby an individual learns the principal values and symbols of the social systems in which he participates and the expression of those values in the norms composing the roles he and others enact."⁵²

Political socialization is part of the general idea of socialization except that emphasis is on 'political' variables. Political socialization "refers to the way society transmits its political culture from generation to generation"⁵³ in order to maintain the political character of the people. This process, if well handled, may serve to preserve the traditional political character of any group of citizens - be it in the nation-state, within an ethnic group or a political party. However, when secondary political socialization agencies inculcate political norms different from those of the past or when the younger generation are raised with political and social expectations different from those of their fore-

fathers, the socialization process can be an instrument of socio-political change. In the case of Nigeria, there is no generally accepted political value to be transmitted from generation to generation. This means that Nigeria has to "create" its own political culture which will guide the younger generations. The United States of America, and to a lesser degree, Canada, have succeeded in creating their political culture and have socialized their citizens accordingly.

To facilitate the process, families, schools and colleges, political parties, and the media have to play vital roles in socialization. What is needed is to create the process in the course of which the young 'discover' what it takes to become political persons. It involves the creation of citizens with committed pride in the nation-state. It means, in the case of Nigeria particularly, causing people to subordinate previously important familial, ethnic or religious loyalties to a new national order. Usually an attempt to deal with this situation is made through a heavy political education in schools, colleges and universities.

The assumption of many excellent studies is that political socialization programs produce a politically unified or integrated nation, that is to say, a nation whose citizens are sufficiently homogeneous and sufficiently committed that social decisions can be made and collective tasks undertaken.⁵⁴

"Unless these individuals who are physically and legally members of a political system (that is, who live within its boundaries and are subject to its laws) are also psychologically members of that system (that is, feel themselves to be members), orderly

patterns of change are unlikely. It is the sense of identity with the nation that legitimizes the activities of national elites and makes it possible for them to mobilize the commitment and support of their followers."⁵⁵

Perhaps it is necessary here to look into a few of the socializing agents briefly and apply them to the Nigerian situation.

THE FAMILY: The family probably functions primarily as a conservatizing influence; one of the most intriguing findings on the family is that it can operate to communicate unorthodox political norms as well. "Interview data from Russian emigrants was expected to reveal that parents who had grown up prior to the revolution would, in the early days of the new Soviet regime, be very conservative socializing influences on their children."⁵⁶ However, these parents, despite the fact that they did not particularly believe in or admire the principles of the new revolutionary government, tried to make their children into good Soviet citizens. "Instead of subverting the regime, they were doing its socialization for it."⁵⁷ These Russian parents were apparently attempting to provide their children with skills and values that would enable them to survive in the environment; such paradoxical socialization was rational indeed. Rather than obstructing social change, this older generation was helping to make it more widely accepted.⁵⁸ Perhaps the best Nigerian parents can do is to copy from those Russian parents. In Nigeria, the tendency has been to orient children towards being Ibo, Yoruba or Hausa, rather than Nigerian. Parents have fallen on to this pattern because of ethnic competition; perhaps a change of attitude will help to achieve the desired goals.

THE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE: Civic education has been a prominent feature of all regimes since ancient times, and formal educational processes and schools are subject to manipulation as a matter of policy. The great emphasis in Plato's Republic on making the young into good citizens through extremely comprehensive state-run instructional programs is so impressive that many conceived the idea that education, not politics per se, was Plato's main concern. For Plato, therefore, the ideal state must be a stable state, and stability is achieved by perfecting mechanisms of social control.⁵⁹ Nigeria is still a young nation-state and has experienced the "disadvantages" of inculcating in the minds of children foreign values through their school system. Young Nigerian students tend to be exposed to Eurocentric views of Nigeria's past found in most published works which have treated Africa as that "Dark Continent" dehumanized by Europe's slave trade, "rehumanized" by European missionary explorers, and finally "civilized" and brought to "freedom" by European colonial regimes.

COMMUNICATION: If one were asked to explain the features of American life that contribute to the underlying consensus in their society, the answer is very simple - their impressive intercommunications system. All functions of the political system are performed by means of communication. And Almond, holding a similar view, feels that it is of prime importance that in modern systems some media of communication develop what he calls a 'vocational ethic' of 'neutral' or objective communication.⁶⁰ Political communication performs "the crucial boundary-maintenance function ..."⁶¹ But, unfortunately, the mass media in Nigeria which had developed this

'vocational ethic' gradually degenerated into ethnic competition within the polity. In the pre-independence period, the Nigerian press played such a central role in the development of national politics, which led to massive awareness on the true meaning of independence. After independence had been achieved, ethnic parochialism marred the good services rendered by the Nigerian Media.*

Political Parties are also important agents of political socialization but only when it comes to ethnic politics do parties play a socializing role in Nigeria - The (N.C.N.C.) National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons for The Ibos; the (AG) Action Group for the Yorubas; and, the (NPC) Northern Peoples Congress for the Hausa/Funani.**

So far, this chapter has dealt with the major concepts in this thesis, namely Ethnicity, Political Socialization and Integration. For the purpose of the present work, the term 'integration' will be used in the sense of "territorial integration", to embrace all the peoples within the geographical territory - Nigeria. There are eminent scholars of integration who see the need for conflict - 'conflict theorists' - and its advantage in Political integration; this writer will not share this view in the Nigerian situation. Rather, conflict per se will create distrust, animosity and rivalry which may disintegrate Nigeria politically. Generally, the meanings of these concepts will conform with the usage in this chapter.

* This aspect will be developed in Chapter IV where local party papers were used to promote ethnic antagonism.

** This aspect will also be developed in Chapter IV.

FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE IBO ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

There are all kinds of speculations about the ethnic consciousness of the Ibo people of Nigeria. Some sources, especially British, say that the Ibos did not develop ethnic self-consciousness as a people until the advent of the British colonial conquerors. Other sources, notably African, claim that the Ibos have known themselves very well, but only maintained individual autonomy to suit local, familial, and group purposes, especially since the Ibos did not have a fear of external threat. This chapter is, therefore, an exploration into the latter claim, that the Ibos have been ethnically conscious from ancient times. It will inquire into the origin of the Ibo people, their location within a specific region and the type of socio-political arrangements that evolved to serve the needs of the people. The Ibo ethnic consciousness, as will be developed in this chapter, stemmed from the fact that the people were located within one geographical region and were protected by such natural barriers as the River Niger, the Imo River and the Anambara River; and again by very thick vegetation that prevented easy communication with other peoples of West Africa.

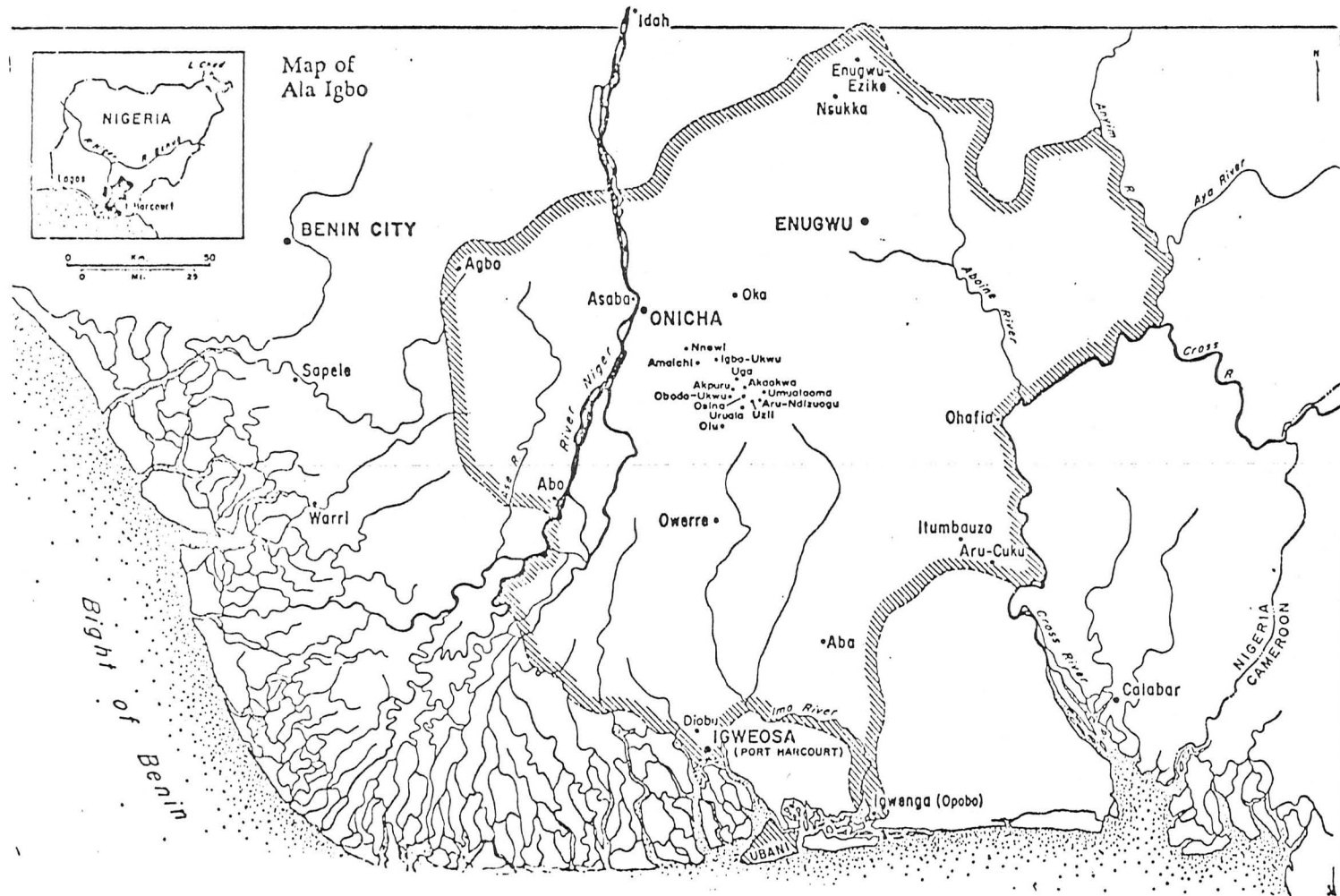
However, external enemies or threats can help make a people more conscious of themselves; the British penetration into Ibo country did help to make the Ibos aware of foreign domination and the need to fight collectively against that domination. This was demonstrated clearly by the

Women's Riot of 1929 when Ibo women questioned the legitimacy of the British in Ibo country, and resorted to violence against British rule. British penetration, like any external threat to any people, therefore, promoted Ibo ethnic consciousness. But, it did not initiate it as some people claim.

The Ibo, numbering about eight million, are a people who speak a common language - Ibo - which forms part of the "Kwa" group of West African languages. Their traditional distribution covers the Niger-Cross River area, with Ibibio and Cross River People in the East, Ijaw in the South, Edo in the West, and Igala Idoma speaking peoples in the North.*

There are three hypotheses by those who speculate on the origin of the Ibo, but none has real evidence behind it.¹ The first group espouse the "lost tribe of Judah" theory or are looking for some similarities between the Ibo and the Jews, hence their references to the Ibos as "the Jews of Africa" or the "Jews of Nigeria". A second hypothesis looks at the Ibo as of Egyptian origin.² A third hypothesis is that the Ibo were the founders of ancient Egypt; speculators of this idea claim that those who occupied Egypt and now pride themselves as the "founders" of the "great civilization" lost the secrets that made ancient Egypt great when they plundered and evicted the Ibo.³ Unfortunately, there are no written records or legends that can tell more about the origin of the Ibo. These theories have not gained any currency even among the Ibos themselves. It is also questionable how the Ibos could have found their way to West Africa from Palestine without settling in such Northern territories as Uganda, Kenya, or Morocco. Nevertheless, the Igbo historian Kenneth Onwuka Dike notes that

* See map on next page.



Map of Iboland

Source: Njaka, E.N., Ibo Political Culture.

"throughout the nineteenth century the great majority of the Ibos claimed Nri town in Awka district as their ancestral home, and it has been suggested that around Nri town is to be found "the heart of the Ibo nationality".⁴ Recent archaeological findings by Thurston Shaw and his associates, have thrown more light on this claim; Shaw writes that the bronzes he excavated in that district "[are] in style ... utterly unlike the work of either Benin or Ife ..."⁵ However, Shaw's work has come under attack by another Ibo historian, A.E. Afigbo,⁶ because of the way he tried to fit the culture of the whole Ibo into that of the town he excavated - what Chukwuemeka Onwubu has termed "... the characteristically cynical English scepticism which marks Shaw's interpretations..."⁷

✓ John Flint explains the origin of the Ibo a bit differently, introducing the idea of Ibo aborigines:

"Along the lower Niger ... and in the area east of the river, there is no evidence of either Kingship, or even chieftaincy before the late seventeenth century ... For the historian this raises acute problems of interpretation ... The absence of Kingship is even more puzzling ... in view of the extraordinary cultural, linguistic, and social uniformity of the people ... The problem would be simpler if the Ibo were a Stone Age people; it could then be argued that the strength of their Northern neighbours, and perhaps the rise of the Jukun Empire in the sixteenth century, had shielded the Ibo from immigrant conquerors bringing iron weapons. However, the Ibo were as skilled in iron technology as any of their neighbours. The only hypothesis, there-

fore, and it is more than a hypothesis, is that the Ibo migrated into the area en masse, bringing their iron technology with them, and either completely expelled or destroyed the aboriginal inhabitants. To date such a movement [... has been found scientifically impossible] although it may be argued that Ibo dialects differ sufficiently for us to conclude that they must have been evolving in separate areas for perhaps a thousand years."⁸

While it is possible to give credit to the idea that there were indeed some 'aboriginal inhabitants' of this area peopled now by the Ibo, there is no evidence, as has been stated, to suggest that the Ibo themselves have not always been living in this country now known as Iboland. But, what is clearly known, according to some scholars, is that when the Ibo moved into this area, the pressure of their numbers pushed the Ijaw and the Adoni to the less hospitable Delta and coastal swamps. The Ekoi and their neighbours were also driven beyond the Cross River.⁹ The physical environment within this zone - one dominated by thick forest with its heavy vegetation - offered an excellent barrier against large scale invasion from outside. This natural protection accounts for what might be termed "Ibo ethnic consciousness" for want of a better word, or rather, what has been described in certain Nigerian quarters as "Ibo pride". All the same, it might have given rise to the sub group isolation that did not aid movement and easy intercourse among the Ibo people themselves, hence the small semi-autonomous republics scattered all over Iboland.

From ancient times, religion has been the prime force behind Ibo

societal life. That is to say that Ibos have traditionally been a religious people. The Ibo religious philosophy is based on a belief in a High God, Chukwu or Chineke; "society and morality are bound together by their cosmological concepts and the social organization of their institutions is sustained by their metaphysical views about life and the universe".¹⁰ In traditional Ibo life, cosmology was the concern of every individual. Each had a patterned picture of the cosmos and his place in it. Writing on this subject, Mazi Mbonu Ojike, an Ibo, gives more meaning to Ibo religion when he says:

If it is necessary to give a name to ... [this] African religious system so that it may be more clearly understood by those who like definitions, the word is Omenana. It is a system which holds that man's activities are limitable by what is good for all. The name comes from the word ana, which ... means the earth, the soil, the land, and also custom, tradition, law, constitution ... For us, religion and law are unalterably interdependent. Religion establishes the social reason for an ideal, while law or government regulates how the ideal can be attained.¹¹

This outlook lays emphasis on the Ibo traditional balance between the spiritual and the pragmatic, the moral and the material.¹² A typical traditional Ibo believed that he was governed by three gods, the High God, the god of his ancestors and his personal god, chi. Geoffrey Parrinder has perceived this notion when he says:

... African religion can roughly be depicted as a triangle. At the top, head of all powers, is God. On the two sides of the triangle are the next greatest powers, [Personal] gods and ancestors. At the base are lower forces, with which magic and medicine are concerned. Man is in the middle, and must live in harmony with all the powers that affect his life, family and work.¹³

Religion was therefore a very essential part of Ibo society.

When the early Europeans came to Ibo land and in quest for more knowledge about the people, they divided the area into five subdivisions: The Northern or Onitsha Ibo; Southern or Owerri Ibo; Eastern or Cross River Ibo; and, North-Eastern Ibo. There are two natural stocks of the Ibo nation and their historical experiences fashion their pattern of political organization. The first group is the Central Ibo, consisting of Owerri Ibo, Cross River Ibo and North-Eastern Ibo; the second group is the Onitsha Ibo, the people around the Niger River. It is worth looking into these two groups differently to see their political or social similarities and dissimilarities.

The people of Onitsha, traditionally, do not consider themselves as Ibos. They claim to have migrated into that area of the Niger, where they now settle, from Benin - a Kingdom which had highly structured political and social institutions - across the Western part of the River Niger. It is not uncommon to see Onitsha people, even to the present day, refer to the rest of the Ibos as "Ndi Igbo", which simply means, 'People of the Igbo Country'. The political system of Onitsha, following that of Benin,

provides for a monarch, the King. "His person is regarded as sacred and he is held to be a symbol ..."¹⁴ Onitsha society divides into two classes of Ndichie (council of elite group) and 'Agbalanairegwu'. The former are the politically oriented elites and are responsible for the government of the state; the latter are the commoners, the ordinary folk. The King of Onitsha - the Obi - is the head of state and head of Ndichie, and all state appointments are made by him. Government officials receive the insignia of their office from him. "All candidates who become Ndichie have already received the Ozo title, and have passed through an initiation ritual which makes their persons sacred."¹⁵ Political recruitment in Onitsha, especially among the Ndichie, is achievement oriented, rather than ascriptive. Once an Onyeichie (singular for Ndichie) dies, his office automatically becomes vacant. The offices are not vested either in a specific lineage or in a political unit. Political recruitment is open and competition for offices is encouraged except that certain qualifications, like the OZO title, are advantageous. To ensure the 'checks and balances' in the Onitsha polity, "No two persons can hold the same (office) title (and) an Obi cannot revoke a title and confer it on another person".¹⁶

The women of Onitsha had their own organization separate from and parallel to that of the men. The chief of the women was the Omu, Queen. She was a member of the Ndichie and was selected by the Obi, the King. Like the male Ndichie, she had the right to perform rituals, she appointed female titled officials, each of whom had duties corresponding to the equivalent male Ndichie.¹⁷ "These [women] were known as 'Ndi Otu Ogene' and they acted as the Queen's advisory and executive council."¹⁸ In modern terms, Ndi Otu Ogene would mean the Queen's cabinet.

The Age Organization - 'Otu na achiani' - is another characteristic of the Onitsha political set-up. "There are twenty-three age sets at Onitsha and these cut across residential and lineage ties, and bring members of every ward into a single organization based on the criterion of age."¹⁹ It is customary among the Ibos, even the Central Ibo, to make use of some promising members of the age sets to perform communal duties. In Onitsha, the Obi and Ndichie delegate the age sets to carry out some bureaucratic functions because they are considered politically mature, having qualified for membership in an age set.

The Onitsha political system, therefore, had political institutions similar to the West European type. The Legislature would be the King-in-Council; the executive, the Council of Elders, Ndichie; and the judiciary was a sort of Supreme Court - "Ndichie Ume" - a selected few highly skilled and knowledgeable in the law of the land. The young age groups provide military force when needed and serve as bureaucrats, in the collection of taxes and implementing government rulings in local villages.

** The people of the Central Ibo, the 'typical' Ibo, present a different and more complicated political organization. "Ibo land was more, ... a large collection of independent and unrelated polities."²⁰ These polities could all trace their roots to the common ancestor. The mechanism of effective social control in Ibo land is the village. In topographical terms the village group consists of "a cluster of [families] sharing a market place, which is at once a ritual, political and marketing centre".²¹ Operationally, the village group is a working arrangement whereby fission of groups and adherence of constituent villages to new groups is a common

characteristic of Ibo social dynamics. The political system of the Ibo has been aptly seen as being based on ideas reminiscent of the great statement of Edward III of Britain in summoning the First Parliament, namely that "what touches all must be approved by all".²² On this basis, traditional Igbo has often been described as practising a form of democracy similar to that of the classical Greek states. At all levels of society, from the family to the village, every adult male is entitled to direct participation in the political decision making process. A survey looking at Ibo society and comparing it with other groups in Nigeria, has come to this conclusion: "There is political authority [in] every one ... [The Ibo country] is like a republican society".* Open conflicts and disagreements between a village and its constituent sections, in extreme forms, could lead the aggrieved sections of the village to break away and form a new village group. This could be seen in Ibo villages having a dual kinship system, especially the type described by G.I. Jones.²³ By dual kinship is meant those Ibo villages which, having broken away still maintained some kinship ties with the parent village, just as European communities that came to the Americas maintained such names as 'New England', 'New France'; there are still Ibo villages depicting such historical backgrounds such as: Obodo Ukwu (great village)/Obodo Nta (small village), Obodo Ulo (home village)/Obodo-Ohia (new village).²⁴ This situa-

* This survey was conducted at McMaster University by Sybil White. She tried to ascertain some differences, if any, among the ethnic groups in Nigeria, as regards their political orientations.

tion whereby Ibo villages could break away and form new villages was illustrative of the egalitarian nature of the society. No groups could be forced to live under perpetual servitude if they perceived their situation as such.

As has been pointed out in the first chapter of this work, the paternal family of an Ibo may be considered as a political unit. This unit is headed by a man, usually the first son of the family, 'Opara'. As a family head, he was expected to hold a staff of office, the Ofo, which he must have inherited from his dead fathers. The Ofo is the source of his authority and link with his ancestors. Even as the family leader, the leadership of the Opara is essentially a moral one for he cannot take any decision alone and cannot enforce any laws without the consent of his family. Government, no matter which level in the society, family or village, must be based on the consensus of the group concerned. Every Ibo family belongs to the 'Umunna' - the strongest but smallest political unit in the Ibo political organization - literally meaning children of one father. Each of the members of the group was known as Ikwu, meaning 'the insider'. This group therefore constituted a democratic independent political unit within the village group. The Ibo has had no King or chief, Oba or Alhaji, to monopolize the affairs of the village. The Ikwu or Umunna - children from one father - worked with the Ibe, meaning the 'outsiders'. Often, the Ibos talk of 'Ikwu na Ibe',* "the insider and the outsider", which constitute the larger village group govern-

* See Diagram on next page.

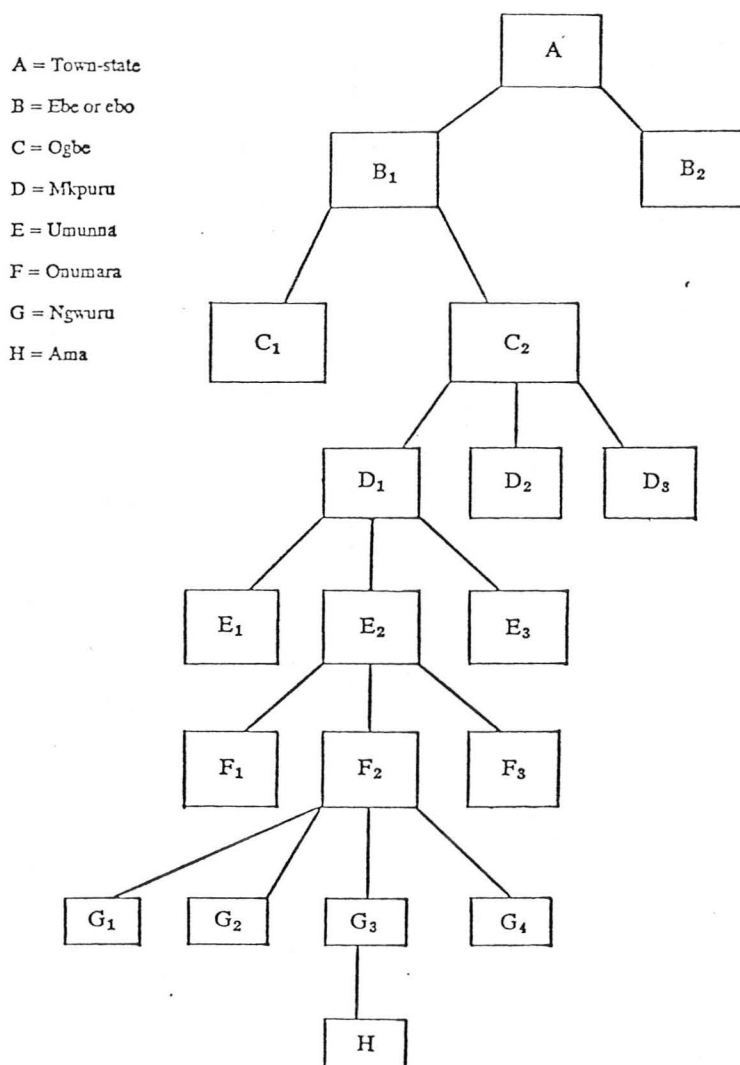


Figure 1. The Structure of the Ibo Village (Town-State) Obodo or MBA.

Source: Redrawn from E.N. Njaka, *Igbo Political Culture* (U.S.A.: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 26.

ment. This form of administrative structure guides the individual and whenever the community has gathered for political action, it becomes a sovereign with supreme power, assuming the name of 'Oha' and demanding complete loyalty from its constituent parts. In such an organizational arrangement, there is no single centre of power or authority, "... the power of the situation is always based on two centres in opposition or co-operation rather than on a single centre with authority".²⁵ This simply means that though the Oha takes on sovereign form, its power still lies within the constituent parts - Ikwu na Ibe.

In an Igbo town-state there are various levels of socio-political structure, as shown in Figure 1.* An individual with a family has an ama (H). As he grows older, his sons establish their ama, and all the ama which have a common ancestral origin, make up the ngwuru (G). Any

* This socio-political structure will be difficult for Western scholars to understand, because they are used to talking of country and city. But in Ibo land, as any Ibo scholar or rather African, will easily appreciate, people can trace their roots to the smallest unit. This diagrammatic representation is simpler than the complex reality it seeks to explain; all it does is to use one town-state or Mba and explain its contents. The term "any number of ..." is self-explanatory because in Ibo land, there is no clear cut number of units that can constitute, say, an Umunna. It depends on how many children the ancestors had, how many survived slave raids, and how many had grandchildren. These units are not equal, some are small, others are very large.

number of ngwuru, provided they have a common ancestral origin, make up an onumara (F). The Umunna polity, (E), which is the backbone of the Igbo political system is made up of different Onumara. The Mkpuru, (D), includes as many Umunna as are descended from a common lineage. Any number of Mkpuru from a common ancestral lineage constitutes an Ogbe, (C). In the same way, a number of Ogbe make an ebe, (B). Any number of ebe make an Obodo or Mga (A).²⁶

Laws within the Ibo polity are maintained through this form of structure, not through chiefs, but through an arrangement whereby all the peoples' interests are represented, say by a Council of Elders. These elders were known as "ndi isi ala" - people who held the peace of the land, when translated literally. This needs more clarification: the council of elders was not a patriarchy as it might seem to be, but it could also admit young people whose socio-political visions have been recognized by the community. After all, an old Ibo adage says, "If a child washes his hands, he could eat with Kings". If a young man, therefore, proved knowledgeable enough, he could be a member of the council. Even then, the council was only an advisory body and a body that could be consulted in time of emergency. Generally speaking, all adult Ibos could participate in decisions affecting the community, in one form or another.

If there was a dispute between one ikwu and his "brother", the elders would arrange to meet say, in a market place and "hammer out a solution to the problem because, after all, they are brothers".²⁷ In conflict management, as in all other aspects of Ibo life, religion as already stated, played a crucial role. Absolute truth was expected of

all disputing parties as to the cause of the quarrel because ... "Ibo life had ... a strong spiritual dimension - controlled by gods, ancestors, personal spirits or chi ..." ²⁸ For accurate and frank judicial procedure, Ibo religion provides for oath taking "idu isi" both on the part of the judges and the disputing parties. An illustration can clarify this point of 'idu isi'; if, for instance, Obi reports Okonkwo to the chief priest and to the Umunna, accusing him of theft, the heads of the several units in the Umunna will be summoned by the chief priest. Obi, the plaintiff, will be asked to state his charges, and Okonkwo, the defendant, to defend himself. The Ibo judicial system, unlike the Western model, would consider an accused guilty until he proved himself innocent. If no clear case was made by the plaintiff or defendant, the Umunna, under the spiritual guidance of the chief priest, would decide on 'idu isi' to determine the issue.

Political socialization among the Ibos begins very early in childhood training. An Ibo child would be made aware that he belongs to three worlds, "the circle of the living, the dead, and the unborn"; ²⁹ three things are therefore paramount in his mind: (1) the independence of the individual within the whole which constitutes his backbone as well as his protection; (2) the self-regulatory principle which is guided by the morals of his religion in his political participation; and, (3) the universality of man in the ikwu and Ibe concept. ³⁰ It is therefore obligatory on the part of an Ibo to participate in the politics of his people. Should an Ibo show signs of apathy in the activities of the Umunna, he is assumed to have "lost his person within the whole". He has lost his ego, his prestige and most importantly and most feared, he has provoked the

reaction of his ancestors. An Ibo individual is made to realize that his strength and freedom lie with his community. Ibos never weary of giving their children such names as "Umunna bu ike" - Umunna is strength; "Umunna kwe", or "Ibekwe" - all meaning great recognition of the "whole" by the individual. Membership in Umunna is then a good testing ground for political recruitment and advancement because members from this body who have shown strong signs of political maturity could represent their units in larger organizations like the Mba - town-state. Besides, political "participation constitutes a check against any non-democratic tendencies among and within political representatives and traditional heads".³¹ Ibo children tend to be present at many of the doings of their people, including attending such meetings as those of the Umunna, sometimes bringing seats for their fathers. Socialization, therefore, on the whole, is probably a matter of assimilation rather than formal education. Children who fail to display a sense of political involvement within the Umunna cause their parents much embarrassment. In Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Okonkwo, an Ibo, frets because his son does not fit his conception of "manliness", and at age twelve "was already causing his father great anxiety for his incipient laziness [and social indifference]".³²

Another important agent of socialization in Ibo land is the age-group system. The importance has already been noticed in the section on Onitsha Ibo. But in the Central Ibo country, besides the normal bureaucratic duties performed by the age groups, "[t]he senior grade, including members of titled societies, was usually concerned with the vital questions of war and peace".³³ There were lower age grades for music, play and so on

which were important agencies of socialization.³⁴ An additional value of the age-group organization is noteworthy: "Each group guarded its prestige very jealously and collectively ostracised a member who through continual misbehaviour brought his grade into disrepute".³⁵ This institution thus played a vital role in guarding the standards of behavior so important to peace and stability of the Ibo community.

In Iboland, women are as organized as the men and they play important political roles. The Right Rev. Bishop Ajayi Crowther, the first Bishop on the Niger summed up the place of women among the Ibo very accurately:

"Among the Egboes,* women hold a very superior rank in the social scale; they are not regarded, as among other tribes, as an inferior creation and doomed to perpetual degradation, but occupy their 'rightful status in society' ..."³⁶

All over Iboland, women belong to different social groups called "Otu Umu Ada". Their organization is sometimes along Village or 'Mba' lines. That is, if women from, say Village 'A' are married to someone in Village 'B', they form an association of women whose Umunna is in Village 'A'. The association holds dual political authority because it can operate in both Villages 'A' and 'B'. This will be developed later in the next section dealing with Colonial Administration, when Ibo women displayed great political resistance to Colonial taxation and expansion into the Ibo heartland.

* Egbo, Igbo and Ibo are the various spellings met in the literature.

BRITISH PENETRATION OF IBO COUNTRY

The abolition of the British slave trade in 1808 somehow transformed the character of British interests on the West coast of Africa. The British then resorted to what they called "legitimate trade" with the peoples of the coast. "Macgregor Laird, the pioneer of British enterprise in this area, obtained in 1857 a subsidy from the British government to enable him to maintain a steamer on the Niger."³⁷ Soon he erected trading stations at Abo, Onitsha and Lokoja and with the help of a freed slave, who later became an Anglican Bishop - Samuel Ajayi Crowther - a mission station was established at Onitsha. Without much resistance, the British entered a treaty with the Obi (King) of Onitsha and his chiefs; it was a treaty of friendship and mutual cooperation, and its preamble reads as follows:

"There shall be peace and friendship between the people of Great Britain and the people of [Onitsha], ... and the people of Great Britain and the people of [Onitsha] shall trade together innocently, justly, kindly and usefully ..."³⁸

The easy conclusion of this treaty meant that once the King and his chiefs welcomed the British, there was little or no resistance from the ordinary citizens. One would, of course, expect this kind of action in a society with a central authority to act on behalf of the entire people. Thus, from this time, the people on this side of the Niger began to witness the dawn of a new epoch, their political institutions, their religion, their trade pattern, all became increasingly affected by alien forces of change.

But, in the Central Ibo republics, the story would be different: how to deal with the legion autonomous entities. Frederick Lugard, the man who "unified" Nigeria, recognized this problem and spelled out vividly Ibo resistance when he wrote:^{*}

"It is one of the sad facts of the story that we had to fight the Igbo for a period of about two decades in the process of dragging them out of their wretched condition into our imperial estate where they now enjoy the benefits of modern civilization."³⁹

Prior to 1902, when the British 'conquered' many areas of Ibo land, there were numerous incidents that proved that the Ibo did not yet want to be "dragged" into the "British imperial estate". But from 1902, the character of the resistance intensified, which gave rise to a series of Anglo-Ibo wars. Prominent among these wars were the Aro Expedition of 1902, the Ahiara Expedition of 1905, the Ekumeku Rebellion and the Owa Revolt of 1904-06, the Ogwashi-Ukwu Revolt of 1909-1910,^{**} and the Igbo Women's Revolt of 1929. For the purpose of this work, only two of these revolts will be dealt with in greater detail, that is, the Ahiara Expedition of 1905 and the Women's Revolt of 1929. This approach is taken because all the encounters had one thing in common - concerted efforts made to defy the imposition of an alien administration on a people that had enjoyed

* Frederick Lugard did not find the Ibo in a wretched condition, he is only being a typical British - very much drunk with cultural arrogance. Any people in the world that ever proved tough for the British to swallow would be seen as wretched, uncivilized and poor.

** These were autonomous republics spread within the Ibo country.

independence from time immemorial.

THE AHIARA EXPEDITION 1905-06

After the destruction of Aro Chukwu Shrine* in 1902, the High Commissioner, Sir Ralph Moore, reported with ample conviction that "an absolute revolution had been carried out in [Igbo] country".⁴⁰ Many British newspapers hailed the operation as salutary, adding that Ibo resistance to the Imperial British penetration had finally been broken.⁴¹ "In a determined attempt to avert possible insurrection, the colonial administration passed the Fire Arms Proclamation or Arms Rule No. 13 of 1902",⁴² intended primarily to disarm the Ibo. Such a rule could have been observed in a society where a central government was in power and had the personnel to police laws. However, this was absent in Ibo land and the results would be obvious.

In 1905, one Dr. Stewart was murdered at a famous market centre in Mbaise-Owerri. According to official records, Dr. Stewart arrived at Owerri (central Ibo) via Bonny (Delta area) on November 13, 1905 en route to Calabar, where he was to serve as a medical officer for Company D, which was engaged in a military expedition.⁴³ But, Dr. Stewart did not join the Company in Calabar since he was killed by angry natives at Ahiara, a historic and very fierce area in Ibo land. Writing some years after the death of Dr. Stewart, the government anthropologist

* Aro Chukwu had great religious significance for the Ibo because of the Chukwu Abiama Shrine. This shrine was a pilgrimage center where Ibos went for special prayers asking for Chukwu's blessings, or vengeance on their enemies.

observed that Stewart was a victim of a mistaken identity: "[H]e was thought to have been the District Commissioner at Owerri"⁴⁴ - a terror to native people. The District Commissioner (D.C.), H.M. Douglas, had a reputation of beating the elders and even thrashing them - an act that would even provoke an Ibo saint. In 1905 for instance, when the Anglican bishop visited Owerri from Onitsha and learnt of the D.C.'s attitude, he sent a pungent note to him:

"From what I have heard from the people as I passed through your District, ... your system of administration appears to be well nigh unbearable. The people complained bitterly of your harsh treatment of them. While those who accompanied me do not cease to speak in the strongest terms of your overbearing manner towards them".⁴⁵

It is of great importance, at this juncture, to note that throughout the Anglo-Ibo hinterland encounters (euphemistically referred to in colonial terms as "pacification"), the colonial administration resorted to a policy of seizing traditionally respected village heads and elders - 'ndi isi ala' - as a means of frightening the inhabitants. Such a policy helped to deepen Ibo hostility and distrust towards the administration. Even Major Gallwey, the Acting Commissioner, sensed this trouble and remarked: "The practice of calling 'chiefs' to meetings and then seizing them ... [as hostages] has resulted in a general distrust of the government and its policy".⁴⁶

It is on this score that one should look at the killing of Dr. Stewart as a retaliation for these deeds, hence Ahiara people sang their

war song, "We have killed the white man who killed our fathers and the elders".⁴⁷

After a short while, a decision to attack Ahiara was made by the Divisional Commissioner, W. Fosbery who spelled out very clearly in his letter to the D.C. at Owerri that the people of Ahiara "are the first on the list to be dealt with during the coming operations and I have no doubt you will exact full reparation for this outrage".⁴⁸ The Acting High Commissioner, J.J. Thornburn shared Fosbery's views and wrote: "The murder of Dr. Stewart was particularly brutal and the disposal of the corpse was unspeakably terrible and calling for the most exemplary punishment".⁴⁹ On December 7, 1905, a punitive military expedition was sent out from Owerri to attack Ahiara. The encounter is well known by every Ibo - part of their oral tradition - and it was said to have been very furious. Because the Ibos were known to be famous in "dug-in warfare", that is fighting from trenches, Major Trenchard, the commander of the colonial force, conceded that Ahiara resistance was bewildering and that the noise made by their seventy-five millimeter guns was "utterly deafening".⁵⁰ In a report to the Colonial Office on the Ahiara Expedition, Thornburn echoed Trenchard's amazement at the encounter: "The opposition to the punitive force is serious and I anticipate that some time must elapse before Ahiara country is adequately punished".⁵¹ After what was reported to be a heavy reinforcement, the colonial army succeeded in occupying the area and Major Trenchard boasted: "I have now been able to deal severe blows to [these people] ... There is not a single town here that has not fired at us ..."⁵²

To further keep an eye on the people, the Colonial Administration opened what was then called a 'Native Court' at Obohia, near Ahiara in 1907 and appointed "Warrant Chiefs" to further keep the people in check. The chiefs they appointed were Onyekwere of Udo and Okpokoro of Onicha⁵³ - both from nearby towns east of Ahiara. It was a great mistake on the part of the Colonial Administration to appoint "chiefs" to rule a chiefless people and open courts for people who, until then, were used to settling their disputes within the village group - Umunna. Naturally, these chiefs had no form of legitimacy and so were not obeyed. People would not go to the court nor would they partake in colonial public works like road construction. It is said that the 'natives' engaged in endless seizure and destruction of colonial agents and eventually the court was closed down and a new one opened at Nguru in 1909 which was completely erased by angry women in 1929.*

The transfer of the court did not improve relations between the administration and the people, for even in 1910 the D.C. at Owerri, L.L. Tew, complained that the Onichas (a town near Ahiara) were "all bad" because they were always in the habit of assaulting court messengers, destroying sign posts, and refusing to attend the native court. And because they would not allow any government agents to pass through their area, Mr. Tew branded them "a menace to travellers".⁵⁴ A similar attitude should be expected in all the areas in which the "pacification" exercise took place. Nevertheless,

* My grandmother told me of this incident and she always boasted of the Colonial arm chair she "grabbed" from the courthouse during the operations. The ruins of the chair can be found in our home today.

the Colonial government was under the impression that tempers were cooling down and that the people were adjusting to the new administration through 'Indirect Rule' by the "man-made" chiefs. Subsequent events between 1910-1929 disproved this conjecture as will be seen in the Ibo Women's Riot of 1929.

THE INDIRECT RULE SYSTEM IN IBO COUNTRY

From the turn of the twentieth century onward, the manner in which African societies adapted to European colonial rule depended in large part on administrative and political models employed by the European powers. There were basically two types of policies of colonial administration established in African colonies. On the one hand was the 'Indirect Rule' system used by the imperial power in Britain, and on the other was the 'Direct Rule' system employed by the French, Belgian, and Portuguese powers. These terms are worth explaining: Direct Rule in colonial terms assumed "that indigenous African authority groups and administrative institutions were incapable of providing the kind of control and political security required by modern colonial regimes".⁵⁵ Because the Africans could not read and write in European languages, it was therefore necessary to rule them directly from Europe with those institutions that had stood the test of modernization, through European officers.

The Indirect Rule system while sharing the same characteristically colonial view that "the political systems of Africa[n] ... societies were not directly adaptable to the needs of modern colonial government, ..." ⁵⁶ also assumed that the day-to-day administration in local African communities would be more efficient if indigenous African rulers performed a wide

range of governmental functions customary to African societies.⁵⁷ Thus, the system sought to preserve the prevailing indigenous authority patterns and make use of rulers and chiefs where they traditionally existed. But where such authority patterns were lacking, the system of indirect rule resorted to 'creating' them by crowning a few 'native' peoples as "Warrant Chiefs" - men who received special socio-political 'blessings' to provide the kind of control and political security required by a modern, British, colonial regime. In colonial Nigeria, some ethnic groups like the Hausa/Fulani, and even the Yoruba, had traditional authority patterns that could readily provide Sultans, Imams, Obas and Chiefs to be used in the new administration. But for such groups as the Ibo, or the Ibibio, where tradition did not provide a reservoir for recruiting chiefs, and where chiefs did not therefore exist, the British created them - the Warrant Chiefs. It was these Warrant Chiefs and the type of administrative instruments they had employed that nearly destroyed British rule in Ibo country.

The major problem for the colonial administration of the Ibos pivoted on the criterion of choice for chiefs. Even though the official policy had endorsed that traditional chiefs and kings be employed in the day-to-day activities of the government, it did not seem, at least in Ibo country, that the colonial administration had a clear-cut plan or system designed specifically to ensure that those chosen for the job were in fact the right men, that is, the traditional representatives of the people. Some examples will clarify this point. "The first Warrant Chief from Ikwo clan in Abakaliki Division was one Anyigo Agwu, of whom it has been said that 'neither he nor his father was a village head before the coming of the

white man'."⁵⁸ After the 'pacification' of Ikwo clan, a meeting of the representatives of its component villages was held and there "the white man just looked at Anyigo Agwu and called him out to be a chief",⁵⁹ because Anyigo Agwu looked like a strong and courageous man who could give effective leadership.⁶⁰ In Ihitte in Okigwe Division, a similar incident took place; the first Warrant Chief was Onuoha Nwosueke, the village crier. He was said to be a very old man who could not take to the bush when the colonial army attacked his people in Onicha Uboma. Consequently, he was captured and ordered to rally his people, which he did by beating his drum as he would do to announce either a general meeting or communal work. To the European officer who saw some of the brave young men respond to the call of the drum, it was a positive proof of Onuoha's legitimate authority over his people. He became a Warrant Chief.⁶¹

Another very interesting case involved an "efulefu" - a social misfit - who was chosen as a warrant chief. This was the Warrant Chief of Umuariam in Obowo Okigwe; here was a man generally considered a social misfit and who had previously been sold to Azumiri merchants as a slave. At Azumiri (coastal region), this man managed to have contact with traders and found his way back home. When the white man asked for a chief, the elders gave him out thinking it was another way of doing away with the man. But when he came back from the white man's dwelling place, he had a piece of paper that made him chief of his people.⁶² It is this type of Warrant Chief that Lord Lugard referred to in his condemnation of the Ibos when he said: "When we asked [the Ibos] for their traditional rulers they pushed forward criminals and nonentities whom they were in no sense pre-

pared to obey".⁶³ In Owerri Division, Njemanze was a very powerful and influential slave-dealer who in pre-British days became known to slave merchants. He had earlier been heard of by the Royal Niger Company (British trading company that had trade monopoly on the Niger), which contacted him through Oguta - one of their coastal stations. During the Aro Expedition of 1901-02, when two colonial military columns heading for Arochuku passed through Owerri, Njemanze was said to have helped provide them with local guides to Bende. After the expedition, now Warrant Chief Njemanze, helped to gather the chiefs of neighboring village groups.⁶⁴ From the foregoing, one can see the type of illegitimacy that surrounded the choice of Warrant Chiefs in Ibo country.

These Warrant Chiefs, it has been said, resorted to all kinds of atrocities against their 'subjects' under the protection of the government civil-military apparatus. The chiefs could order citizens to surrender their wives "because the white man likes them" or to pay special tribute to the chiefs to appease the white man - "Wa Bekee".^{*} The chiefs could annex neighboring towns to enlarge their chiefdoms, and they had special days in the week when their 'subjects' worked for them. Their children were above local customary laws because what ever they did was the way the "white man ordered". They could close and open markets, they

* Information from my grandmother, who died in 1967, aged over 100.

She said that the chiefs were "everything", even "gods". They had more wives than anyone else, they did not marry most of those women, but only ordered husbands to surrender their beautiful women to 'Ndi Eze' - Chiefs.

had special courts in their private 'palaces' where cases which were hitherto tried in the Umunna were to be tried by them exclusively. They appointed their own judges whom they called Headmen - "Edmalla" and the freedom the Ibo man had enjoyed for ages, gradually disappeared. In 1929, the whole system nearly crumbled as a result of the Women's Riot.

THE WOMEN'S RIOT, 1929

By the end of 1929, just when the colonial administration was congratulating itself upon the great success with which the difficult task of introducing direct taxation or Poll tax in the "pacified" provinces of Nigeria had been accomplished, serious disturbances broke out in parts of Iboland. In Owerri area, in the heart of Ibo country, where a particularly dense population inhabits the palm forest, there is a place called Oloko.⁶⁵ In this town, a Warrant Chief, Okugo, under the instructions from the District Officer (D.O.), was trying to assess the taxable wealth of the people. This attempt confirmed rumours that "[t]he Warrant Chiefs ... [had] even ... been bribed by Government to agree to the introduction of taxation"⁶⁶ in Ibo country. Tension was mounting and women began to organize because they were seriously perturbed: "We depend on our husbands, we cannot buy food or clothes ourselves and how shall we get money to pay tax".⁶⁷

Chief Okugo, however, reluctantly was carrying out his assignment as he sent a messenger to do the counting. This man entered a compound and told one of the married women, Mwanyeruwa, who was pressing oil, to count her goats and sheep. She replied angrily, "'Was your mother counted?' at which they closed, seizing each by the throat".⁶⁸ At this moment, the

long awaited opportunity had come for the women. Reaction spread like bush fire all over Ibo country. A deputation of fifty women took a train to provincial headquarters at Port Harcourt to question the Resident - the Highest Colonial Officer in the Province.⁶⁹ From Oloko, women went in all directions, beyond the boundaries of the province and even into neighboring Ibibio country, spreading the rumor, and from a wide area, subscriptions began to come in to Nwanyeruwa who had become a figure of womanhood rising up against oppression.⁷⁰

At Aba - a very important commercial center in Ibo country, some ten thousand women, carrying sticks, singing angry songs against the chiefs and the court system, proceeded to attack the European trading stores and the Barclay's Bank. They also attempted to break into the prison and release the prisoners who were probably held because of their resistance to government policies. After two days of rioting, troops were said to have arrived and dispersed the crowds without any serious casualties.⁷¹ One would not expect government sources to put down any figures on the casualties, but local sources within Ibo country said the number of women shot to death at Aba alone ran into hundreds. Even Lord Lugard referring to this incident, and, of course, in his characteristically imperial manner, acknowledged the gravity of the government reaction to the women. He said: "... in 1929 ... the Igbo [had] the opportunity they had been looking for to overthrow our authority. For the first time in our imperial history we were faced with and insulted by mobs of irate women who marched up and down the country decrying our rule and pulling down local institutions of our authority ...

When the women would not listen to peaceful argument we had to bring them to reason with machine gun and rifle fire".⁷²

However, several government institutions were destroyed as a result of this riot, including the Nguru Native Court as has been earlier stated. It gave the British imperial authorities some insight into the traditional life of the Ibo people. "The comments of local officials on the working of the Native Courts illustrate the difficulties created by this attempt to disregard sociological fact in the interests of administrative convenience."⁷³ In 1926, according to Lugard "... a group of [Igbo] leaders at Onitsha and Okigwi had the temerity to tell Resident W.E. Hunt that it was understandable if the British were taxing the Hausa whom they had conquered but bewildering that they also intended to tax the Igbo whom they had never conquered".⁷⁴ All these incidents have illustrated Ibo resistance to colonial rule and it was not until the colonial authorities devised alternative means of approach, through the missionaries, that the Ibos finally decided "... to partake in the glory of membership of [British] empire on which at that time the sun never set, ..."⁷⁵

THE MISSIONARIES IN IBO COUNTRY: FORMAL WESTERNIZATION

It was the same white man, 'Wa Bekee', who brought with him chiefs, Native courts and taxation into Ibo country, that also brought in the Christian Religion. Within a short period, religion helped to usher in urban settlements, development of new economic system based on a cash nexus, introduction and spread of education - what has generally been referred to as 'Westernization of the Ibo country'. This is not to say

that the Ibo accepted Christianity without reservations; there were fears of it especially since the new movement was related to the government. However, this time the missionaries did not resort to use of force, but simply approached the Ibo as friends. They claimed they believed in one Supreme God and in the equality of all men - a belief that very much attracted the Ibo who believed strongly in equality and the concept of God - Chineke. But ultimately, the Ibo found out that the new religion had destroyed traditional norms and opened new avenues for westernization. In this instance Chinua Achebe presents vividly the Ibo reaction to this new force in his book, Things Fall Apart. In this book, an elderly Ibo cries for what he calls the white man's cleverness and its implications on the Ibo society:

"The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart."⁷⁶

It had been stated earlier that the missionaries came to Onitsha in the 1850's, but not until 1869 did they open their Anglican Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) centres in the interior of the town. Following the example of the C.M.S., the Roman Catholic Missionary, Rev. Lutz arrived in 1885 and concluded an agreement with the King of Onitsha who was happy to receive his new organization.⁷⁷ Educational activities consisted more of teaching the pupils how to read the Bible and communicate to new con-

verts. Besides, most of these activities took place in the Onitsha-Ibo area. It was in this area that the early catechists and headmasters who spread education into the interior of Ibo country were educated, hence "Onitsha became the Cradle of missionary education' in Igbo land".⁷⁸ It was not long after the mission schools were opened that even traditional religious leaders started sending some of their children to the schools. Ezeulu, a native priest, realizing the need to befriend the missionary, sent his son, Oduche, to the white man's school, saying:

"I want one of my sons to join these people [the missionaries] and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the white man today will be saying had we known tomorrow".⁷⁹

Ezeulu was not only interested in his son going to school, but also wanted him to learn the white man's art because that meant power. "When I was in Okperi I saw a young white man who was able to write with his left hand", Ezeulu told his son,

"From his actions I could see that he had very little sense. But he had power; he could shout in my face; he could do what he liked. Why? Because he could write with his left hand. This is why I have called you. I want you to learn and master this man's knowledge so much that if you are suddenly woken up

from sleep and asked what it is you will reply. You must learn it until you can write it with your left hand. That is all I want to tell you".⁸⁰

It was the Catholic Bishop, Shanahan, who actually realized that the conversion of the "pagans" could be hastened through the education of their children. Catholic missionary activities were therefore concentrated in spreading education into the interior through the establishment of schools in all mission centres of the interior. The Catholic Church established parishes under white Priests, Rev. Brothers and Nuns. The parish headquarters became bases for missionary educational and church activities in the village-groups that came under the supervision of each parish priest. The parish headquarters therefore, served as modern centres of church civilization.⁸¹ It is this attitude of the church that embittered British administrators and Lord Lugard did not hide his feelings when he wrote:

"The wrong-headed missionary was as harmful to us as the proverbial serpent. He came dangling western education in all its ramifications before the Ibo. The latter being unduly ambitious lapped up everything the missionary had to offer and soon their heads were swollen with such ideas as democracy, equality, fair play, political sovereignty and all-what-not-ideas which are dangerous in a primitive people suddenly thrust from barbarism into civilization".⁸²

Perhaps Lugard was referring specifically to the Roman Catholic Church

in Ibo land which not only changed the content of religious education to embrace formal education, but also spread schools within such a short span to all corners of Iboland unlike the C.M.S. which was an arm (being an English organization) of the colonial administration.

However, schools did expand very rapidly in Iboland as revealed in the following 1958 government statistics of education in Eastern Nigeria:

(a) Post School Certificate Courses

Igbo area	5
Ibibio-Efik	2
Rivers	1

(b) Approved for West African School Certificate (W.A.S.C.)

Calabar Province	10
Ogoja Province	2
Onitsha Province	11
Northern Onitsha	9
Owerri Province	13
Rivers	6 (of which 5 were in Port Harcourt)

Summary -	Igbo Area	33
	Ibibio-Efik	12
	Rivers	6

(c) Recognised by Government but not approved for W.A.S.C.

Calabar	5 (2 mixed)
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Onitsha	14	Igbo 30
Owerri	16	

(d) List of Teachers Training Institutions

Calabar Province	4	20 Igbo
Onitsha Province	10	
Owerri Province	10	
Ogoja Province	2	

(e) List of Technical and Vocational Schools

Igbo	17
Rivers	1
Ibibio-Efik	2

Source: Government Statistics of Education, 1958, as shown in Ikenna Nzimiro, "The Igbo in the Modern Setting", The Counc, Vol. III, No. 2, Sept. 1971, p. 173.

Figure 2. DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN EASTERN NIGERIA IN 1958.

Westernization through mission schools did not consist of such simple lessons as: 'Jesus Christ is the son of God' and the 'Blessed Virgin Mary is His Mother'. Or 'Lagos is the capital of Nigeria' and 'twenty shillings make one pound'; Westernization meant to the Ibo the desire to participate in those economic activities that brought more monetary reward than the traditional agricultural mode of production. It meant the training of young men in such trades as carpentry, smithing,

tailoring, motor mechanics, radio, watch repairing, whole sale and retail trading, masonry and all kinds of construction jobs. It meant interest in bakery, confectionery, tin-canning and metal works. These activities in turn called for mobility, in fact, urbanization. The high incidence of population density in Iboland, coupled by the fact that the soil in several parts of this country could hardly support more than subsistence agriculture, led many young Ibo to the quest for alternative sources and means of livelihood outside their homeland.⁸³ Stanley Diamond gives further emphasis to this point when he remarks:

"Population pressure on deteriorating forest lands (1,000 plus per square mile) in, for example, Owerri Province at the heart of the Eastern region, had, in conjunction with the social character of the Ibo, led to continuous migration of [the] Ibo to all regions of Nigeria; the largest number of migrants, of course, found their way north since the Region so designated represents three-quarters of the country. Moreover, the educational level of [the] Ibo was higher than that of the average Northerner, enabling them to get jobs in the civil service, trading companies, utilities. Nigeria became, in effect, an Ibo diaspora".⁸⁴

The degree of the Ibo migration from the rural homeland to centres outside their geographical borders can be illustrated in the following statistic:

Figure 3. IGBO URBAN PRESENCE OUTSIDE IGBO LAND: EARLY 1950's

CITY	INDIGENES	PERCENTAGE OF IGBO IN NON-INDIGENOUS POPULATION
Lagos	Yoruba	44.6
Benin City	Edo	53.5
Sapele	Urhobo	46.9
Calabar	Efik	50.7
Kano	Hausa	38.0
Zaria	Hausa	39.0
Kaduna	Mixed	40.7

Source: Population Census of the Western Region of Nigeria 1953 (Lagos: Government Statistics 1953-54); Population Census of Eastern Region of Nigeria 1953 (Lagos: Government Statistics 1953-54); Population Census of Northern Region of Nigeria 1952 (Lagos: Government Statistics 1952-53). Quoted by Ikenna Nzimiro, "The Igbo in Modern Setting", The Conch, Vol. III, No. 2, Sept. 1971, p. 166.

So far this chapter has probed the origin of the Ibos and their ethnic consciousness. It has also shed some light on the Anglo-Ibo relationship - how the Ibos resisted British penetration, abhorred the Indirect Rule with all its manifestations, and later through western religion became 'Westernized'. The effects of Westernization have been partly dealt with in this chapter. The next chapter will deal with the

migration of the Ibos with their Western values, into other parts of Nigeria. Certain crucial questions will then emerge: What was the reaction of the other ethnic groups whom the Ibos opted to live with? What part did the Colonial Administration play in promoting the idea of one Nigeria when the Ibos left the Ibo country for other centers in Nigeria? Did the role of the Colonial Administration and actions of other ethnic groups strengthen or weaken Ibo ethnic consciousness?

FOOTNOTES

1. Elechukwu N. Njaka, Ibo Political Culture (U.S.A.: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 16.
2. See Independent Nigeria: The People of Nigeria (Lagos: Government Printer, 1960), p. 13, which describes the Ibo as of "Egyptian Origin" and as the "lost tribes of Israel - Egyptians who preferred the sun-draped Africa to the vicissitudes of a nebulous Canaan". Also, see article by M.D.W. Jeffreys in Africa, XXI, (1951), p. 2.
3. Njaka, op. cit., p. 18.
4. K. Onwuka Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885: an Introduction to the Economic and Political History of Nigeria (Oxford, 1956), p. 44.
5. C. Thurston Shaw, "Research Note, Bronzes from Eastern Nigeria - Excavations at Igbo-Ukwu", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. II, No. 1, (December 1960), pp. 162-65.
6. A.E. Afigbo, "On the Threshold of Igbo History", The Conch, Vol. III, No. 2 (September 1971), pp. 205-16.
7. Chukwuemeka Onwubu, "Ethnic Identity, Political Integration, and National Development: The Igbo Diaspora in Nigeria", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 13, 1975, p. 402.
8. John E. Flint, Nigeria and Ghana (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1966), p. 63.
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10. Ikenna Nzimiro, Studies in Ibo Political Systems (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1972), p. 3.
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16. Ikenna Nzimiro, op. cit., p. 46.
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18. Ibid., p. 55.
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21. D. Forde and G.I. Jones, "The Ibo and Ibibio-Speaking Peoples of South-Eastern Nigeria", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. III, No. 4 (June, 1974), p. 647.
22. Michael S. O. Olisa, "Political Culture and Political Stability in Traditional Igbo Society", The Conch, Vol. III, No. 2 (Sept. 1971), p. 25.
23. G.I. Jones, "Dual Organization in Igbo Social Structure", Africa (19, April, 1949), pp. 150-166.
24. Michael Olisa, The Conch, Vol. III, No. 2 (Sept. 1971), p. 26.

25. Paul Bohanna, and P. Curtin, Africa and Africans (New York: The National History Press, 1971), p. 143.
26. E.N. Njaka, Igbo Political Culture (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 27.
27. Bohanna and co., op. cit., p. 45.
28. Chinua Achebe, "The Role of the Writer in a New Nation", Nigeria Magazine, No. 81, June, 1964, p. 160.
29. E.N. Njaka, op. cit., p. 55.
30. Ibid., p. 56.
31. Ibid., p. 56.
32. Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1958), p. 17.
33. J.C. Anene, Southern Nigeria in Transition, p. 14.
35. Ibid., p. 14.
36. Crowther as quoted by E.N. Obiechina in The Conch, Vol. III, No. 2, Sept. 1971, p. 15.
37. J.C. Anene, op. cit., p. 39.
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47. Ekechi, op. cit., p. 149.
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50. Ibid., p. 152.
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52. Report dated 22 December 1905, C0520/35, in Ibid., p. 154.
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58. A.E. Afigbo, The Warrant Chiefs (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1972), p. 61.
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69. Ibid., p. 165.
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CHAPTER III

THE MANIFESTATION OF IBO ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

The Nigerian State, as an administrative unit, was a new political phenomenon to all ethnic groups within its umbrella, including the Ibos. People did not transfer their identitive loyalties from Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Ibo, etc., spontaneously to an abstract entity about which they had no prior understanding. They retained their customs, values and life styles as they entered the union. It would be inconceivable to assume that the mere imposition of foreign rule by the British would automatically destroy ethnic consciousness in peoples who could not understand one another; who had had nothing in common in the past; and, who only saw the present association as a political experiment initiated not by themselves, but by the British. To adapt to the association, people were expected to develop new sets of attitudes that were similar to those of the colonial overlords - at least politically.

It is the purpose of this chapter to inquire into the nature of the new political attitudes the Ibos acquired within Nigeria; the nature of their responses to colonial demands, and the manner with which they conducted themselves in urban centers. The effects of these politico-economic activities and the way other ethnic groups perceived the Ibos will be dealt with in this chapter. It is important to note that the acquisition of different political, economic and social attitudes did not necessarily destroy latent ethnic consciousness. However, the re-

sults of these activities could strengthen or weaken ethnic consciousness, depending on how groups viewed their positions. This chapter is, therefore, arguing that the Ibos dispersed to other areas of Nigeria, got actively involved in social, economic, and political activities which strengthened their belief in being Ibo within a free Nigeria, indeed Africa.

It does not require an elaborate investigation into the Ibo society in order to establish why the Ibos migrated to other centres in Nigeria. Scholars of migration have established that certain conditions facing a people might compel them to look for other places to live in. These conditions range from wars, hunger, massacre of a hated group; to such opportunistic ventures as search for new economic, social, political and religious advancement. Examples of these incidents abound in history: the massacre of the Jews in the last two centuries in parts of Europe forced them to look for peaceful settlements elsewhere; the massive religious persecution in Europe in the 16th century forced dissidents to emigrate to the New World in the Americas, e.g., the Puritans; the post World War II depression in Europe drove many Europeans to the United States and Canada; the tense political situation in Southern Africa has encouraged many black Africans in that region to settle in locations in East Africa and elsewhere.

What then pushed the Ibos into other parts of Nigeria? On this score, the celebrated Ibo historian, Kenneth Dike, has suggested that the major determinants are economic and population pressures. Hence he writes:

The density of population which was and still is a main feature of the Ibo country was due in part at least to [the] accession of new blood from the West and North. The Ibos might be ... a prolific race ...

... the most important factor conditioning Ibo history in the nineteenth century and in our own time is land hunger. Yorubaland, occupying a greater area of land, has a smaller population. Hence the Ibos, pressing against limited land resources had, of necessity, to seek other avenues of livelihood outside [their own ethnic homeland].¹

In this regard, and this has been previously stated, Stanley Diamond has seen "... Nigeria [as] in effect, an Ibo diaspora".² The Ibos left their ethnic homeland for other parts of Nigeria; they settled and lived in these areas. However, the Ibos did not "cut the bridge behind them[selves]" - to use the phrase of Chukwuemeka Onwubu - in that they continued to maintain connections with their original place of birth.³ This should be expected since the Ibos were newcomers, could not understand the other groups fully and in fact were treated as "strangers". For example, those Ibos who migrated into the Northern cities - Kano, Zaria, Kaduna, Makurdi, etc. - were confined by the Muslim authorities within the Sabon-Gari (Strangers' quarters). That is to say, the Muslims did not want to mingle with the "invaders" (see below p. 89) whom they often treated with contempt. This attitude reinforced the determination of the Ibos to survive. They stayed and controlled much of the urban economic activity from the meanest jobs

to prestigious ones. They were cleaners, carpenters, cooks for the Europeans, mechanics, building contractors, and at the same time, they provided the largest number of non-indigenous personnel in commercial and governmental establishments.

The Ibo presence was also soon felt in Lagos and other major cities in the West. They were educators, landlords, transporters, private businessmen, workers in private and governmental institutions. The perception of Ibo as 'outsiders' by non-Ibos in other Nigerian cities - mostly in the West and North - heightened latent feelings of Iboness and made them manifest. In the East, the region of the Ibos, perceived economic activities encouraged them to migrate from the rural areas into the cities. According to reliable sources, "Between 1921 and 1952 the rate of population growth in [four] urban centers was 68.8% far higher than anywhere else in Nigeria".⁴ Urban markets became the foci of trading activities and the Ibo did not hesitate to move into these markets both in the local urban centers and abroad (a term mostly used in West Africa) - outside Iboland. "The distinct Igbo trader had links with those at home so that goods purchased in far places, like Northern Nigeria and Lagos, were sent down home for marketing, while goods such as food stuffs from Igboland and environs were relayed back to the North."⁵ Ukwu I. Ukwu describes this 'chain-relation' of Igbo traders in these words:

"A successful trader has a hard core of devoted customers whose loyalty he cultivates by economic inducements such as credits, advance information and first option of fast lines,

as well as by spheres of personal friendship. Formal links exist in the inter-regional trade with Lagos, the Western Region and the Northern Region. These traders in the chief commercial centres in Iboland have corresponding agents in some of the main centres. Their distribution is suggested by local concentration of Ibo-speaking peoples in these areas, the most important being Lagos, Ibadan, Kano, Jos, Zaria, Lafia, Maiduguri, Gusau, Mina, Kafanchan, and Makurdi. The correspondents and agents in Lagos keep their Ibo contacts informed of the latest arrivals in Lagos and often buy and store goods for them to come and collect. With the correspondents and agents in the Northern and Western Regions the relationship is symbiotic."⁶

The systems of apprenticeship whereby established Ibo traders recruited young villagers, often Kinsmen, into the 'trade' business, developed all over Iboland. The apprentices passed periods of trading tutelage where they acquired expertise before they set up their own private business. This system therefore enabled the transfer of lineage members from the villages to the urban centers, which in the long run, led to concentration of certain kinship groups in particular economic activities.⁷ It is said, for example, that Nnewi traders (a people near Onitsha) were noted for their trade in imported motor parts and Onitsha market, the largest in West Africa, was a center for the distribution and sale of motor parts.⁸ Sociologically speaking, trading connections had a great integrative impact on the Ibos as a people. They were looked upon by

others as "grabbers" and "opportunists". Besides, the money they made from trading activities was invested in the education of their children and kinsmen, and in such capital accumulation ventures as manufacturing, the purchase of modern homes and improvement of local communities. As would be expected, the material success of the Ibos in these centers within a short period of time provoked the reaction of other ethnic groups. This will be dealt with in full later in this chapter.

The rise and growth of new urban centers led to a spontaneous growth in ethnic associations. The Ibos in these centers organized themselves into a variety of associations ranging from Family Meetings, Clan Unions, Provincial Unions to an Ibo National Union. It is noteworthy that the Ibos, unlike the other major ethnic groups, have no central authority to rely on. Events quite out of the control of the Ibos brought a kind of 'Iboness' in the urban centers. It has been aptly claimed by social scientists that "[t]he awakening of the Ibos to their common identity owed more to the forces of modernity unleashed by the colonial administration than to any conscious efforts by the Ibos".⁹ By forces of modernity is meant such factors as urbanization which promoted interaction with other non-Ibo groups and Europeans; this gave rise to ethnic competition between groups, and the Ibos were looked at as the most materially successful. For example, the Ibos had "the most extensive hospital facilities in the country by 1965, the largest regional production of electricity in the country since 1954, and the greatest number of vehicle registrations by 1963".¹⁰ The Ibos who worked as clerks, artisans, laborers and petty traders in the urban centers among sometimes hostile neighbors were limited to interacting with people who spoke the

Ibo language, since that was the only way to survive in these 'foreign' centers.

Another factor that fostered the development of Ibo identity was the perception of Ibo similarity by outsiders. Because the colonial administration had difficulty bringing the Ibos under the British colonial umbrella, several surveys and studies were undertaken to enable this administration to learn more about the sociopolitical arrangements of the Ibos. "These surveys and later research undertaken by missionaries and scholars emphasized the linguistic and cultural uniformities in the area."¹¹ In the cities, many foreigners including the British, treated the Ibos with contempt and this helped to cement Ibo feelings of being a disliked group and their shared feelings of amity for each other. British creator of Nigeria, Frederick Lugard, puts the Anglo-Ibo relations clearly when he says:

"It is known to all candid students of African affairs that we, the British, show great attachment to our ... colonial peoples. With the Igbo, however, the situation seems somewhat different. From the beginning of our direct contact with this people, relations have been marked by suspicion and tension as a result of which we have found it impossible to extend to them that fatherly love and care which characterise our relationship and policy towards our other ... wards [like the Hausa/Fulani]".¹²

This British lack of "love and care" for the Ibo coupled with the attitude of the other Nigerian ethnic groups helped the Ibos to organize unions.

Ibo ethnic unions or associations in the urban centers in the early twentieth century were aimed at providing a sense of security for the Ibo immigrants. The ethnic unions exhibited many of the same characteristics as the commercial enterprises linked with the "homeland". James Coleman has outlined some of these characteristics:

- (i) Mutual aid and protection in the urban centers of temporary residence and employment. This normally includes sustenance during unemployment, solicitude and financial assistance in case of illness, and the responsibility for obsequies and repatriation of the family of the deceased in the event of death.
- (ii) Acceleration of the acculturation process. The new tastes; ideas, and aspirations (including material wants and political consciousness) acquired by the "sons abroad" have been and are communicated to the home villages through tribal unions.
- (iii) Medium for re-integrating the individual employed in an impersonal urban city by permitting him to have the essential "feeling of belonging".¹³

Perhaps it is worth considering the structure and organization of a few of the Ibo Family, village and clan unions. This will not only help in providing a thorough understanding of Ibo organizational behavior, but will also show why the Ibos modernized so rapidly in the way they did; and why other groups did not like them. In this regard, modernization is equated with greater educational opportunities, provision of infrastructure like good roads, communication networks, personal housing schemes, etc.

The people of Abiriba town live in Bende Division of Ibo country. They are known all over Iboland for their industry and aspiration for material wealth. By 1927, a large proportion of Abiriba men and women who were previously engaged in local trade at home could be noticed in many of the major centers in Eastern Nigeria. By 1941, the Abiriba Communal Improvement Union (A.C.I.U.) was inaugurated with varied objectives.¹⁴ A rough census taken by the A.C.I.U. in 1941 showed that 1,381 Abiriba men and women had left Abiriba to trade and seek jobs in towns throughout the Eastern Region and in Lagos.¹⁵ The motto of the A.C.I.U. was "Self-help is the sure path to success", and the aims and objectives in the A.C.I.U.'s constitution were geared towards development. These aims and objectives included the following:

- (1) To cater [to] the welfare of the Abiriban people wherever they may be;
- (2) To promote and preserve the aspects of Abiriban culture and tradition which are in keeping with modern times;
- (3) To promote and encourage community development in Abiriba;
- (4) To promote the economic well-being of the Abiriban people;
- (5) To encourage the education of our people at all levels. To this end, the Union may establish Education[a] Institutes in Nigeria, establish Education Committees to advise on matters relating to education policy, offer scholarships to deserving sons and daughters of Abiriba and other citizens of Nigeria as far as Education Policy of the Union shall permit;
- (6) To promote peace, unity and harmony among Abiriban people at

home and abroad and between Abiriba and other clans of Nigeria.¹⁶

In keeping with the promotion of educational opportunities, since the Colonial Administration gave little emphasis to education in Iboland, the A.C.I.U. opened up the Enuda College in Abiriba in 1954. Almost simultaneously, a Town Hall was built by the Okezie age set (see note 17) under the auspices of the Union. In this manner, Abiriba acquired a post office, a hospital and a second secondary school.¹⁷ Between 1944 and 1946, the Union extended some assistance to students to complete their secondary education; and in order to provide well-trained staff for the the school, A.C.I.U. awarded scholarships for higher education. "They enabled two students to attend Edinburgh University in 1946, one to attend University College, Ibadan, in 1948, and two to attend Howard University in 1948".¹⁸ At present, three schools in Abiriba owe their existence to A.C.I.U.: Enuda Primary School, Enuda College, and Egwuena Girls' Secondary School.

The organizational structure of the A.C.I.U. was typical of most Ibo organizations anywhere in Nigeria. Because the Ibos lacked an ethnically centralized mode of organization as could be found among the Yorubas or the Hausa/Fulani, they adopted the British organizational style. There were elected officers, minute books - in fact all that any European organization could do - except that the Ibo language was used most of the time. "A typical structural characteristic of the A.C.I.U. (or any other Ibo Union) included the appointment of a full-time, paid administrative secretary and the frequency of general meetings."¹⁹ In addition to the A.C.I.U.

home branch at Abiriba, numerous other autonomous branches existed in all the major centers where Abiriba people were domiciled. "The Union held two general meetings or conferences each year - during the last week in August or the first week in September, and during late December or early January at Abiriba - to which each branch and the auxiliary women and youth organizations sent from two to four delegates."²⁰

The people of Afikpo, like their Abiriba counterparts, developed improvement associations for the development of their own group. The Afikpo people are Eastern Ibos, who live within the administrative jurisdiction of what the British called Afikpo Division. Prior to the end of World War II, several villages in Afikpo had established village or Family Unions basically with improvement objectives. The Afikpo Town Welfare Association (A.T.W.A.) resulted from the mass arrest of a group of Afikpo fishermen in Umon on the Cross River because of quarrels over fishing rights. To save the fishermen and prevent such an incident from recurring in the future, "An Afikpo man working at a trade-union post in Aba, who had travelled widely in the course of his work and was in contact with many Afikpo communities outside Afikpo, realized the need for a protective union to aid Afikpo people living and working abroad".²¹ In March 1950, A.T.W.A. was born and officers were elected. "By the time of the first annual meeting, over ~~£~~[₦] 280 had been collected in dues and donations."²² The activities of this association since its inception have characterized it as progressive, especially in the field of education. Among its successful contributions to Afrikpo development include:

(a) Work projects. The union has effectively rebuilt the Afikpo main market; it has constructed new roads and cycle tracks within Afikpo

villages.

(b) Moral issues. The A.T.W.A. outlawed all those customs that were not deemed progressive by the people, like nudity of young unmarried women or their wearing of beads alone.

(c) Trade. The A.T.W.A. helped traders enforce certain protective regulations centering around non-competition and mutual aid.

(d) Educational activities. The A.T.W.A. encouraged the extension of scholarships to their sons and daughters and felt that scholarships should be the primary purpose of the union.²³

Improvement Unions in Iboland maintained a diffusion process which involved three phases of integration. The first was the federation of all branches abroad of the same Union; the federation of the federated branches abroad with the home branch; and, the formation of an all-tribal federation. The procedure was for members originating from the same region to set up regional bodies to which representatives from the home town and clan associations were elected. These in turn set up the organization covering the whole tribe. Delegates from regional associations sat on the main committee, and once a year at the annual general meeting of this central organization any member could attend.²⁴ The structural arrangement of the Ibo Improvement Unions, therefore, provided a ready-made network of communication between the Ibos abroad and those at home. It served as a great integrative force.

The manner with which the Ibos conducted their affairs in Nigerian urban centers provoked criticisms from other ethnic groups. To most people, the Ibo was a "grabber", a hungry man, an "opportunist". As an Efik ob-

server put it:

Sometimes the Ibo, like the Jews, are called blood-curling grabbers; sometimes they are referred to as adventurous and hard-working; sometimes they are satirized as mean, cunning, unreliable and nauseatingly arrogant ...²⁵

A Yoruba contractor who has had Ibos work for him describes his feelings a bit differently:

I don't like the Ibos as a people because they show too crude a breeding. But they are very fine workers; they don't mind working as long as you are prepared to pay them. My Yoruba people are too proud, and worse still lazy. If I were to depend on my people by now I would have packed up my trade.²⁶

The combined forces of modernization, more especially the persistent demands for labour by the colonial economic and administrative network, created competition for valuables - contracts, local trade, clerical jobs - which played a large part in making ethnic identification more manifest. Economic conflict with other groups in Nigeria might arise because of competition between ethnic groups for empty lands in their neighborhood. But the Ibos did not engage in this conflict with any group; rather they engaged in what to them was legitimate competition for trade in commodities. A writer already cited has portrayed the economic relations between the Ibo and the Efik of Calabar in the following manner:

The role of the Ibo in the internal economy of Calabar, a town

of close proximity to Ibo territory is of profound significance. At first their main articles of trade consisted of stock-fish and clothing materials which they bought from European stores. They became the middlemen thus ousting the natives from their historic preserve. As peddlars they penetrated every corner of Efik plantation, making friends and enemies as they went along. Before the end of the last war their economic interests had widened; stock-fish and clothing materials were to them too narrow a compass. New grounds [sic] had to be broken and extended. And to the surprise and annoyance of the indigenous natives the Ibo plunged, without reservation, into the selling of consumption goods [such] as yam, garri, crayfish, fresh and smoked fish, including all sorts of spices and greens. All these with the exception of the first two, yam and garri, were, and are still to the natives, the preserves of their womenfolk ... When the Calabar-Mamfe road was being built the majority of the labourers were Ibo. This gave them a vantage point to establish contacts with the local people, the Ekoi, whom the Ibo who subsequently arrived found a willing clientele. Soon the traders have established an Ibo settlement; farming is undertaken as an ancillary activity. The local hunters instead of carrying their kill to Calabar as they hitherto had done now sell to the Ibo who will smoke the meat and retail it to Efik housewives at prices considered exorbitant if not prohibitive.²⁷

In this situation, conflict or ethnic hatred arises if one group becomes very conscious of the fact that the terms of exchange are becoming unfair, either because the other group is alleged to be making an unduly excessive profit (as in the case of the sale of smoked meat to Calabar referred to above), or because it is actually taking over the place of the first (as in the case of the Efik women food sellers).

In the Northern centers of Nigeria, reaction against the Ibos was felt in almost all the major cities. The reason was the same - Ibos were trading and expanding very rapidly. In fact, the Ibos were looked upon as invaders. Mallam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (who was to become the first Prime Minister of Nigeria) made this clear in 1948 when he said:

... The Southern tribes (Ibos in particular) who are now pouring into the North in ever increasing numbers, and are more or less domiciled here, do not mix with the Northern people ... and we in the North look upon them as invaders.²⁸

Earlier in October 1945, the Hausa and the Ibo in the city of Jos (Northern Nigeria) fought one another for days. The reason was economic, though it had some political underpinnings since the colonial administration was alleged to have been involved behind the scenes. This point will be clarified below. Jos has been a mining area and a region attractive for Europeans because of its mild weather. "The Ibos arrived (in Jos) in large numbers after the railway line from Port Harcourt reached Jos in 1927."²⁹ These Ibo immigrants were miners, government workers and petty traders. By the end of World War II, the economic life of Jos had diversified into

private transportation between North and South, manufacture of certain goods like tin cans, etc. Again, the war period witnessed a large influx of Ibos into the area. Prior to the war, the Yoruba and the Hausa were the two major African entrepreneurial groups in Jos. The post-war influx of Ibos meant more competition within the Hausa-Yoruba commercial oligopoly. The Hausa-Ibo conflict in October 1945 confirmed this assertion. (This will be dealt with below.)

As far as the Colonial regime is concerned, the Ibos had exerted tremendous political pressure on the British through their ever-increasing presence in the major cities in Nigeria. In June 1945, a nation-wide strike frustrated and nearly paralysed economic activities in Nigeria for more than a month; it was viewed by the regime as Ibo-inspired even though the objectives and organizations transcended ethnic divisions. The strikers, who were mainly Southern Ibos, were working in government establishments, notably the Posts and Telegraphs (P & T), the railways, and the ports. They had been "performing services indispensable to the economic and administrative life of the country".³⁰ Earlier in 1945, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe had toured the North to arouse national feelings and mobilise support for the demands of self-government from the British. For all these reasons, the Ibo became visible targets for the release of administrative frustrations, since Azikiwe himself was also Ibo.

With regard to the Hausas, Leonard Plotnicov writes of an argument which developed "between an Ibo and a Hausa trader, both of whom sold potatoes. Mutual abuse led to blows, at which point the men were restrained by their fellow tribesmen".³¹ A verbal argument occurred and

large crowd gathered; there was an exchange of blows. While Alhaji Inusa, leader of the potato dealers, was imploring the crowd to disperse, one of the Ibo lumber dealers, Joseph Onyema arrived. He and Alhaji Inusa started quarrelling. None of them could control the crowd, and in the ensuing confusion, Alhaji Inusa was struck on the head and he fell unconscious. The angry response spread like a bush fire - the Hausas went after Ibos, shouting that the Alhaji had been killed. The Ibos including Joseph Onyema, were chased until Onyema, who had tried to quell the fighting was beaten mercilessly and left lying on the street unconscious. One of the Hausas who had taken part in the chase against the Ibos told this source:

"When we returned from the Roman Catholic Church (where Ibos had run in but were refused refuge) a D.O. came and told us the Ibos had killed one of our brothers, then he gave instructions to beat Ibos. From there the Hausas united and began beating Ibos".³²

The belief that a British district officer (D.O.) had incited the Hausas to fight the Ibos at an early stage of the quarrel was widespread and "cannot be ruled out in view of the utter absence of any government record of the conflict"; and from what the above Hausa said.³³ An African, from Ghana, who had spent many years in Jos and who sensed the negative Anglo-Ibo relations said to Plotnicov: "The English didn't like the Ibos at that time because Zik (Azikwe) was then agitating to throw the English out of the country. The Hausas were then the Englishman's pet".³⁴ The cost in Ibo lives and property as a result of the Hausa attacks was

said to be staggering. "Wares identified with Ibo market women, such as gari (cassava flour), stock-fish, and palm oil, were scattered within and outside the market; sheds and stalls were destroyed or damaged"; outside the market zone it was said that "Hausa[s] surprised Ibo in the streets, their houses, and their places of business, to shower them with blows and throw their belongings in all directions".³⁵ Although there was no official estimate by the government on the amount of damage done to Ibos as a result of the attack, sources close to Eastern Nigeria maintained:

"At Jos in 1945, a sudden and savage attack by Northerners took the Easterners completely by surprise, and before the situation could be brought under control, the bodies of Eastern men, women and children littered the streets and their property worth thousands of pounds reduced to shambles".³⁶

In fact, there were sources which claimed that several bodies, mostly Ibos, were dropped into abandoned mine pits or taken into the bush for the hyenas to feast on.³⁷ To further provoke the Hausas against the Ibos, there were Europeans who were alleged to have been spreading false rumours about wounded Hausas: "Several Europeans alleged that some Hausa had died in hospital, not because their wounds were fatal but because the nurses were Ibo";³⁷ that is to say, that Ibo nurses were killing Hausas admitted to hospitals. That this statement could be made by the very Europeans who were seen as the "fathers" of African colonial peoples, epitomized the alleged hatred European officers felt towards the Ibos.

Another attack on the Ibos occurred in 1953, at Kano - a city in the Central zone of Northern Nigeria. There were many political antecedents that finally gave rise to this disturbance. For the purpose of analysis, only a few of them will be dealt with in this section; the rest will be elaborated on in Chapter IV of this work. The MacPherson Constitution of 1951 had given broader participatory rights to most Nigerians, yet the details of application fell short of the eventual self-government sought by nationalist leaders, notably those from the East and West.³⁸ Meanwhile, there had been a strong debate in the House of Representatives in Lagos on the issue resolving that Nigeria be self-governing in 1956. It was said that Northern Nigerian representatives refused their support for the motion on self-government, with their leader Alhaji, the Sardauna of Sokoto saying:

The North does not intend to accept the invitation to commit suicide ... No ... [one] can, therefore, criticize the Northern Legislators for refusing to associate themselves with such an arbitrary motion fixing as it does, a definite date for the attainment of national self-government.³⁹

The refusal of the Northern delegates to support this motion led to resignations by ministers from the East and West, and to a boycott of the concurrent deliberations in the House by representatives of these two regions. Two cabinet ministers who had resigned reported their grievances to the House that "the Northern Ministers had been frustrating Nigeria's true nationalists by continuing [sic] voting with the British official ministers".

"We refused", said Bode Thomas, "to associate ourselves with Africans who have not got the guts to speak their mind."⁴⁰ Samuel L. Akintola, then deputy leader of the Action Group (A.G.) declared: "I am not appointed an Imperialist Minister to do the will of the Imperialist agents in Nigeria".⁴¹ These mounting tensions finally found expression in Northern Nigeria, where in Kano City, Hausa mobs set out to attack Ibos within their community.

The crisis began by mid-May 1953 but spread rapidly in the city. It was said that the Action Group had scheduled a public meeting in Kano on May 16th and the Hausa/Fulani sympathetic to the Northern Peoples Congress (N.P.C.), sparked off a confusion that led to a collective outburst.⁴² Mallam Inuwa Wada, the Secretary of the Kano Branch of the N.P.C. had earlier called a political meeting on May 14th, where he "made a very ill-advised and provocative speech to Native Administration sectional heads at the Works Depot, demanding that the staff should absent themselves from work on the forthcoming Saturday in protest at the [A.G.] meeting".⁴³ Due to alleged strong political pressure by the N.P.C. hierarchy exerted on the Colonial District Officer, Mr. Purdy, the permit already granted for the A.G. meeting was cancelled. And in an official statement over the air just a few hours before the meeting was to start, the D.O. said:

Because of this growing tension, the Kano Native Authority was compelled to withdraw the permit for the meeting to take place ... The organized demonstrations against the chiefs and other Northern representatives in Lagos [at the last House of Representatives

meeting] and the organized Press Campaign against the Northerners have caused so much popular resentment that it has become clear that if the Action Group meeting is to be held in Kano, then, breaches of the peace are likely to be committed. Should this meeting, scheduled for today, be held, there are indications that a spontaneous and therefore uncontrolled demonstration will occur.⁴⁴

The cancellation of this permit generated strong political protest from Southerners (Easterners and Westerners) who were opposed to the views of the N.P.C. To them "Southern nationalists should be given a chance to counteract some of the misleading propaganda of the N.P.C. ... The fact that certain Northerners were booed in the South was not sufficient ground for depriving the delegates of the opportunity for addressing the mass meeting".⁴⁵ This protest notwithstanding, the A.G. meeting was not allowed to be held.

At about 15.00 hours small groups of Northerners began to move up Court Road into Sabon Gari towards the Colonial Hotel where, and at the time when, the Action Group meeting was to take place ... Soon afterwards about twelve horsemen and 100 persons on foot, some armed with bows and arrows, demonstrated in front of the Colonial Hotel ... More and more Northerners in small groups now began to concentrate in Sabon Gari and by 15.30 there was an estimated crowd of about 2,000, many mounted and the majority armed in some way or other ...⁴⁶

Dissatisfied by the presence of the police and the declaration of a state of emergency, the Hausas returned to Fagge (a local community), where atrocious slaughter of Ibos living in that area took place. A Northern blacksmith who had observed the atrocities at Fagge had this to say:

I occupy the house next door to the one where the Ibo was burnt. [At] about 4 p.m., on Sunday, 17th May, 1953, I returned from Fagge, and found the area near my house full of armed Hausas - there were at least 200 - making a great noise and trying to break into houses. I stopped at the door of a house belonging to an Ibo named Frank where there were some Ibos hiding and prevented anyone from entering. I then saw rioters break into the house opposite, where an Ibo named James lived and carry off his goods. About 5 p.m. I saw flames rise from the house and the people who had broken in ran off ...⁴⁷

It would seem as if what was thought to be a Northern and Southern affair had been principally directed against the Ibos, because "the streets of Fagge were stormed with packs of Northern rebels armed and shouting",⁴⁸ as they charged along: "the Ibos had killed all the Northerners in the Sabon Gari and ransacked their houses ... We must kill the pagans before they kill us ..."⁴⁹ At last they raided the homes of Ibos and "it was reported that fifteen more Ibos had been brutally murdered, ten of their bodies subsequently burnt and thrown in or near the Gogan stream bed which flanks the western outskirts of the suburb".⁵⁰ In addition, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto recalls in his autobiography that

"here in Kano, as things fell out, [sic] the fighting took place between the Hausas ... and the Ibos; the Yorubas were oddly enough out of it".⁵¹

The ethnic wars against the Ibos notwithstanding, the Ibos were determined to fight for a free and independent Nigeria, hoping that through education of the masses, people would learn to tolerate one another regardless of ethnic differences. On this basis, the Ibos encouraged the spreading of schools in Nigeria including the North and West. As one Ibo leader put it: "Give a boy a good secondary education and he can rise to any height in the world without being dragged down by the dead weight of inferiority complex".⁵² The sincerity of the Ibos in this regard, according to Coleman, could not be questioned in the light of the nondiscriminatory policy of the Ibo school in Kano, an institution which became a center of enlightenment for the children of all Nigerian ethnic groups in that education-starved city of the North.⁵³ It was a genuine demonstration of Pan-Nigerianism by the Ibos, especially in view of the fact that no other ethnic group in Nigeria tried to open such institutions in Iboland. Elaborating on the Pan-Nigerianism, Coleman believes that "the Pan-Nigerian ideal was a more emphatic objective of the Ibo and of other [groups] from the Eastern Region ..."⁵⁴

In the Western part of Nigeria, as in the North, relations were not cordial between the Ibos and the Yorubas. There were various reasons for this: there were many Ibos in parts of Yorubaland and with their entrepreneurial zeal established Yorubas felt challenged. A few Ibos in Yoruba cities were landlords and many were civil servants. Again, the Yorubas had always felt important in Nigeria since they were more Wester-

nized than any other group in Nigeria; the subsequent rapid westernization of the Ibos also constituted a challenge, at least, politically. "When Yoruba men were obtaining their education in England", for instance, "the Ibo on the whole were still living their isolated life in their small village communities".⁵⁵ In 1911, there were only 264 Ibos in Lagos, but by 1951 there were 26,000 of them in Lagos alone.⁵⁶ By great energy and tremendous material sacrifices of village and town unions, as already stated, and through scholarships and other forms of aid, Ibos were able to reduce the gap between them and the Yorubas educationally, so "that by the late 1930's there were more Ibos than Yorubas at most of the important Nigerian schools".⁵⁷ When in 1935, Sir Francis Ibiām,* the first Ibo medical doctor, returned from Scotland, some progressively-minded Ibos in Lagos sought and formed, through the already existing clan unions, what became known as the Ibo Union in Lagos. The main purpose of this Union was to advance Ibo people, most especially in the field of education. As one of the early advocates of this Union put it:

"... education is the only real agent that will give rebirth to the dying embers of the Ibo national zeal ... It will be the means to free Ibos from the throes of both mental and moral thralldom and I see no better place to start the work ... than Lagos".⁵⁸

* He sent back his medal to the Queen of England during the Nigerian-Biafra war in protest for British involvement in the war. He therefore preferred being called Dr. Akanu Ibiām - the name he maintains till this day. He was the Governor of Eastern Nigeria.

During the period 1944-1947, the Ibo Federal Union under the leadership of the Lagos branch made great efforts towards the realization of Ibo educational plans.⁵⁹ However, during the same period, the Lagos branch of the Union became one of the most active member organizations supporting the N.C.N.C. (National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, later National Convention of Nigerian Citizens). This aspect of the Union will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter IV.

In the Summer of 1948, Ibo-Yoruba tension could be felt anywhere in Nigeria. Because both groups were relatively well educated, it was more of an intellectual warfare than the physical massacre of human lives that characterized the Ibo-Hausa conflicts. Thus, in 1948, through the formation of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa - a Yoruba cultural organization that later became the Action Group - Yorubas were able to express collectively their anti-Ibo feelings:

We were bunched together by the British who named us Nigeria. We never knew the Ibos, but since we [have] come to know them we have tried to be friendly and neighbourly. Then came the Arch Devil [Azikiwe] to sow the seeds of distrust and hatred ... We have tolerated enough from a class of Ibos ... who have mortgaged their thinking caps to Azikiwe and his hirelings.⁶⁰

Statements of this nature by the Yorubas and retaliatory remarks by the Ibos marked a kind of press war in the Nigerian media, especially between the West African Pilot and the Daily Service - the former serving the interests of the N.C.N.C. and the latter those of the (A.G.) Action

Group. Replying to some of the statements by the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the West African Pilot declared:

"Henceforth, the cry must be one of battle against Egbe Omo Oduduwa [not physical fight though], its leaders at home and abroad, up hill and down dale in the streets of Nigeria and in the residences of its advocates ... It is the enemy of Nigeria; it must be crushed to the earth ... There is no going back, until the Fascist Organization ... has been dismembered".⁶¹

The 'political war' between the Yorubas and the Ibos, between Western Nigeria and the East, was further institutionalized when in 1951, Obafemi Owolowo inspired and molded a new political party out of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, to challenge the N.C.N.C. This will also be elaborated on in the next chapter.

This chapter has shown how the Ibos, who were previously in rural communities in their towns and villages in Ibo country, gradually converted Nigeria into an Ibo diaspora. The results of Ibo patterns of migration, economic activities, level of education, positions in colonial jobs, religious belief, etc., have been considered. It is noteworthy that these activities - 'Westernization' - did not promote unity between the Ibos and the other ethnic groups, contrary to Karl Deutsch's contention that it would.⁶² Rather, what this did was to promote "primordial sentiments"⁶³ in Nigeria with the result that latent Iboness was made more manifest. In this regard, ethnic images were given an extra distinctiveness, thereby creating a "we"-others, and "they"-Ibos mentality.

Robin Luckham puts this situation more accurately when he says:

Sometimes the identities of others may be used as a butt for extra-punitive hostility, anxiety and fear ...; sometimes to define the situation created by the arrival of new immigrant groups, like the Ibos in the North [of Nigeria]; sometimes as a shorthand for the conflict created by the competition for economic resources and jobs; and sometimes politicians have deliberately manipulated such images to widen their own support, as when Chief Akintola launched his onslaught on the Ibos in 1964 [or the image of the Ibos projected by the colonial administration in Nigeria].⁶⁴

From all these it is evident that the hypothetical myths surrounding "modernization" or "Westernization", (Western writers often use these terms interchangeably) and "integration" did not hold for the Nigerian situation. All it did was exacerbate ethnic conflicts as has been seen.

The next chapter will focus on ethnicity and politics in Nigeria. In this perspective attempts will be made to study the three major political parties in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the N.C.N.C., to see the nature of their ethnic implications. This will aid in relating political parties to political integration or disintegration of Nigeria.

FOOTNOTES

1. Kenneth Onwuka Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1835: An Introduction to the economic and political history of Nigeria (Britain: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 28.
2. Stanley Diamond, Nigeria: Model of a Colonial Failure (New York: 1967), p. 43.
3. Chukwuemeka Onwubu, "Ethnic Identity, Political Integration, and National Development: The Igbo Diaspora in Nigeria", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 13, 1975, p. 403.
4. Ikenna Nzimiro, "The Igbo in the Modern Setting", The Conch, Vol. III, No. 2, September 1971, p. 167.
5. Ibid., p. 169.
6. Ukwu I. Ukwu, Markets in Iboland (Nigeria: University of Ibadan Press, 1969), p. 175.
7. Ikenna Nzimiro, op. cit., p. 169.
8. Ibid., p. 169.
9. Audrey C. Smock, Ibo Politics: The Role of Ethnic Unions in Eastern Nigeria (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 7.
10. Paul Anber, "Modernization and Political Disintegration: Nigeria and the Ibos", The Journal of Modern African Studies, 5, 2(1967), p. 164.
11. Smock, op. cit., p. 8.
12. The Conch, p. 153. Also see E. Wayne Nafziger, "Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria", The Journal of Modern African Studies, 11, 4(1973), pp. 518-519.
13. James S. Coleman, "The Role of Tribal Associations in Nigeria", West African Institute of Social and Economic Research Ibadan (Nigeria: 1953), pp. 63-68.

14. Audrey Smock, op. cit., p. 27.
15. Ejim Akuma, "Administrative Report of the Abiriba Improvement Union 1942" (memo) as quoted in Ibid., p. 29.
16. "Constitution of the Abiriba Communal Improvement Union" (memo) in Ibid., p. 39.
17. Ibid., pp. 32-33; the Okazie Age Set in Abiriba is one of many such groups in that town - a group of men and women usually within a certain age bracket, which identifies itself with traditional names.
18. Ibid., p. 33.
19. Ibid., p. 34.
20. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
21. Simon Ottenberg, "Improvement Associations Among the Afikpo Ibo", Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, Vol. XXV, No. 1, January 1955; pp. 15-16.
22. Ibid., p. 17.
23. Ibid., pp. 19-21.
24. Kenneth Little, West African Urbanization (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 33-34.
25. Eyo B.E. Ndem, Ibos in Contemporary Nigerian Politics (Onitsha (Nigeria): Etudo Press Ltd., 1961), p. 16.
26. Ibid., p. 17; perhaps the reference to the Ibos as showing 'crude breeding' is the fact that they lacked what a Hausa or Yoruba would call 'discipline' and "respect" for a central authority, e.g., the Oba or Sultan.

27. Ibid., pp. 17-18.
28. Mallam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Legislative Council Debate, March 1948, quoted in Bernard Nkemdirim, Social Change and Political Violence in Colonial Nigeria (Britain: Authur Stockwell Ltd., 1975), p. 42.
29. Leonard Plotnicov, "An Early Civil Disturbance: the 1945 Hausa-Ibo riot in Jos", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1971, p. 299.
30. James S. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), p. 259.
31. Leonard Plotnicov, op. cit., p. 301.
32. Ibid., p. 301.
33. Ibid., p. 301.
34. Ibid., p. 301.
35. Ibid., p. 302.
36. Crisis 1966 Nigeria Pogrom: The Organized Massacre of Eastern Nigerians (ENUGU, 1966), Vol. III, p. 2.
37. Leonard Plotnicov, op. cit., p. 303.
38. For a detailed account of this incident, see Bernard Nkemdirim, Social Change and Political Violence in Colonial Nigeria (Great Britain: Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd., 1975), pp. 65-84. Also see Kalu Ezara, Constitutional Development in Nigeria (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 105-153.
39. Quoted in Bernard Nkemdirim, pp. 68-69.
40. The Daily Times, April 1, 1953, as quoted in Ibid., p. 70.
41. Ibid., p. 70.

42. Ibid., p. 72.
43. A Report on the Kano Disturbances (Nigeria: The Government Printer, 1953), p. 7.
44. The Daily Times, May 18, 1953, as quoted by Bernard Nkemdirim, p. 74.
45. West African Pilot, May 19, 1953.
46. A Report on the Kano Disturbances, p. 9.
47. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
48. Bernard Nkemdirim, op. cit., p. 82.
49. A Report on the Kano Disturbances, p. 17. It must be realized that the term 'pagan' refers to (in Hausa usage) those who do not identify with Mohammedanism. In this regard, Ibos would be 'pagans' while the Yorubas would not because they had 33% of their population as Muslims - see Richard L. Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 247.
50. Nkemdirim, op. cit., p. 83.
51. Quoted in Frederick Forsyth, The Making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story (England: The Chaucer Press Ltd., 1977), p. 23.
Also see note 49 on religious grounds.
52. James S. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, p. 340.
53. Ibid., p. 341.
54. Ibid., p. 339.
55. Frederick A.O. Schwartz, Jr., Nigeria: The Tribes, the Nation, or the Race - The Politics of Independence (U.S.A.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965), p. 66.
56. Ibid., p. 67.
57. Ibid., p. 67; also see Wayne Nafziger (note 64 below), p. 528.

58. The Nigerian Daily Telegraph, Feb. 3, 1933, cited in Coleman, op. cit., p. 340.
59. Ibid., p. 341.
60. Oluwole Alakija, "Egbe Omo Oduduwa Monthly Bulletin 1" (Dec. 1948), p. 4, quoted in Ibid., p. 346.
61. West African Pilot, August 30, 1948, in Ibid., p. 346.
62. Karl W. Deutsch, "The Growth of Nations: Some Recurrent Patterns of Political and Social Integration" in Jackson, R.J. and Stein, M.B., Issues in Comparative Politics: A Text with Readings (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971), pp. 129-144.
63. Clifford Geertz, "The integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States", Finkle, J.L. and Gable, R.W. (eds.), Political Development and Social Change (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971), pp. 655-669.
64. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military: A Sociological Analysis of Authority and Revolt 1960-67 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 223; also see E. Wayne Nafziger, "The Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria", The Journal of Modern African Studies, 11, 4(1973), p. 508, p. 527, where he discusses this idea of perception of one group by others because of modernization.

CHAPTER IV
THE EFFECTS OF ETHNICITY ON POLITICAL INTEGRATION OR DISINTEGRATION
OF NIGERIA

From the early stages of different ethnic contacts in Nigeria, fear of and distrust for one another characterized the Nigerian politico-economic scene. Although all these groups tended to express dislike for and fear of colonial domination, the degree to which these feelings were projected differed from group to group. In other words, external threat from the British did not build a Nigerian "we" feeling on the part of the ethnic groups, hence politics was not viewed from a national perspective. That is to say, that politics was seen in ethnic terms - simply those activities which could help in the enhancement of ethnic positions in order to get more benefits from modernization and self-rule. This assertion will be elaborated on in this chapter - that Nigerian groups - the Hausa/Fulani, the Ibo, the Yoruba, etc., reacted to political bargaining in primordial* terms.

* The term primordial is used here to reflect those "givens" of social existence (assumed or implied) in relation to culture, language, religion, etc. - which tend to influence individual or group behavior. See Edward Shils, "Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties", British Journal of Sociology, June 1957. Also, Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States", Finkle and Gable, pp. 655-669.

This chapter is primarily concerned with the formation of political parties in Nigeria and the manner with which they operated in the Nigerian scene - from their inception to the crises of 1966. This will aid in showing the effects of ethnicity on the Nigerian polity and how they promoted the political integration or disintegration of Nigeria. The main argument is that although some political parties were more inclined toward formal independence than others, and some gave more support to Nigeria as a nation, sooner or later all the political parties in Nigeria became ethnically motivated. In this perspective, the N.C.N.C. will be discussed, and its alleged connections with the Ibos will be looked into. I have limited this chapter to political parties because they were the main organs that influenced other institutions in Nigeria.

The earliest political organizations in Nigeria were reported to have been established, in actual fact, in Lagos, in protest against the tax and land policies of the British administration.¹ According to Coleman's conclusion on this subject:

... membership in the early political associations in Lagos was limited to a few leaders who sought to defend what they considered [to be] the natural rights of Africans and their acquired rights as British subjects, against the policies of a colonial government in the first phase of expansion and development. Such associations were primarily instruments for achieving a united front in protesting against particular grievances, and little effort was made to build them into permanent associations. Once the grievance was disposed of, the organizations either be-

came moribund or split into hostile factions.²

However, Nigerian educated young men did not give up because of initial setbacks in the formation of political parties. In 1922 after a constitutional change (Clifford's Constitution) had conferred the right of franchise on a limited number of the Lagos population, Herbert Macaulay* and a group of followers formed a political party. This party - The Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) - was inaugurated in 1923. The NNDP laid emphasis on the provision of facilities for higher education for Nigerians, the introduction of compulsory education at the primary school level and above all, Africanization of the Civil Service.³ At approximately the same time, the Lagos Youth Movement (LYM) which later renamed itself the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), had been gathering momentum to challenge many of the colonial policies, especially those on education.⁴ The NYM was strengthened in 1937 by the arrival of Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Ibo who had studied in the United States. With this strength, the NYM "won all three elective seats in the Lagos Legislative Council, thereby putting an end to the fifteen-year electoral rule of the Democratic Party in Lagos".⁵ By early 1940, the mood of the NYM was very nationalistic and its proposals included the following:

* Herbert Macaulay was one of the earliest Lagos political figures, an engineer by trade, surveyor by occupation, journalist and politician by inclination, he contributed much to Nigerian Nationalism.

- a) Abolition or reform of indirect rule.
- b) Higher appointments in the civil service.
- c) Representation of provinces, including the north, in the Legislative Council.
- d) Representation of Nigerians in London.
- e) Problems of the farmer and rural communities.
- f) Aid and support to African business entrepreneurs.
- g) [Better] Conditions of service of African employees in mercantile firms."⁶

Most of these ambitious objectives were not realized because of an internal crisis within the Movement. This crisis was "a congenital weakness of conflicting interests that were partly ethnic and partly economic".⁷ It was said that sometime in June 1938, Ernest Ikoli, an active leader of the NYM, became editor of the Lagos Daily Service, which had claimed to be the official mouthpiece of the NYM, and that Azikiwe who had been editor of the West African Pilot felt challenged in his own journalistic enterprise.⁸ Shortly after, Azikiwe resigned from the executive of the NYM for compelling "business"⁹ reasons, and finally in 1941 broke away from the movement. "A press war between the Pilot and the Daily Service ensued. Azikiwe and the Ibos never rejoined the movement, which after 1941 was composed of Yorubas".¹⁰ However, the NYM could not survive the internal crisis that followed, hence it ceased to function effectively. The "Ibos and the Ijebu Yorubas turned to the NNDP".¹¹ The crisis within this movement, which was popularly referred to as the 'Akinsanya crisis', (see note 10) was the earliest manifestation of the ethnic tension that

would characterize the Nigerian political scene.

The Second World War has been seen by many observers as one of the key factors that hastened a greater effort on the part of Nigerians to unify under a political umbrella and fight for liberation from the British. Writing on the War, Thomas Hodgkin maintains that it "was a forcing house of new political movements in West Africa".¹² The right of self-determination, enshrined in the Atlantic Charter, was picked up by African nationalist leaders to mean self-determination for all peoples - be they in Europe, Asia or Africa. In 1943, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe led a Press delegation to London to request the Secretary of State for the Colonies to initiate a fifteen-year programme for independence in West Africa: ten years of "representative" government followed by a final five-year term of limited tutelage with fully "responsible" government.¹³ In 1944, a group of students and ex-students of King's College (one of the few 'British'-established schools in Nigeria) met Azikiwe, along with members of the Nigerian Union of Students (NUS) complaining "that the youth of the country were ready [for political unity] but there was no leadership".¹⁴ With Azikiwe's encouragement, and the support of his strong press, the students initiated a national conference in Lagos of all organizations for the sole purpose of organizing a national council to "weld the heterogeneous masses of Nigeria into one solid block".¹⁵ On August 26, 1944, the inaugural meeting of this conference was held in Lagos with the following resolution:

Believing our country is rightfully entitled to liberty and prosperous life ... and determined to work in unity for the realization of our ultimate goal of self-government within the British

Empire, we hereby bind ourselves together forming the Nigerian National Council.¹⁶

In this conference, Herbert Macaulay (leader of the NNDP) was elected President, and Azikiwe general secretary.¹⁷ Membership was purely organizational and included: 2 trade unions, 2 political parties (Democratic Party and Young Democrats), 4 literary societies (for example, the Youths' Literary Improvement Circle), 8 professional associations (for example, the National Herbal Institute of Medicine and the Society of Native Theraputists), 11 social clubs (for example, Zik's Athletic Club and the Merry Rose Club), and 101 tribal unions (for example, the Ibo Union and the Ijebu National Union).¹⁸ Since Cameroonian associations in Lagos at that time desired to join (that is, the Bamenda Improvement Association, the Bakweri Union, and the Cameroons Youth League), the name of the union was changed to the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC).¹⁹ The year 1944, therefore, marked the birth of the NCNC and it is noteworthy that despite the efforts made by the organizers of this association to incorporate all progressive organizations at that time, the NYM and other groups headed by older Yorubas were not attracted to the call of the NCNC.²⁰

Early in 1945, the NCNC held a Constitutional Convention and had the following among its objectives:

- 1) To extend democratic principles and to advance the interests of the people of Nigeria and the Cameroons under British mandate.
- 2) To impart political education to the people of Nigeria with a

view to achieving self-government.

- 3) To provide NCNC members with a "medium of expression in order to secure political freedom, economic security, social equality, and religious toleration in Nigeria and the Cameroons under British mandate, as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations".²¹

In 1946, the NCNC leadership - Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe and a few others - began a pan-Nigerian tour aimed at acquainting the peoples of Nigeria with the objectives of the party. While on this tour, Herbert Macaulay took ill and returned to Lagos where he died at the age of 82.²² He did, however, bless the movement in his last words:

"Tell the National Council delegates to halt wherever they are for four days for Macaulay and then carry on."

"Tell Oged [his son] to keep the flag [obviously of the Council] flying."²³

The Pan-Nigerian tour was completed in eight months, and gave the NCNC "written mandates from 153 Nigerian Communities (24 in the North, 48 in the West, and 81 in the East, in addition to the endorsement of the Oba of Lagos) and raising some ₦13,500".²⁴ To prove to the then Governor that the NCNC did represent Nigeria as a nation, contrary to the views expressed by the Governor, the NCNC members who ran in three elective Lagos seats in the Legislative Council were returned with great majorities.²⁵ To further provide adequate proof that the NCNC was indeed a national party, the leadership sent seven delegates to put the NCNC's

case before the Colonial Secretary in London. The composition of the delegation tended to support the NCNC claim of 'national' representation in view of the fact that the major groups in Nigeria were adequately represented. Members of the delegation included such people as: "Nnamdi Azikiwe (Ibo), Adeleke Adedoyin (Ijebu Yoruba), Dr. Abu Bakr Olorun-Nimbe (Ilorin Yoruba), Mallam Bukar Dipcharima (Hausa), Chief Nyong Essien (Ibibio), P.M. Kale (Bakweri Cameroonian), and Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti (Yoruba)".²⁶ Before the departure of the delegates, Azikiwe was elected President to succeed the late Macaulay. In London, the NCNC request for immediate constitutional reform was rejected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies who rather "advised them to return to Nigeria and cooperate in working the Constitution which they had discredited"²⁷ (Richards Constitution). Azikiwe's reaction to this was evident in his Presidential address to the Kaduna National Assembly of the NCNC when he stated that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had "treated our National Delegates and the National cause we sent them to present, in a most summary, unpleasant, unfavourable and disappointing manner which we regard as a great insult to our entire Nation".²⁸ At this moment, the NCNC as an organization was not very active, except that the personality of Azikiwe, aided by his press, helped to keep the organization alive.²⁹ Later political activities of the NCNC will be discussed in a different section of this chapter. Meanwhile, it is worth considering the nature of other Nigerian political parties so as to establish their characteristics and compare them with those of the NCNC.

In 1945, a group of Yoruba nationals studying in England founded

a pan-Yoruba cultural movement - the Egbe Omo Oduduwa - which simply meant the Society for the descendants of Oduduwa, the mythical father of the Yorubas. One of the founders of this cultural association was Obafemi Awolowo who had returned to Nigeria in 1946 as a barrister. Many Yorubas were said to have been "deeply troubled by the meteoric rise of Azikiwe ... [and his] unprecedented popularity among politically conscious Nigerians..."³⁰ To allay this fear on the part of the Yoruba elite, "in 1948 these elements joined together to found the Egbe Omo Oduduwa as a Yoruba cultural organization in Nigeria."³¹ Among its objectives were the following:

- 1) Cultural development: "... to foster the study of the Yoruba language, culture and history".
- 2) Educational advancement: "... to plan for the improvement of educational facilities ... especially by means of Scholarship awards by the Society ... [for] the pursuit of Secondary and university education by Yoruba boys and girls".
- 3) Yoruba nationalism: "... to accelerate the emergence of a virile, modernized and efficient Yoruba state with its own individuality within the Federal State of Nigeria ... [and] to unite the various clans and tribes in Yorubaland and generally create and actively foster the idea of a single nationalism throughout Yorubaland".
- 4) Protection of chiefs: "... to recognize and maintain the monarchical and other similar institutions of Yorubaland, to plan for their complete enlightenment and democratisation, to acknowledge the leadership of Yoruba Obas".

- 5) Nigerian Federation: "... to strive earnestly to co-operate with existing ethnical [sic] and regional associations and such as may exist hereafter, in matters of common interest to all Nigerians, so as thereby to attain to unity in federation".³²

At the inaugural meeting of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, Sir Adeyemo Alakija, former President of the Nigerian Youth Movement, was elected President, while Awolowo was elected General Secretary.³³ Since some prominent objectives of the organization included the "idea of a single nationalism throughout Yorubaland", objective observers would argue that Yoruba leaders had wished to minimize their efforts in any movement for Nigerian independence.³⁴ Although the Egbe Omo Oduduwa did indicate its neutrality in party politics, observers viewed from the start that it was a Yoruba political party.³⁵ Supporting this allegation was the statement credited to Awolowo when he was reported to have said that "the Egbe was formed ... to end the distrust and misunderstanding between Yoruba Obas and their subjects. Another reason was to save the Yoruba people from the 'destructive role' played by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe on his return to Nigeria in 1937".³⁶ The outcome of Yoruba nationalism and the manner the Ibos perceived it led to what Coleman has aptly described as the "Cold War"^{*} of 1948. This political milieu led to the politicization of the Pan-Ibo (Ibo Federal Union) and Pan-Yoruba (Egbe Omo Oduduwa) national federations.³⁷ In

* Coleman is here referring to the bitter exchange of words between the NCNC and the AG. See Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, pp. 346-347.

December 1948, the Ibo Federal Union at Aba, was converted into the Ibo State Union with a mandate to organize the "Ibo linguistic group into a political unit in accordance with the NCNC Freedom Charter".^{*38} At this conference, Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected Ibo state president. At the first Ibo State conference in 1949, Azikiwe was said to have made a speech which his critics saw as purely tribalistic and provocative:

... it would appear that God of Africa has specially created the Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of the ages ... The material prowess of the Ibo nation at all stages of human history had enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of Preserver of all that is best and noble in African culture and tradition. ... The Ibo nation cannot shrink its responsibility from its manifest destiny.³⁹

In 1951, Awolowo publicly inaugurated a political party from Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the Action Group. The Action Group (AG) had as its main target - the capture of political influence in the Western Region under the new constitution's electoral arrangements.⁴⁰ The aims and aspirations of the AG included the following:

* The Freedom Charter provided for the organization of Nigeria into states based on cultural and linguistic affinity. See West African Pilot, January 4, 5, 1949; also James Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, p. 398.

- (1) "to encourage and strengthen most sedulously all the ethnical organizations in the Western Region"; and
- (2) "to explore all possibilities for and to co-operate wholeheartedly with other nationalities in the formation of a Nigeria-wide organization which shall work as a united team towards the realization of immediate self-government for Nigeria."⁴¹

The dominant theory of the AG, according to Coleman, was that the only avenue to political power in Nigeria at that time was through a regional (ethnic) political party.⁴²

The situation in Northern Nigeria would not be different, especially given that the two Southern sections - East and West - had been ethnically oriented. It is noteworthy that the Northern section of Nigeria did not politicize its population at the same time as the East and West were doing so. The North, appearing late as it did in national politics, exploited the political distrust between the East and the West to enhance its own position - shifting alliances between these two groups, and always to its own political advantage. This aspect will be treated further in Chapter Five, dealing with conflict management in Nigeria. At present, it is relevant to look into the formation of political parties in the North. According to Richard Sklar, embryonic political organizations in Northern Nigeria were first organized by a few educated youth, some of them in the civil service - many of whom were from privileged families.⁴³ In 1946, a group of nationalists at Kano formed a Northern political association called the Northern Elements Progressive Associa-

tion (NEPA). The organization was alledged to be "the northern extension of Azikiwe's nationalist crusade [which gave it] a short life, owing mainly to the strong opposition of the Kano Native Authority".⁴⁴ The NEPA was later renamed the Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU) in 1950 and it still maintained close link with the NCNC - a factor that increased its problems with most northerners.

The most important political party in Northern Nigeria was the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC). The NPC was formally inaugurated at Kano City in 1949. The leaders of the congress were conscious of the fact that "the north must and could only be saved by northerners; that the peoples of the north felt 'cautious friendship' for the other peoples of Nigeria; ..."⁴⁵ In this regard, the congress assumed the character of a "Progressive Political Party as from Octover 1st, 1951",⁴⁶ and established "65 branches (with) over 6,000 members".⁴⁷ The party "elevated" Alhaji Sanda from Deputy General President to Acting General President and also included in its membership the Sardauna of Sokoto and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.⁴⁸ As a political party, the NPC declared the following among its aims:

- (1) regional automony within a unified Nigeria;
- (2) local government reform within a progressive emirate system;
- (3) the voice of the people to be heard in all councils of the north;
- (4) retention of the traditional system of appointing emirs with a wider representation on the Electoral Committee;
- (5) drive throughout the north for education while retaining and in-

- creasing cultural influences;
- (6) eventual self-government for Nigeria with dominion status within the British Commonwealth; and,
- (7) one north, one people, irrespective of religion, tribe or rank.⁴⁹

From the foregoing, it is evident that the NPC, like the other two political parties in the South, had ethnic or tribal objectives. Some scholars have argued that ethnic identification tended to be more manifest in the AG and the NPC (considering the nature of their aims) than in the NCNC. But, the fact that the NCNC at a point in time changed its character (with Azikiwe accepting the Presidency of the Ibo Union) casts doubt on the validity of that assertion. However, it has been argued that the 'Ibonization' of the NCNC was more of a reaction to the ethnic politics from the West than a conscious effort on the part of the NCNC leadership. This argument is premised on the fact that the Ibo Union did not emerge alongside the NCNC (see the formation of Ibo Unions in Chapter 2); that it only became actively involved when it perceived that the Yorubas had formed an ethnic political organization under the guise of Egbe Omo Oduduwa. Coleman also maintains that "the affiliation of an organization [e.g., the Ibo Union] with the NCNC was a subtle but powerful means of awakening political consciousness among individuals in the provinces by the filtration technique".⁵⁰ All these arguments notwithstanding, the political parties under review had ethnic leanings. These can be easily seen in the results of Federal and Regional elections in Nigeria between 1951-61. A glance at these figures shows the importance of ethnic cleavages in

the parties (see Figure 1) as measured by the voting behavior of the different ethnic groups.

It is now necessary to consider the nature of the Ibo-NCNC connection. The NCNC has been often described as an Ibo political party because of its leadership and the nature of its operations. The NCNC experienced two major changes in leadership, one was when Herbert Macaulay (a Lagos-Yoruba) died in 1946 and Azikiwe took over. The other was when Azikiwe resigned as premier of Eastern Nigeria in 1959 to become president of the Senate and leadership went to Dr. Michael Okpara. Azikiwe and Okpara were both Ibo, hence to many observers, NCNC was an Ibo party.

The relationship between Ibo ethnic unions and the NCNC is very crucial in any understanding of this party. John Mackintosh has described the NCNC as a "gathering of clan and town unions rather than a party based on individual membership".⁵¹ This generalization holds for most political parties in Africa be they in Zaire, Ghana, Tanzania or Ivory Coast. The Nigerian independence constitution vested most functions of government and residual powers on the regions, this meant that whichever party was in power in the regions controlled the means of generosity and patronage, for example, public offices, government contracts, etc.⁵² As was earlier stated in Chapter Three of this work, clan, town, village or ethnic unions in Iboland were primarily concerned with development; the fact, therefore, that the NCNC was in power in Eastern Nigeria meant that different groups would support it to achieve their aims. People commonly believed (and this belief was universal in Nigeria) that the regional government would refuse to allocate development funds in their areas should they oppose

<i>Election</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>	
Eastern Regional election of 1951	National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC)			65	
	United National Party			4	
Western Regional election of 1951	Action Group			45	
	NCNC			30-35 (approx- imately)	
Northern Regional election of 1951	Northern Peoples' Congress			Indefinite, but an over- whelming majority	
Eastern Regional election of 1953	NCNC			72	
	National Independence Party			9	
	United National Party			3	
Federal election, Eastern Region, 1954	NCNC			32	
	United National Independence Party			4	
	Action Group			3	
	Independent candidates			3	
Federal election, Western Region, 1954	NCNC			23	
	Action Group			18	
	Commoners Liberal Party			1	
Federal election, Northern Region, 1954	Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC)			79	
	Middle Zone League (allied to NPC)			2	
	Idoma State Union (allied to NPC)			2	
	Igbirra Tribal Union (allied to NPC)			1	
	Middle Belt People's Party			1	
	Action Group			1	
	Independents			4	
	Federal election, Southern Cameroons, 1954	Kamerun National Congress			5
		Kamerun People's Party			-
Federal election, Lagos, 1954	NCNC			1	
	Action Group			1	
Western Regional election of 1956	Action Group	623,826	48.3%	48	
	NCNC	584,556	45.3%	32	
	Nigerian Commoners Party	5,133	0.4%		
	Nigerian People's Party	3,029	0.2%		
	Dynamic Party	4,841	0.4%		
	Nigerian Commoners Liberal Party	5,401	0.4%		
	Independent Candidates	64,388	5.0%		

Figure 1*. Voting Behaviour of Nigerians.

Source: Richard L. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 35-37.

* This explains the ethnic character of the Nigerian voting system between 1951-61, this includes Regional and Federal elections. The NCNC victory in the West in 1954 was not in actual fact Yoruba loyalty to the party, but simply a result of internal quarrel among different Yoruba groups which helped the NCNC to win.

<i>Election</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>
Northern Regional election of 1956	Northern Peoples' Congress			100
	Independent candidates allied to the NPC			7
	Rival wings of the United Middle Belt Congress			11
	Northern Elements Progres- sive Union—Bornu Youth Movement Alliance			9
	Action Group and Ilorin allies			4
Eastern Regional election of 1957	NCNC		63.26%	64
	Action Group		10.75%	13
	United National Inde- pendence Party		6.32%	5
	Independent Candidates		19.67%	2
Federal election of 1959				
Totals	Northern Peoples' Congress	2,027,194	28.2%	134
	National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons/ Northern Elements Pro- gressive Union Alliance (NCNC/NEPU)	2,592,629	36.1%	89
	Action Group	1,986,839	27.6%	73
	Others	578,893	8.1%	16
	East	NCNC/NEPU	1,246,984	64.6%
	Action Group	445,144	23.1%	14
	Small Parties and Inde- pendents; Niger Delta Congress (NPC ally)	237,626	12.3%	1
West	Action Group	933,680	49.5%	33
	NCNC/NEPU	758,462	40.2%	21
	Northern Peoples' Con- gress	32,960	1.7%	-
	Small Parties and Independents	162,107	8.6%	
	<i>Mabolaje</i> of Ibadan Independents			7 1
North	Northern Peoples' Con- gress	1,994,045	61.2%	134
	Action Group	559,878	17.2%	25
	NCNC/NEPU	525,575	16.1%	8
	Small Parties and Independents	179,022	5.5%	
	Igbirra Tribal Union (NPC ally)			1
	Independents (declared for NPC)			6

<i>Election</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>
Lagos	NCNC/NEPU	61,608	55.9%	2
	Action Group	48,137	43.8%	1
	Northern Peoples' Congress	189	0.2%	
	Small Parties and Independents	138	0.1%	
Western Regional election of 1960	Action Group			79
	NCNC/NEPU			33
	<i>Mabolaje</i> of Ibadan (NPC ally)			10
Northern Regional election of 1961	Northern Peoples' Congress and allies			156
	Action Group/UMBC			9
	NEPU/NCNC			1
Eastern Regional election of 1961	NCNC	901,887	58.02	106
	Action Group	240,075	14.44	15
	Dynamic Party	68,007	4.38	5
	Small parties and independents	344,451	22.16	20

the NCNC. In this regard, the NCNC became, in people's minds, synonymous with development opportunities. A quick glance at development projects in Mbaïse* Owerri supports this view.

In his study of the NCNC in Mbaïse Owerri, Audrey C. Smock associates a variety of government sponsored development projects in this area with the representation of Mbaïse at the Eastern House of Parliament by two NCNC ministers.⁵³ In this respect, Dr. Ogbonna, one of the two ministers - Minister of Trade and Industries - was said to have influenced the siting of a water project in Obizi, his home town.⁵⁴ The same holds for Pius Nwoga - Minister of Town Planning - who also was said to have been instrumental in another project, "[t]he installation of the entire water scheme for Ekwerazu ... [his home town]".⁵⁵ The promises of such projects by NCNC candidates during elections and the fear that such rewards might be denied groups who opposed the NCNC, helped in converting Mbaïse to an NCNC stronghold. Even successful candidates who failed to receive the NCNC nomination but stood for election as independent candidates were forced by their town or village unions to 'cross the carpet'^{**} and rejoin the NCNC.

* Mbaïse is a group of five villages ('Mba' - village or town, 'ise' - five) that were officially merged into one administrative unit in 1941. It is one of the largest County (Divisional) units in Iboland. It is part of Owerri-Ibo.

** The term 'carpet crossing' is generally used in Nigerian politics to describe changes in a Parliamentarian's loyalty from one party to another.

In 1961, the Nguru (one of the component towns of Mbaise) Patriotic Union presented E.O. Osuagwu to the constituency nominating committee; S.M. Ahamba represented another town, but both of them failed to receive the NCNC nomination.⁵⁶ " ... the Nguru Patriotic Union and the Oke-Ovoro Clan Union [supporting S.M. Ahamba] decided to sponsor their campaigns as independent".⁵⁷ Though E.O. Osuagwu was successful in the election as an independent member, there was "an immediate desire to return to the [People's] Party [NCNC]"⁵⁸ since this was a sure way of guaranteeing the party's support for amenities in his area. Thus, the NCNC became to Mbaise people a kind of political religion in which all believers in development projects would enlist. In Mbaise, the NCNC had "[b]ranches ... in each of the nine local council jurisdictions constituting the Mbaise County Council, and representatives of these made up a Mbaise district executive".⁵⁹

Also in Abiriba (one of the towns treated in Chapter Three), the Abiriba Communal Improvement Union (A.C.I.U.) cooperated with the NCNC to give the party a monopoly in that part of Ibo country.⁶⁰ The people of Abiriba considered themselves faithful and loyal members of the NCNC and would always make their view felt by whoever represented their constituency in the Eastern House of Assembly. In this respect, when Emole* got elected in the Eastern House of Assembly, he embraced the NCNC and became a minister in the government. As his influence in governmental affairs increased, "leaders of the ACIU found it increasingly to their advantage to stress their loyalty to the ruling party and to recommend

* Chief Emole, an Abiriba, was a member of the Eastern Legislative Assembly from its inauguration in 1953 to its dissolution in 1966.

the re-election of Emole"⁶¹ - obviously to enhance the position of Abiriba town in the governmental circle.

It can, therefore, be seen from the foregoing that the NCNC did acquire an Ibo character in its operations. The results of regional and federal elections between 1951-1961 (Table 1) proved adequately that the peoples of Eastern Nigeria, especially the Ibos, voted more for the NCNC than for any other party. This attitude was true of other Nigerians in relation to the NPC, the AG or other minor parties. The ethnic characteristic of these parties can further be seen in their leadership distribution between 1958 and 1959 (see Figure Two). The largest ethnic group within the NPC is the Fulani, which has 32.4%, closely followed by the Habe (Hausa group) with 18.9%. However, other smaller ethnic groups including emirates are reflected in the leadership. The NEPU which claims to represent the ordinary class (talakawa) is overwhelmingly Habe. The NCNC leadership has more Ibo in the hierarchy than any other ethnic group. The AG exhibits the same characteristic in relation to the Yorubas.

It has been pointed out by many writers that the problem with African political parties is the lack of "cross-fertilization" of party members over and above ethnic boundaries. Most Western parties would not exhibit this characteristic, rather ideology, not primordialism, plays a major part in their party membership. Take, for instance, Ontario, Canada, might cross-fertilize membership with Quebeckers and vice-versa. Perhaps the leadership of Canada's Liberal Party by a Quebecker, Pierre Trudeau, might support this assertion.⁶² But this practice was not true

Figure 2. Ethnic Distribution of Major Political Party Leaders (in %) between 1958/59

Party	Ibo	Other Eastern Groups	Yoruba	Other Western Groups	Northern Groups	Cameroons Non-Nigerians & Unknowns
NCNC ^a	49.3	9.9	26.7	5.6	2.8	5.6
Action Group ^b	4.5	15.2	68.2	7.6	3.0	1.5

Party	Fulani	Habe	Nupe	Kanuri	Yoruba	Other Northern Groups	Unknown
NPC ^c	32.4	18.9	9.4	6.8	6.8	16.2	9.4
NEPU ^d	14.0	67.1	4.6	3.1	0.0	7.1	3.2

Source: James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (eds.), Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 612.

Continued.....

of Nigeria, indeed, most of Africa. Le Vine in his treatment of political parties in the Cameroons concludes that ethnic parochialism among two groups - the Bassa and the Bamileke - account for their dominance in the Union des Populations du Cameroun.⁶³ The same was similarly found among the Baganda of Uganda, the Buoule of the Ivory Coast, the Ashanti in Ghana, the Wachagga of Tanzania⁶⁴ - (at least before Tanzania became a one-party state). After what seemed to be repeated abortive efforts to terminate dependence upon tribal or ethnic cleavages as the nuclei for party committees, party leaders in the Ivory Coast, reluctantly decided that such efforts would have to be postponed "until people learned to live together regardless of tribe".⁶⁵ This problem is therefore endemic in countries of tropical Africa and contributes to their lack of national integration. Nigerian political parties were characterized by ethnic primordialism which made political integration almost impossible.

This chapter has looked into the formation of political organizations in Nigeria and the manner in which these organizations reflected ethnic primordialism among the different ethnic groups of Nigeria. It has explored the nature of party leadership in Nigeria and has shown how the major ethnic groups - the Hausa-Fulani; the Ibo; and the Yoruba dominated the political parties. It is worth noting that Nigerian political parties did not reflect individual belief in some form of ideology, say capitalism, socialism, or whatever; rather they aggregated ethnic organizations mainly to win elections for the benefit of the groups supporting them. In other words, Nigerian political parties could not integrate Nigeria as a nation. What did happen was that the parties helped in

fragmenting Nigeria since ethnic groups became synonymous with political parties.

The next chapter will focus on the conflicts inherent in the Nigerian ethnic groups and their parties. One crucial question here will be the manner with which Nigeria responded to ethnic self-awareness and also how conflicts were managed. In this regard, some conflicts like the Tiv riots of 1962, the Western election crisis of 1965 and the census rumpus will be probed. These will aid further in understanding the disintegration of the first Republic that occurred in 1966-67.

FOOTNOTES

1. James S. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 178-182.
2. Ibid., p. 182; it is not within the scope of this work to probe more into Lagos politics since, in actual fact, politics was then not within the reach of most Nigerians.
3. Richard L. Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 46.
4. Ibid., p. 49. It was reported that the Colonial Administration wanted to convert Yaba (Lagos) Higher College into a vocational training institute where Nigerians would be trained as technical assistants to aid European Engineers. This proposal was rejected by the NYM which insisted on full University degrees for Nigerians especially in the United Kingdom and the abolition of the 'inferior' local certificate.
5. Ibid., p. 52.
6. Coleman, op. cit., p. 226.
7. Sklar, op. cit., pp. 52-53.
8. Coleman, op. cit., p. 227; West African Pilot, Jan. 4, 1939, where Ikoli sent annual greetings to the Youths; Sklar, ibid., p. 53.
9. West African Pilot, Feb. 2, 1939, as cited by Sklar, op. cit., p. 53.
10. Coleman, op. cit., p. 227; the major case was that Azikiwe (Zik) supported Akinsanya, an Ijebu-Yoruba as leader of the movement when Dr. K.A. Abayomi resigned, and the other Yorubas supported Ernest

Ikoli. Zik and Akinsanya interpreted the move as purely ethnic - a projection of Ijebu and Ibo prejudice. Ikoli was himself an Ijaw (one of the Niger Delta groups) but it was said that the Yorubas did not mind since the post did not go to an Ijebu; the Ijebus and the rest of Yorubaland have not been good neighbours for "historical reasons" - see Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, p. 228, where the Ijebus are described as the 'Jews of Yorubaland' because of their role during the slave era, since they controlled the major routes for trafficking slaves.

11. Sklar, op. cit., p. 55.
12. Thomas Hodgkin, "Political Parties in British and French West Africa", Information Digest, Africa Bureau, No. 10 (London: August, 1953), p. 14, as quoted in Sklar, ibid., p. 55; also, Coleman, op. cit., pp. 230-267.
13. Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties, p. 56.
14. Coleman, op. cit., p. 264.
15. Ibid., p. 264.
16. "Macaulay Papers" quoted in Ibid., p. 264.
17. Nnamdi Azikiwe, The Development of Political Parties in Nigeria (in Coleman, ibid., p. 264), p. 10.
18. African Affairs, 44 (October, 1945), p. 165.
19. Coleman, op. cit., p. 265; the NCNC changed its name to National Convention of Nigerian Citizens when the Cameroons broke away from Nigeria in 1962.
20. Coleman, ibid., p. 265.

21. The Constitution of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (Lagos, 1945), p. 1, as cited by Coleman, ibid., pp. 266-267.
22. Sklar, op. cit., p. 61.
23. West African Pilot, May 8, 1946, cited in Sklar, p. 61.
24. Sklar, op. cit., p. 61.
25. Ibid., p. 61.
26. Coleman, op. cit., p. 293; also, Sklar, ibid., p. 62.
27. Sklar, ibid., pp. 62-63; Richards Constitution (1946-47) was unitary, concentrating power in Lagos and it also perpetuated the stay of the British officials who were said to have ruled and advised the North in order to safeguard their interests. See James O'Connell, "Political Integration: The Nigerian Case" in John Paden, (ed); The African Experience, Vol. II Syllabus (U.S.A.: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 141.
28. Azikiwe in West African Pilot, April 7, 1948.
29. Coleman, op. cit., p. 295.
30. Sklar, op. cit., p. 68.
31. Coleman, op. cit., p. 344.
32. Constitution of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (Ijebu-Ode, 1948), pp. 5-6, in Coleman, ibid., pp. 344-5.
33. Sklar, op. cit., p. 68.
34. Coleman, op. cit., p. 345; Coleman has suggested that this must have had some effect on the thinking of other Nigerians.
35. See article by Oged Macaulay, "Searchlight into the Political Bowels of Egbe Omo Oduduwa", West African Pilot, June 30, 1948; also see

- A.A. Olowu, "Report of Goodwill Mission of Yorubas that Met a Committee of Egbe Omo Oduduwa", West African Pilot, February 19, 1948.
36. Daily Times, November 9, 1957, cited in Sklar, op. cit., p. 69.
 37. Coleman, op. cit., p. 347.
 38. Minutes of First Pan-Ibo Congress (Aba, 1948), cited in Coleman, p. 347; also see West African Pilot, January 4, 1949.
 39. West African Pilot, July 6, 1949.
 40. Coleman, op. cit., p. 350; the 1951 Constitution granted more "benefits" to the three Regions.
 41. Ibid., p. 350.
 42. Ibid., p. 350; this regional party would eliminate the perceived Ibo domination in national affairs, especially the fact that the NCNC now preaches unitary rather than Regional structure which the 1951 Constitution favoured.
 43. Sklar, op. cit., p. 88.
 44. Coleman, op. cit., p. 358.
 45. Ibid., p. 358.
 46. Quoted by Coleman in ibid., p. 363.
 47. Quoted by Sklar, op. cit., p. 96.
 48. Declaration of the Northern Peoples' Congress, i.e., the Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa, 1st October, 1951, in Sklar, ibid., p. 97.
 49. Manifesto of the Northern Peoples' Congress, October 1, 1951, quoted in The Northern Report on The Kano Disturbances (Government Printer, Kaduna, 1953), p. 45, as cited in Coleman, op. cit., p. 364.
 50. Coleman, op. cit., p. 265; it has already been stated in Chapter Three

of this work how innovations - economic, social and political - diffused from the urban centers where Ibos were domiciled into Ibo homeland, via different unions.

51. John P. Mackintosh, "Electoral Trends" in Mackintosh, ed., Nigerian Government and Politics (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), p. 522.
52. See Constitutional Conference of 1957 and its Results in Kalu Ezeru, Constitutional Developments in Nigeria (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 231-254.
53. Audrey C. Smock, "The NCNC and Ethnic Unions in Biafra", The Journal of Modern African Studies, 7, 1 (1969), pp. 21-34.
54. Ibid., p. 27.
55. Ibid., p. 27.
56. Ibid., pp. 28-29; it was a common practice for the NCNC local committees to nominate their own candidates from contesting candidates.
57. Ibid., p. 29.
58. Ibid., p. 32.
59. Audrey C. Smock, Ibo Politics (U.S.A.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 163.
60. Ibid., p. 161.
61. Ibid., p. 162.
62. This idea was brought to my attention by Professor Toivo Miljan of the Political Science Department at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.
63. Victor T. LeVine, "Cameroun", in J.S. Coleman and C. Roseberg, Jr.,

(eds.), Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (U.S.A.: University of California Press, 1964), p. 132.

64. Ibid., p. 690.

65. Ibid., p. 691.

CHAPTER V

ETHNIC POLITICAL CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

The politicization of the Nigerian ethnic groups by their local organizations and later by political parties (some of which grew out of these organizations) meant that Nigerian politics assumed a kind of ethnic arithmetic. In this regard, ethnic groups used politics to enhance their power base in Nigeria. The state of Nigeria has already been seen as the creation of the British who had assumed the power of an overlord within the territorial boundaries of Nigeria. The nature of Nigeria - the boundaries of the regions, the disparity in modernization (including education) between the different ethnic groups - called for political conflicts. It is necessary to pose some fundamental questions that vividly point to the nature and structure of political conflicts in Nigeria; how was Nigeria divided into Regions and what were the political consequences? Was the division a clever tactic by the Colonial Administration to enhance the political strength of one group or region in order to protect British interests? What were the objects of competition among the ethnic groups? These are some of the questions this chapter will attempt to investigate. In this respect, some crises will be considered since most of them have been acknowledged by analysts of the Nigerian situation as the main issues that pushed the country into the disintegration of its first Republic in 1966-67. Prominent among these crises were the 1951 Constitutional crisis; the Tiv (one of the

ethnic groups in the North) Riots in 1960, and in 1964; the Census rumpus in 1962-63; the Federal election of 1964-65; and finally the Military coup d'état of January, 1966.

This chapter will also inquire into the manner with which the central government in Lagos handled these crises; this will help in establishing the role played by the Lagos Administration towards the political integration or disintegration of the first Republic.

The sources of political conflicts in Nigeria were embedded in the nature of the state itself. Nigeria was created by the British and its boundaries determined by the same power in Westminster. Earlier in its history, there were the protectorates of Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria; in 1914, these protectorates were amalgamated by Lord Lugard, and in 1939 the Southern Provinces were divided into two administrative units, the East and the West. As was earlier stated (in Chapter 1) the Hausa/Fulani were in the North, the Ibo in the East, and the Yoruba in the West. The characteristics of these ethnic groups have already been considered (in Chapters 1-4). It is then worth looking into the nature of political conflicts in Nigeria, especially the fact that the three major ethnic groups were the main participants in the conflicting issues. Observers of the Nigerian situation have maintained that one of the regions created by the British, "the Northern [Region], was assured of a dominant position by mere virtue of the fact that it was larger in population and area than the others put together".² A glance at Figure I demonstrates this point.*

* "The existing regions were retained in spite of the disparity in size, partly because the colonial officials working in the North who foresaw the political advantage that would accrue to the region [insisted on the original structure; besides] ... the British government felt that a Nigerian government controlled

Region	Population, Present Boundaries			
	1931 Census (000)	1952-53 Census (000)	1963 Census (000) per sq. mile	
Northern	11,434	16,840	29,809	106
Western	2,743	4,595	10,266	337
Mid-Western	986	1,492	2,536	170
Eastern	4,266	7,218	12,395	420
Lagos (Township)	126	272	665	24,639
TOTAL	19,555	30,417	55,671	156

FIGURE 1 shows Population of Nigeria by Region.

Source: James O'Connell, "Political Integration: The Nigerian Case", in Arthur Hazelwood, (ed), African Integration and Disintegration (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 156.

For other reasons of an historical nature* education, which is

* The British did not encourage the spreading of education in Nigeria especially in the North. But, the Southern regions had schools in many parts of their areas with missionary help and encouragement from the local citizens. By 1949, for example, there was only one Secondary School - Government College Umuahia (Ibo) that the British founded in E. Nigeria. There was none for girls. See Zik, "Self-Determination for the Ibo People of Nigeria", West African Pilot, July 6, 1949.

generally associated with modernization, was not spread evenly across the regions of the country. A quick reference to Figure II below clarifies this assertion:

FIGURE II. Levels of Schooling Reached by Different Regions (including Lagos Federal Territory) 1963

Enrolment in Primary Schools		Enrolment in Secondary Schools	
North	410,706	North	9,881
East	1,278,706	East	39,938
West	1,099,418	West	30,630
Lagos	107,552	Lagos	11,372

Source: Adapted from Federal Office of Statistics, *Economic Indicators* (Lagos, 1966) cited by James O'Connell, "Political Integration: The Nigerian Case", in Arthur Hazelwood (ed.), p. 166.

Although there had been earlier conflicts among the ethnic groups in Nigeria (most of them have been discussed in the previous chapters), the major political confrontations occurred between 1950 and 1966. During the conference organized in 1949-51 to review the Macpherson constitution, it was reported that the Northern representatives made it crystal clear that if the demands they brought forward were not conceded, they would opt for secession from the rest of Nigeria.³ These demands included the following:

- "(1) that there be no alteration of the North-South boundary in favor of the South;

- (2) that regional representation in the Central House of Representatives be on democratic (per capita) basis, and that the north therefore be given a minimum of 50 per cent of the representation in the house; and,
- (3) that central revenue be allocated to the regions on a democratic (per capita) basis."⁴

"British influence and Southern impatience for early self-government resulted in an agreement [which left] the Northern Region intact with a majority of representatives in the Federal legislature".⁵ From that moment on, the politics of Nigeria became a process of making concessions than in actuality governed by democratic and parliamentary norms. This will be developed later; meanwhile, it is worth considering the objects of political competition among the ethnic groups.

Robin Luckham has brilliantly argued that "Nigerian [n]ational politics was characterized by competition for the Federation's resources, which was made all the more intense by the variations between the regions in culture, wealth and access to means of modernization, like education".⁶ In this respect, objects of competition in Nigeria were of three kinds.

✓ First, there was Nigeria's scarce economic resources.⁷ Financing the federation (or revenue allocation), proved to be the most crucial issue in Nigeria's early political crises. Which region should get what, when and how intensified ethnic political conflicts - Nigerian regions were synonymous with the major ethnic groups. The question was whether to budget for the regions in response to their 'needs' or according to derivation. "Nigerians

from the richer Western and Northern Regions advocated the greater use of 'derivation' *⁸ while the East preferred 'balanced growth'. However, the East did change its stand when it became clear in the late 1950's that there were enough oil deposits in the Region.⁹ Although the federal government tried to combine the principles of derivation, population (i.e., needs) and balanced growth, the political conflicts from revenue allocations in Nigeria were felt all through the first Republic. There were charges that "the Northern politicians were able to use their voting strength and cabinet posts to ensure that a major part of federal spending went to benefit the North".¹⁰ Apart from the conflicts over revenue allocation, there were also squabbles over the siting of federally financed projects such as the Iron and Steel complex which never materialized because of ethnic politics. Under the 1962-68 Nigerian Development Plan, an Iron and Steel complex was to have been located at Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria, a site which a feasibility study sponsored by the federal government had recommended. The project was held up indefinitely "because the Northern Premier, Ahmadu Bello, would not agree to a location in the Eastern Region ..."¹¹

✓ A second source of conflict in Nigeria developed from "the distribution of the fruits of political office and patronage in political and

* It was reported that the Korean War hiked the prices of commodities which were produced in the West and the North, and that meant enough revenue for the two regions. Derivation meant that the Regions from which more resources were extracted should get more from financial distribution.

✓ administrative posts".¹² Not only was each region charged with engaging in dishonest practices such as bribery, manipulation of bureaucratic personnel, awarding government contracts to party supporters and the like at the regional level, they also tried to extend such influence on the federal bureaucracy. This was particularly evident in the "jockeying for power and patronage in various Federal public bureaucracies, along lines presaged by the Western Region ..."¹³ In March 1965, it was made public by the Council of the University of Lagos that the appointment of the University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Eni Njoku, an Ibo academic, had been terminated, with Dr. S. Biobaku, a Yoruba, to replace him.¹⁴ "There were no good academic grounds for the termination of Dr. Njoku's appointment; and this step was actively opposed by the University Senate and the majority of both staff and students."¹⁵ Observers saw the move as purely political, reflecting the rise to power of the Akintola government in the West, which was enjoying a 'happy marriage' with the NPC in coalition. This argument will be developed further in this chapter when considering the Western Nigerian Crisis of 1965.

✓ A third major source of conflict in Nigeria was the struggle for political power with the view to controlling the machinery of government in both the regions and the centre. This source of conflict was based on the assumption that "the political kingdom held the key to all other types of allocations".¹⁶ It is from this perspective that the major Nigerian political conflicts will be considered. It is proper at this juncture to consider some of the conflicts that helped in pushing the Nigerian peoples further apart.

COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE IN TIVLAND 1960, 1964

The Tiv people are part of the Middle Belt of the Northern zone of Nigeria. Numbering about three-quarters of a million, the Tivs did not recognize external authorities from the far North mainly because of "a certain prejudice against Islam [since] it was considered that when a Tiv man became Muslim he would copy the Hausa customs ... [which the Tivs did not admire]".¹⁷ By the early 1950's, there were developments in the North which heightened political awareness of non-Hausa/Fulani peoples of the Lower North including the Tivs. To them the Hausa/Fulani domination of the region was unhealthy and did not promote political advancement of the other groups. In 1958, the idea of creating a Middle Belt State led the Tivs to organize an opposition party to the NPC. This party - the United Middle Belt Congress (U.M.B.C.) elected Joseph Tarka president and sought the mobilization of the Middle Belt masses. To achieve a kind of national character, and for financial reasons, the UMBC allied with the Action Group (AG) in the West. For two vital reasons, the AG was pleased by the alliance:

- "(1) the Action Group was ardently committed to the creation of more states particularly in the Northern Region, partly because of the colossal size of the Region which threatened the political instability in the country;
- (2) the party wanted to extend its organization and political influence in the North through the U.M.B.C. and thereby limit the resources (i.e., population strength) available for mobilization by the Northern Peoples Congress".¹⁸

In the 1959 Federal election, the Action Group won 17.2% of the total vote in the Northern region with 25 elected seats.¹⁹ Throughout 1958-1960, the U.M.B.C. employed all kinds of political tactics from willful flouting of Native Authority by-laws, to sporadic bids for political power within the NPC-dominated structure of the Region.²⁰ With the election success of the UMBC/AG, the NPC started looking for scapegoats: a list of Native Authority staff who were alleged to have aided the victory of the UMBC was prepared and several of them were sacked or declared redundant.²¹

The Tor of Tiv's personal Clerk (the Tor was the chief of the Tivs) who was accused of assisting UMBC/AG when working in a Polling Station in one of the local areas was sacked, the Prison Scribe was declared redundant; even bicycle hirers who supported the UMBC/AG were penalized by being forced out of a favourable position in Gboko (a town) into a less favorable marketplace.²² It was reported that harder repressive measures were taken against UMBC/AG supporters ranging from denial of social amenities, denial of trading licences; withdrawal of regional scholarships from sons of UMBC/AG members, to arbitrary taxation.²³ By early 1960, the political climate in the Tiv Division was very volatile and an appeal which Tarka sent to Ahamadu Bello concerning the repressive actions of the government machinery was termed 'false' and 'exaggerated'.²⁴ Soon some other incidents helped to ignite the political dynamite and it was reported that "scuffles, murders, raids and demonstrations in one part of the Tiv Division or another marked the [political scene] for almost every week from January 1960".²⁵

In mid-August 1960, a speech by a clan chief which was perceived purely as an anti-AG campaign led to trouble in one of the local centers - Yandev. The Resident and the Senior District Officer wanted to confer with well over 300 armed men from Yandev, but failed to reach any meaningful agreement.²⁶ Shortly after, when a convoy of NPC delegates were going to a local convention in Wukati (a town), they were ambushed by the local people. The Nigerian Police who had already been called in, opened fire and killed a man from one of the local towns - Mbalagh.²⁷ The people of this area "concluded that their man had been killed by the NPC. Since the NPC on the road was ... too strong for them to oppose they would try to exact vengeance from 'the NPC in the bush', and therefore picked on the vulnerable Gidan Uga community who, as Muslims, mostly supported NPC".²⁸ From Gidan Uga the gangs spread like bushfire. In each clan they visited "they set out to burn all the houses of the Chiefs of the Kindred heads, Court members, and Tax Collectors (except for those who still supported the UMBC), and of all NPC members".²⁹ During the whole course of the burning in Tiv Division, it was reported that some 50,000 people must have taken part and 30,000 homes must have been burnt; about five people were killed and some twenty of the burners also killed by either the police or the people they attacked.³⁰ Although there were attempts to reconcile the Tiv people with their Chiefs and Tax Collectors, peace did not last for long.

In February, 1964, serious clashes between the police and Tiv people were reported to have occurred, which left several hundred dead. The Army was called in to restore normal life in Tiv Division. The

Northern Regional Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry which concluded "that it had proved impossible to use the existing machinery of local government to force Tiv into allegiance to the NPC".³¹ Relations improved and the December 1964 elections did take place in which Tarka and his men won four of the seven seats in the Division.³²

The political implications of the Tiv disturbances lay in the manner with which constitutional powers in Nigeria were used by major ethnic groups to enhance their political bargaining powers under the umbrella of 'federalism'. Again, the disturbances will shed some light on what politics really meant for the North. Another important implication of the disturbances was the attitude of the central government in Lagos which authorized the use of the national Army in partisan politics. This aspect will be elaborated on in the section dealing with the Western election crisis of 1965, when the Army was again employed in party politics.

THE WESTERN NIGERIAN CRISIS, 1962

Observers who watched the crisis of 1962 in the West linked it with personality conflicts between Chief Awolowo and his Deputy leader of the AG, Chief S.L. Akintola.³³ Chief Awolowo had surrendered the Premiership of the West to Akintola after the Federal election of 1959. There were allegations that Awolowo who was now in the center as opposition leader, still wanted to control Premier Akintola's premiership in the Western Region. Besides conflicts over the affairs of the Western Region, there were ideological 'contradictions' between Awolowo's 'Na-

tional Reconstruction Group' and what Akintola stood for.* The National Reconstruction Group was a band of twelve men whom Chief Awolowo instituted within the AG "to study Nigeria's economic and social problems and produce policies to solve them". Among such men were young radicals whose political views ranged from "'something left of the British Labour Party' to the ideas of the European Social Democrats ..."³⁴ However, at the 8th Annual Congress of the AG in Jos 1962, the differences between the two leaders - Akintola and Awolowo - became explosive. Awolowo charged Akintola with "mal-administration, anti-party activities and gross indiscipline" and obtained a mandate that required Akintola "to resign the Premiership of the Region and his post in the party as Deputy Leader forthwith".³⁵ Chief Anthony Enahoro (later jailed with Awolowo for an alleged plot to overthrow the federal government), who moved the motion of Akintola's resignation, carried the vote by 81 to 29, although Chief Akintola made it clear he would not resign.³⁶

Meanwhile, there were allegations that Chief Akintola had come to believe that the AG should join with the NPC in a "National Government" by cooperating with its leaders.³⁷ This view was supported by several Yoruba chiefs, including the AG financial supporters. The rationale behind this was that "a bargain with NPC in which obvious federal hegemony ... [lay] would be counterbalanced by promises to recognize AG dominance of Western Region politics and continued control over the Midwest".³⁸ Awolowo,

* Chief Akintola was said to be a firm believer in capitalism, drawing his followers from wealthy local chiefs and big cocoa farmers.

on the other hand, believed that cooperation with the NPC would run counter with the AG political tactics (for example, the AG support for the UMBC). Accordingly, the Awolowo faction signed a petition which was sent to the Governor, Sir Adesoji Aderemi, asking him to dismiss the Premier. This was acceded to by the Governor and "Alhaji Adegbenro was sworn in as Premier of the West ... on the evening of May 21 [1962]".³⁹

On May 25, the meeting of the Western House of Assembly was spectacular and characterized the chaotic nature of Nigerian politics:

The House of Assembly met at 9 a.m. and after Prayers, as Chief Odebiyi rose to move the first motion, Mr. E.O. Oke, a supporter of Chief Akintola, jumped on the table shouting 'There is fire on the mountain'. He proceeded to fling chairs about the chamber. Mr. E. Ebubedike, also a supporter of Chief Akintola, seized the mace, attempted to club the Speaker [of the House] with it but missed and broke the mace on the table. The supporters of Adegbenro sat quiet[ly] as they had been instructed to do so, with the exception of one member who was hit with a chair and retaliated. Mr. Akinyemi (NCNC) and Messrs Adigun and Adeniya (Pro-Akintola) continued to throw chairs, the opposition joined in and there was such disorder that the Nigerian Police released tear gas and cleared the House.⁴⁰

On this occasion, the Regional Commissioner of Police had been instructed by the Federal Government to recognize neither of the two contenders - Akintola nor Adegbenro, but only to take orders from the Inspector-General

of Police.⁴¹ Adegbenro was said to have telephoned the Prime Minister of Nigeria in Lagos asking if the Police could come into the Chamber when the next attempt at a meeting was held. The Prime Minister, who showed some reluctance to grant the request, especially since the Akintola faction had also made such a request, issued the following statement:

The two factions in the Action Group have contacted the Prime Minister regarding the holding of another meeting of the Western Nigeria House of Assembly today. The Prime Minister cannot stop the meeting from taking place but because of the fight which has broken out in the House this morning, they may do so. It must be on strict understanding that there will be no police protection within the Chamber. If, however, any party insists on being afforded police protection within the Chamber, the police may be so present, but the Federal Government will not accept any decision reached as a result of such proceedings in the Chamber. If, in spite of all the efforts of the Police, there should be an outbreak of violence or any disorder, the Police have authority to clear the Chamber and lock it up.⁴²

Further attempts at holding the meeting still met with the same disruption that frustrated the first attempt:

In Ibadan, Alhaji Adegbenro and the Speaker agreed to try once again to hold a meeting some two and a half hours after the first had been disbanded. Policemen were stationed beside and behind the Speaker's Chair. At once, the Akintola faction and the NCNC

opposition began to shout and bang their chairs. Chief S.A. Tinuba sat on the floor beside the Speaker's Chair and continually rang a bell. Mr. J.O. Adigun threatened to throw the Record Book at the Speaker. Mr. Akinyemi smashed one despatch box, and Mr. Adedigba threw the other at Alhaji Adegbenro (it was caught by the Sergeant-at-arms). Mr. Adeniya then hit the Speaker with a chair, while the NCNC members smashed theirs or threw them to opponents. All this time the police had been begging the Speaker to let them act, and when he finally did so they again released gas and cleared the House.⁴³

On May 29, the Federal Parliament, under the leadership of the Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa declared a state of emergency in the Region, effecting the dismemberment of the Western government, and the detention of all the politicians involved.⁴⁴ Parliament then "approved thirteen regulations which appointed an Administrator and gave him powers to nominate commissioners (ministers), make all necessary orders, and amalgamate and command the Local Authority and the Nigerian Police Forces".⁴⁵ The Administrator, Senator Majekodunmi, was vested with the power "to imprison anyone spreading misleading reports, to prohibit public processions and meetings, to detain or restrict any person in the interests of public order and to search premises without a warrant".⁴⁶ After a short while (two months) it was alleged that nearly all the Akintola politicians and NCNC members who were detained by the Administrator, were freed but many of the AG's important organizers were still confined

to restricted areas.⁴⁷ Six months later (after the emergency began) "Chief Akintola, the exponent of cooperation with Balewa's federal government, had been invited to form a government for Western Region".⁴⁸ Awolowo had to face charges of the Coker Commission* which was set up to investigate the alleged malpractices of the AG, and almost simultaneously he was found guilty in a case in which he and Anthony Enahoro were purported to have planned to overthrow the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1962. Both men were sentenced to prison for treason.⁴⁹

The most important political implications of the 1962 Western Crisis, like the Tiv Disturbances, concerned the actions of the Federal government which was led by an NPC Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. One serious accusation against the Federal government and the Prime Minister "was that during the crisis Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and the Federal Government were privy to the plans of the Akintola group and had assured them that if sufficient row was made in the Western House, the Federal Government would step in".⁵⁰ The evidence for this accusation was based on the fact that Chief Akintola was a personal friend to Tafawa Balewa, who would prefer Akintola to Awolowo in Federal politics.⁵¹ Another accusation was that the police had received instructions from the Prime Minister before any violence had actually occurred not to take any orders from either Premier - Akintola or Adegbenro.⁵² Still observers "doubted whether a real state of emergency existed, [but] that the Federal

* The Commission found that the AG misappropriated £10 million from the Western Revenue; see Frederick Forsyth, ... The Biafran Story, p. 28.

Government may have exaggerated the situation [hence] it sent lorry loads of troops, and talked of the danger of violence spreading out of the House ..."⁵³

One clear lesson of the Western Crisis, according to John Ostheimer "was the willingness of the NPC - [led] coalition^{*} Federal Government to exercise influence within a region's political affairs in order to ensure a government friendly to NPC aims".⁵⁴

THE CENSUS RUMPUS, 1962-63

There were feelings among many Southern peoples that the Northerners were changing their political attitude from that of a senior partner in Federal politics to that of the 'big' boss. Revenue allocation and the channeling of most development projects to the North generated this 'servant-boss' feeling in most politically conscious citizens. The only prospect that many politicians were looking forward to was the outcome of the new census. The last census which had been held (British operated) in 1952-53, had indicated that the population of Nigeria was 30,417,000.⁵⁵ By this British political arithmetic "the Northern Region contained 16,835,582 people, the East 7,215,251, the West 6,085,065 and the Federal Territory of Lagos 267,407, ..." ⁵⁶ It was on this score that 312 seats were allocated

* After the Federal election of 1959, the NPC and the NCNC contracted an 'unholy' alliance by forming a coalition in Lagos. But in actual fact, the NCNC was used as "a dancing Queen" because basically it could not function in opposition to the views of the "drummer-King" - the NPC. Subsequent events destroyed the coalition, when the NPC picked up the Akintola Party - the NNDP in the West.

in the Federal House - 174 to the North, 73 to the East, 62 to the West and 3 to Lagos Federal Territory. Observers hoped that the 1962 census would be more accurate and would modify the dominance of the North in the Federal House. There were a number of arguments that tended to support the alleged inaccuracy of the 1952-3 census. Firstly, there was the feeling among certain people "that British officials in the early 1950's had wanted to bolster the North and that this had influenced their counting".⁵⁷ Some also held that Southerners had felt that the 1952 counting was for more taxation of the people and so had evaded the enumerators. This fear reflected the 1929 incident in Ibo country - the Women's Riot (see Chapter 2 of this thesis).

The Census day was May 13, 1962 and the officer in charge of the operations was Mr. J.J. Warren, a British official, who had to work with 45,000 enumerators from across the country.⁵⁸ The first returns from the census in July "showed very substantial increases in the populations of the Western and Eastern Regions and a more moderate increase in the North ..."⁵⁹ However, Dr. Michael Okpara, the Premier of the East maintained that the figures from the East were accurate and that he would stick to them. After a lot of disagreement, a verification exercise was undertaken and "the result was the same in the East and the West, but the North suddenly rose from 22.5 million [in July] to 31 million [in December]".⁶⁰ When the Minister responsible for the Census, Waziri Ibrahim (from Bornu in the North), placed the matter before the Cabinet, he "submitted the original Eastern and Western totals together with the 'verified' Northern figures, thus suggesting that Mr. Warren's approval had been bestowed on the 31 million and not on the 22.5 million of the original count".⁶¹ The outcome

of this was a row in the Cabinet between the NPC and the NCNC in coalition. Seeing that tempers were exploding, and that questions were being raised about discrepancies especially in the Northern figures, the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, decided to cancel the whole census and start a fresh count. The original 1962 Census, when broken down gave the Regions the following:

North	22.0 (in millions)
East	12.3
Mid-West	2.4
West	8.1
Lagos	0.45

FIGURE 3. Showing the (Regional) Population of Nigeria in 1962 Census.

Source: Adapted from Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 213.

THE 1963-64 CENSUS CONFLICTS

Following Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's promise to cancel the controversial 1962 census figures, the Federal and Regional governments met in September 1963 and agreed on a quick head count between November 5th and 8th.⁶² The exercise was to be in the hands of Regional officers, but each Region was to send a team of inspectors to the other Regions in order to observe the conduct of the operations. The Eastern Region sent mixed groups of men and women to the North whose religious belief bars men from seeing their women in 'purdah'.^{*} By the end of 1963, the

^{*} 'Purdah' is a Muslim practice which requires the separation of women from public sight at certain periods of the year. In such occasions only women are allowed to see them; and the East sent women to count those whom 'the

figures were collected and after what was described as "exhaustive tests", the Census Board announced the results on February 24, 1964. "They placed the Northern Region at 29,777,986, the East at 12,388,646, the West (with the new Region of the Mid-West) at 12,811,837, while the Federal Territory of Lagos numbered 675,352."⁶³ These figures aggregated meant that Nigeria jumped, within a short space of time, from a little over 30 million to nearly 56 million. As can be seen from comparison with Figure 3 (p. 156) the East as well as Lagos retained the same figures that were given in 1962. The West inflated its figure more grossly than before. The North reduced its "verified" figure of 1962 from 31 million to 29, yet it still pushed in 7.3 million more people than its original accepted figure (22 million) for 1962.

The Eastern Premier, Dr. Michael Okpara lost no time in criticizing the result. He told a news conference on February 28 - just a few days after the Census Board had released the figures:

"I regret that the inflations disclosed are of such astronomical proportions that the figures taken as a whole, are worse than useless."⁶⁴

Michael Okpara therefore gave a list of what was called his "objections" - ranging from "Double counting" among other allegations, to "Refusal of entry into Purday".⁶⁵ He was supported by the NCNC Premier of the Mid-West, Chief Dennis Osadebay, who described the results as "the most stupendous joke of our age".⁶⁶ From that point, Nigeria became a political 'mine field' and the NPC/NCNC coalition was completely dead. In the same charged

political climate, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Premier of the North, announced that "it is the belief of his government ... that the Census ... had been properly and efficiently conducted and that no better organization could have been made".⁶⁷ In the West, NCNC Parliamentary members maintained that no "reasonable, honest and fair-minded person" could accept the figures. Yet, Premier Akintola accepted "the results of the Census".⁶⁸ Also it was reported that the Prime Minister of Nigeria, Tafawa Balewa, had regarded the results of the census as entirely satisfactory. He therefore "announced that the Delimitation Commission would start work reallocating constituencies on the basis of these new population figures".⁶⁹ Dr. Michael Okpara challenged this decision in the Supreme Court, but his case was dismissed. It then became clear that the 1964 Federal Election would take place with the constituencies and register drawn from the disputed census. In August, "the Federal Electoral Commission announced that the 312 seats in the Federal House of Representatives would be reallocated with 167 for the North, 70 in the East, 57 in the West, 14 for the Mid-West and 4 for Lagos".⁷⁰

The Census dispute had many implications, it had exacerbated the Ibo/Hausa-Fulani hostility to the extent that "punitive measures against Easterners [in the North intensified], such as expulsion from market stalls by the Native Authorities".⁷¹ The Census provided Chief Akintola with the opportunity by which the local NCNC wing in the West was destroyed - for he formed a new party - the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which went into alliance with the NPC. Further implications of the Census dispute will be treated in the next section dealing with the Federal Election of 1964.

THE NIGERIAN FEDERAL ELECTION CRISIS, 1964

The results of the Census had almost destroyed the NPC-NCNC coalition at the center and also had exacerbated ethnic hostilities between the North and the East. A shift of party alliance seemed inevitable as far as the NPC and the NCNC were concerned. By the end of July 1964, Sir Ahmadu Bello, leader of the NPC, had announced his intentions not to have any further political dealings with the NCNC. He maintained: "Even if my party fails to get the required majority in the next federal elections [to be held in December 1964], it will definitely not enter into agreement or coalition with the NCNC". He concluded by saying that "the Ibos have never been true friends of the North and will never be ..."⁷² Ahmadu Bello's NPC, with the help of the Prime Minister, had already concluded an alliance with Akintola, whom the Prime Minister preferred to work with politically over Awolowo or any of Awolowo's sympathizers. What then emerged were two alliances in 1964: one between the NPC and Akintola's United Peoples Party (UPP) which later changed its name to Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP);* the other between the NCNC and the Action Group. The former became the NNA - Nigerian National Alliance and the latter, the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). However, other minor political parties joined one of the two groups - this will be dealt with later in

* The NNDP is not to be confused with Herbert Macauley's Party - also NNDP - which was inaugurated in 1923 and later joined hands with the NCNC. Perhaps Akintola adopted the same name in order to enjoy the "corporate image" of Macauley and leave the impression that he was furthering the cause of Macauley. (See Chapter 4 of this work.)

this chapter.

Meanwhile, the 'big' political parties were preparing for a 'combat'. Dr. Michael Okpara had visited Lagos in June and had assured supporters that the coalition with the NPC would come to an end with the life of Parliament that year, and had regretted the alliance to start with - calling the "Coalition ... a great mistake".⁷³ It would seem from the statements of Bello and Okpara that they both saw the unworkability of their coalition government. The details of the UPGA strategy were worked out, the NPF (the Northern Progressive Front^{*}) joined forces with the AG and the NCNC. The leaders of these parties - Michael Okpara for the NCNC; Alhaji D.S. Adegbenro for the AG; J.S. Tarka for the UMBC; and Alhaji Aminu Kano for the NEPU - formed a directing committee of four to oversee UPGA interests during the election.⁷⁴

The NNA, which now embraced the NPC and the NNDP, attracted some Southern parties like the Niger Delta Congress, the Mid-West Democratic Front, and Dr. Chike Obi's Dynamic Party. By September 1964, the Political climate of Nigeria was defined by a perverse use of the seven letters - NNA and UPGA.

The election campaign which followed the nomination of party candidates was dirty and chaotic - there were reports of thuggery, obstruction of political 'enemies' from visiting 'captured' regions, and punitive control of government apparatus by some parties in order to disadvantage

* The Northern Progressive Front consisted of the UMBC and the NEPU which merged in November 1963 to present a more united stand in the Federal election of 1964.

their opponents. Perhaps it is worth considering the nature of the campaigns Region by Region; this will help in giving order to the analysis of the election in 1964.

According to some sources, the election campaign was dirtier in the West than the other Regions. This was so in the West because political conflicts had assumed a pattern of normality there since the events of 1962.⁷⁵ In June 1964, when the UPGA Leader, Dr. Okpara, announced his plans to tour the West in order to bring his group's views to the people, the government of the West made it clear that the visit was an "encroachment" by the NCNC into the Western Region.⁷⁶ The Governor of the Western Region, Sir Odeleye Fadahunsi, even appealed to the President, Azikiwe, asking him to urge Okpara to postpone his tour of the West.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, Okpara went to the West to campaign and several obstacles lay in his way. His attempt to deliver a lecture at the University of Ife was frustrated when the University authorities forbade the meeting, and he had to move to Ibadan University.⁷⁸ His wife, Adanma, who was scheduled to hold a meeting at Ilesha Town Hall, was refused permission.⁷⁹ Besides these, there were reports that "a group of NCNC supporters was severely beaten while travelling on the Akure-Ondo road; market women were beaten at Ogbesse; and NCNC and Action Group flags at Owo were torn and destroyed".⁸⁰ The use of thugs by the NNDP, according to Post and Vickers, produced retaliation from the AG (UPGA) who were in a position to fight back.⁸¹ For example, in Ijebu-Ode, the NNDP leader, Prince Adepoju Odufunnade "was surrounded by a crowd who ordered him to shout 'Awo [Lowo]'. He refused and fired a gun at the crowd, who then dragged

him out of his house and beat him to death".⁸² Not long after that, another NNDP supporter, "Mr. Oguunloye Fakunmoju was found dead of machet wounds at Ipara-Remo" (a town).⁸³ These atrocities persisted in the Western Region until a "Peace Agreement" was reached by the political parties on October 23rd, 1964. The agreement stated that:

1. All local government and Native Authority Police forces^{*} should be integrated into the Nigerian Police Force and be under the control of the NPF [Nigerian Police Force] for the purpose of the election.
2. All political parties should be given equal opportunity to campaign anywhere in the Republic without let or hindrance and that freedom of movement and assembly should be granted throughout the country.
3. All government-controlled organs of publicity should offer broad-

* Apart from the NPF, local government Police existed in the West, and Native Authority Police in the North. These were organs of the Regional governments. But the East had no local Police force except the NPF units in the Region. The Ibos were not used to the idea of Chiefs who had established courts and used local police force to control their subjects. Even the so-called "court messengers" who were employed in the local court system in Iboland were not policemen, but simply 'messengers' of the courts - delivering summons to the people. Sociologically speaking, there was no need for local policemen in Iboland; unlike the North and West, where tradition encouraged their use.

casting and advertising opportunities to all parties.

4. There should be no discrimination in the granting of permits for public meetings.
5. All bans on public meetings ... [should] be lifted throughout the country.
6. Hooligan[ism] and thuggery [were] to be stamped out.⁸⁴

Despite this "Peace Agreement" there were still charges that not much had been achieved. Only two days after the "Agreement" "Dr. Okpara and his campaign team [who] were due at a party rally in Ogbomosho (Chief Akintola's home town) ... were stopped by a road block".⁸⁵ The Local government police said that orders had been issued by the District Council not to allow the meeting in the town hall. But with the intervention of the Nigerian Police Force, the UPGA team was allowed passage and the meeting was held in the open field.⁸⁶ The Western Regional government used all administrative weapons at its disposal to effect punitive control against the UPGA; some of these measures ranged from 'disorderly conduct or conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace'.⁸⁷

In the North, the situation almost resembled that in the West. The "NPC was accustomed to treat the opposition minority [in the North] roughly and did not break the habit in 1964".⁸⁸ There were a series of complaints from the UPGA against the NNA. When Okpara and the other leaders of his alliance were on a campaign tour of the North, they were said to have been obstructed by road blocks wielded against them. "Their meetings were forbidden in Lafia, Funtua and other towns; [and] at Katsina they found the city gates closed against them ..."⁸⁹ There were charges

that the Native Authority Police, the local (alkalai) courts and thugs combined to make UPGA campaigning almost impossible. "By November 20th, the NPF leader, Alhaji Aminu Kano was reporting that 26 of his candidates were in jail".⁹⁰ Earlier in October, about 134 UPGA supporters were said to have been bound over (given a warning) for six months and some 95 given prison terms ranging from six to twelve months.⁹¹ Even lawyers who were working to secure the release of UPGA members were themselves entrapped; one of these, C.M. Abengowe "was himself found guilty of unlawful assembly by the Anchau Alkali's Court in October and sentenced to nine month's imprisonment with hard labour".⁹² After protests from the Eastern Nigeria Bar Association, and pressure from the Minister of Justice from the East, Abengowe's application for a writ of habeas corpus bore fruit - but four weeks after his sentence.⁹³ There were reports of the continuation of the Tiv riots and on "December 16th, Mr. J.S. Tarka, leader of the UMBC was arrested for incitement, and units of the Nigerian Army which had been stationed in the Division since November 1964, were asked to 'restore order'".⁹⁴ Observers maintained that NPC supporters in the North were not prepared to relax in their efforts to frighten or intimidate their opponents.⁹⁵

It is interesting to evaluate the conduct of the campaign in the East, especially the question as to why UPGA members were complaining the most. However, it would be difficult to establish the general conduct of the campaign since "the Northern People's Congress and NNDP leaders did not campaign outside their own region, and were not exposed, therefore, to the possibility of the sort of obstruction which their rivals

met".⁹⁶ Observers had the view that considering the campaigning by the Mid-West Democratic Front, the Dynamic Party, Niger Delta Congress, Republican Party and Eastern People's Congress in the East, coupled with the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party in various parts of the south, "it does seem clear that far less thuggery, punitive control, and obstruction was used against them by the incumbent parties".⁹⁷ There seems to be some element of truth in this assertion, considering the fact that Dr. Michael Okpara had invited Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Chief Akintola to tour the East and campaign in that Region and thus demonstrate their concern with the whole Federation.⁹⁸ But these leaders did not accept the invitation. This notwithstanding, there were occasional complaints by those southern parties of victimization by the UPGA. For example, in November, "the MDF (Mid-West Democratic Front) ruefully pointed out that all its leaders had been arrested at some time or another".⁹⁹ In December, the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party (S.W.A.F.P.) complained in a telegram to the President and Prime Minister "that its supporters in Aba North and Obubra constituencies were being 'terrorised', victimised and attacked".¹⁰⁰ However, a critical assessment of the whole situation would prove that these charges were either exaggerated or made up to balance the charges of the UPGA. To start with, the law enforcement agents in the East were the Nigerian Police Force, which was controlled from Lagos by its Inspector General^{*}; it would be inconceivable to link the Nigerian

* The Inspector-General himself, Louis Edet, was not an Ibo, he was an Effik (Calabar in the East).

Police with local political influence in the East. Besides, at the beginning of November, the MDF suggested that the Sardauna of Sokoto lend a helicopter to Dr. Okpara in order that the NCNC leader might conveniently cover the vast distances in the North on his campaign tour.¹⁰¹ Obviously, this call by an ally of the NNA suggested that the UPGA was not harrasing its opponents in the East, otherwise the MDF would have asked the Sardauna to intensify the obstacles against the UPGA in the North. This is not to suggest that there were no clashes between political opponents in the East, but the intensity was not much, and little evidence exists as cited above.

Despite all attempts by thugs and local police forces (where they existed) to frustrate the campaign, there were some measures by which the administration 'wanted' to conduct a free and fair election. The Federal Electoral Commission (FEC) was set up under the Chairmanship of Mr. E.E. Esua* - the General Secretary of the Nigerian Union of Teachers. Each Region was represented by a member including the new Mid-West. The Commission had to base its work on the Census returns, as was already pointed out. Considering the fact that the Commission had to recruit polling and counting officers from the Regions, the administrative efficiency and neutrality of this body were questionable. However, the Commission set its machinery to work. Having accomplished its task of delimitation of the constituencies, it was faced with the preparation of the preliminary list. According to the Electoral Act, these lists had to be displayed

* Mr. E.E. Esua was from a minority ethnic group in the East - Efik. He was not an Ibo.

publicly for some thirty days in order to permit claims of omissions and corrections.¹⁰² The exercise was to have started on the 7th of September but because errors were said to have been detected, it was not possible to publish all the rolls until October.¹⁰³ The Prime Minister delayed the dissolution of the House until he was told that all arrangements were ready for the election. "On December 10th Sir Abubakar asked the President to dissolve Parliament, and to announce that the general election would take place on December 30th."¹⁰⁴ The problems were not over because the nomination papers had to be signed by two nominators whose names appeared on register for their constituency before December 18th. But by December 14th, the register for the North had not been published. UPGA politicians, therefore, demanded a postponement of the final day for the nominations. However, the lists were published on the 17th, leaving only one day before the deadline - 18th December.¹⁰⁵

More complications came into the nomination procedure because of this delay in publishing the lists in the North. "Not only was the most extreme pressure brought to bear on prospective UPGA candidates to force them to drop out of the running before they were actually nominated, but electoral officers frequently connived at, or even actively assisted, measures devised to prevent their official registration."¹⁰⁶ There were charges that any constituency where the NPC could prevent the nomination of its opponents by the official date, December 18th, would pass to the NNA as "officially unopposed".¹⁰⁷ In this respect, local NPC leaders, including the Sardauna and his elite group were said to be prepared to employ all available means to eliminate potential opponents, ranging from kidnapping to murder.¹⁰⁸ Electoral officers were often accused of dodging

UPGA candidates wishing to hand in their nomination papers.¹⁰⁹ Despite appeals by President Azikiwe, and the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Edet, for a fair election, the nomination tactics continued. Meanwhile, Mr. C.C. Mojekwu, the Eastern Attorney-General, who had just returned from a fact finding tour in the North, had to cable the Chairman of FEC demanding the extension of the 18th December deadline for five days.¹¹⁰ However, the Chairman of FEC, Mr. Esua, agreed to extend the closing date for registration of nomination papers only to Saturday, December 19th and a team of FEC members flew to Kano in the North to see things for themselves.¹¹¹ Tension was very high throughout the country and acts of hooliganism were widely reported.

On the evening of the 20th, the Eastern Premier, Dr. Michael Okpara, gave a Television speech on 'Face the Nation', where he described the election as a "colossal farce" and declared, "There will be no election at all".¹¹² With threats of boycotting the election if the extension period was not sufficient enough, the FEC, nonetheless, started to receive details of the nominations. By December 22nd, there were said to be seventy-eight unopposed candidates in all, fifteen for the NCNC in the East, sixty-one for the NPC in the North, and two for the NNDP in the West.¹¹³ This provoked anger within the AG hierarchy which had opposed the NNDP's unopposed claim "since they were both from Ife Division, and had been allotted to that party [the AG], which claimed to have certificates of acceptance to prove that nomination papers had been handed to the electoral officers".¹¹⁴ The FEC appeared to have seen the truth in

the AG claim and so decided that NNDP be opposed throughout the Western Region.¹¹⁵ To balance the charges on unopposed candidates, the NNDP in Ibadan, speaking on behalf of the Republican Party Leader, Dr. Okazie, asked the FEC to conduct an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the unopposed NCNC candidates in the East. Dr. Okazie maintained that in each of the cases there was an NNA candidate who had been duly nominated and issued a certificate of validity.¹¹⁶ However, it was alleged that "In the East, 15 UPGA candidates had no opponents ... because the NNA could not or did not choose to contest these seats".¹¹⁷

On December 22, after Esua had returned from his fact-finding tour of the North, not East, he said that investigations had proved that there were cases where one candidate had been returned unopposed when in the real sense more than one candidate had registered. He cited three instances, two in the North which he visited and one in the East which he did not visit.¹¹⁸ On this score, on December 24th, Dr. Okpara, Chief Dennis Osadebay, and Alhaji D.S. Adegbenro headed an UPGA delegation to the President, threatening that unless the election was postponed, the UPGA would boycott the poll. Having heard the views of the UPGA leaders, President Azikiwe was said to have conferred with the Governors of the Regions on the 26th and decided to invite all the Premiers to confer with him in Lagos on December 29th.¹¹⁹ Earlier there had been talks between the Prime Minister and the President, where the President suggested the "postponement of the elections for six months and requested that United Nations experts and advisers be invited to come and supervise the conduct".¹²⁰

Sir Abubakar was said to have argued that there was no reason for postponement and that it would be humiliating to admit any outside assistance like the United Nations.¹²¹

During the meeting of the 29th December, the Northern and Western Premiers were absent and it was reported that the Sardauna had maintained he would not attend because the meeting was to discuss the secession of the East.¹²² Only the Governors and Premiers of the East and Mid-West joined the President and the Prime Minister at the meeting. However, the deadlock remained unresolved. On the same day, December 29th, UPGA staged a boycott of the elections. The Prime Minister announced that the elections would take place as scheduled on the 30th; Esua supported the view of the Prime Minister and two members of the FEC, Mr. Aniagolu (East) and Mr. Akenzua (Mid-West), all resigned. The next day, December 30th, partial elections took place - mostly in the North, parts of the West and Mid-West. The following days witnessed personal conflicts between the President and Prime Minister; the country was almost in total disarray; (see next page). Figure 4 shows the distribution of seats after the polling on the 30th of December, 1964; this includes the unopposed candidates.

Two days after the election, December 31st, 1964, and January 1st, 1965, were very crucial in determining which path Nigeria would follow - disintegration or still "one Nigeria". The President, Dr. Azikiwe, took a stand, maintaining that the elections were not conducted satisfactorily and as such he would not reappoint Sir Abubakar to form a new Government. In a long speech^{*} Dr. Azikiwe gave instances of violations of freedom in

* This speech was to have been broadcast to the nation on the first of January, 1965, but it was cancelled because of attempts to reconcile Zik and Balewa. However, Radio Brazzaville and some other foreign sources aired the speech and so it was printed by the West African Pilot the next day. Balewa's reply to this speech was also cancelled, but printed in the West African Pilot.

	NPC	NNDP	NCNC	AG	NPF	INDS.	TOTALS
North	162	--	--	--	4	1	167
West	---	36	5	15	-	1	57
Mid-West	---	--	13	--	-	-	13
East	---	--	15	--	-	-	15
Lagos	---	--	--	--	-	1	1
TOTALS	162	36	33	15	4	3	253

FIGURE 4. The Distribution of Seats after the Election of 30th December 1964.

Source: K.W.J. Post and Michael Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, p. 183.

the past weeks and concluded that "I would rather resign than exercise the power to call on a person to form a new government".¹²³ The army had paraded the streets of Lagos earlier in order to make its presence felt by the population and it was alleged that the Prime Minister had summoned all the heads of the services to discuss necessary precautions.¹²⁴ President Azikiwe was also said to have invited Major-General Welby-Everard (the British officer commanding the Nigerian Army); Commodore Wey of the Navy; and the Inspector-General of Police, Edet, to the State House and was "alleged to have pointed out that they owed allegiance first to him as President of the Republic and to have drawn General Everard's attention to the fact that the President was Commander-in-Chief and that all officers took an oath of allegiance to him".¹²⁵ After all kinds of constitutional arguments regarding the powers of the President and those of

the Prime Minister, some members of the judiciary decided to bridge the gulf between the President and the Prime Minister¹²⁶ (refer to paragraph below). On the 3rd of January, 1965, the Chief Justice of the Federation, Sir Adetokunboh Ademola, and Chief Justice of the East, Sir Louis Mbanefo, decided to meet Balewa and Azikiwe with a 'Six-Point Plan' to resolve the impending crisis.

The Six-Point Plan was aimed at reminding Azikiwe and Balewa that 'bloodshed, violence and national disintegration' could be avoided if the NNA and UPGA leaders agreed to:

1. A strict observance of the constitution.
2. The formation of a broad-based government led by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister.
3. The determination of the legality of the election except in those constituencies where by-elections would have to be held due to the small number of votes cast.
4. The acceptance of the results of the election except in those constituencies where by-elections would have to be held due to the small number of votes cast.
5. Review of the constitution and machinery for elections (to take place in six months).
6. The dissolution of the Government of the West so that the people of that region would have the opportunity to express their will as to who should govern them.¹²⁷

Meanwhile, the Chief Justices made known to Azikiwe that Sir Abubakar had

accepted the terms of the pact 'in principle'^{*} and on this basis the President named the Prime Minister: "I have this evening [January 4, 1965] summoned the Rt. Honourable Sir Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to form a government and I have his permission to say he intends to form a broad-based government".¹²⁸ This "Zik-Balewa Pact" as it was later known, was not received happily by the two major alliances, the NNA and UPGA. An observer has noted that "Dr. Okpara had grudgingly agreed to the [Pact] because he was not prepared ... to lead the East in seceding from the Federation".¹²⁹ Even some critical members of the alliance began to express doubts about the 'broad-based' government to be formed. In this regard, Chief Ogunsanya, one of the NCNC leaders from the West put it cynically: "It all depends on what the Prime Minister means by a broad-based government. I would want some categorical statements in respect of the agreed points and something about the release of Awo[lowo]".¹³⁰ The NNA had even pointed out clearly that if Sir Abubakar continued to "fail" and did not "get tough" they would have him replaced by Sir Kashim Ibrahim, the Governor of the North.¹³¹ The idea was that Sir Abubakar should not give any ministerial post to the UPGA.

However, on the 7th of January, the Prime Minister announced the names of seventeen ministers. "These were all the NPC members of the previous Cabinet together with Pro-NPC independents like Senator Majekodunmi and T.O. Elias".¹³² Two NCNC members were named - Festus Okotie-Eboh and

* It was reported that Sir Abubakar was opposed to point 6 because he felt that Constitutionally dissolution of the Western House would be in eight months time.

K.O. Mbaduwe; two seats were given to the NNDP, and it was said that two other seats would be available for the NCNC after the elections had been held in the areas that had boycotted the poll.¹³³ For the purpose of the election, a Bill was passed in Parliament permitting elections where the boycott had been total. On March 18, 1965, the election took place; the results provided a victory for the UPGA. Out of 59 seats contested, the UPGA captured 57 and two seats in the East were won by independent candidates.¹³⁴ Figure 5 gives a detailed result of the 1964-65 election.

	NPC	NNDP	NCNC	AG	NPF	INDS.	TOTALS
North	(162)	--	--	--	(4)	(1)	167(167)
West	---	(36)	(5)	(15)	---	(1)	57(57)
Mid-West	---	--	1(13)	--	---	---	14(13)
East	---	--	49(15)	4	---	2	70(15)
Lagos	---	--	1	2	---	(1)	4(1)
FINAL PARTY TOTALS	(162)	(36)	83(33)	21(15)	(4)	5(3)	312(253)

FIGURE 5. Little Election Results and Final Party Totals (interim results of December 1964 in brackets)

Source: Post et al., op. cit., p. 213.

The political consequences of the 1964-65 federal election were enormous: the election completely destroyed the coalition government at the center - this has been seen from the statements of both the Sardauna

of Sokoto, and Dr. Michael Okpara. Also, the power of the central government became synonymous with the NPC hierarchy of the North, that is to say that although Nigeria was supposedly a federation of four Regions, the power base was in the NPC North. The election demonstrated clearly the decay of the Nigerian political system; the atrocities associated with it - thuggery, murder, detention, jail sentences, etc. - underlined the fact that democracy - at least the Westminster meaning of the concept - had been destroyed in Nigeria. This could be seen in the lack of freedom of movement and campaigning which characterized the election period. It heightened ethnic hostilities, especially the anti-Ibo feelings that deepened in the North and within the NNDP circles in the West. Some insight into the statements made by certain highly placed politicians in the West and the North will clarify this point. Appealing to his Yoruba supporters to intensify their loyalty to their group and dislike for the Ibos, Chief Taku Onibaje of the NNDP declared that "More and more Ibo business interests are pouring into Lagos and Ibadan and the Ibos are striving might and main to penetrate the Western economy thereby exploiting our wealth and riches for the benefit of themselves".¹³⁵ Even the Premier of the West, Chief Akintola, was quoted as saying that "While the Northerners [the NPC] have a good exchange of commodities in Kolanuts and cows with the Yorubas, the Ibos have nothing to offer the Yorubas except second-hand clothings".¹³⁶ In the North, Malam Maude Ahmadu Sidi Gyani was also cited as saying that he would "use his position as a district head to draft all the Native Authority policemen at his command ... to deal with the Ibos ...".¹³⁷ To crown it all, the election strengthened Chief Akintola's

power base in the Western government because he was enjoying the protection of the NPC government at the center. The effects of Akintola's political strength will be demonstrated in the section dealing with the Western Nigeria election of 1965.

THE WESTERN ELECTION, 1965

The holding of the Western election in 1965 was part of the 'Zik-Balewa Pact' of the previous year, though Balewa did not accept an immediate election then. However, on the 19th of September, the Western House of Assembly and the House of Chiefs were dissolved; the polling day was fixed for 11th October.¹³⁸ The campaign which followed the polling was as violent as that of the Federal election in 1964, and with the administrative networks of the Region still in the hands of the NNDP, punitive measures against political opponents were said to have been staggering. Nominations were due to close on the 27th, but "there were numerous complaints from UPGA* that this process was being made extremely difficult for them".¹³⁹ Even Eastern politicians from the UPGA who were assisting in the campaign in Ife Division reported that "they had not been able to find local Electoral Officers to accept nominations and had been threatened by thugs".¹⁴⁰ The tactic of the NNDP at this point "was apparently to restrict as much as possible the influence over the conduct of the election of anyone whom it was not sure it could manipulate".¹⁴¹

Meanwhile, the anti-Ibo drum was beaten once again. While launching the NNDP 'Operation Salvation for the West' on the 25th of September,

* The UPGA still stood as a body in the Western election of 1965.

R.O.A. Akinjide, the then Federal Minister of Education and General Secretary of the NNDP said, "the members of the UPGA are now shamelessly seeking for [sic] the votes of the people of Western Nigeria to enable them [to] carry out their plan to establish 'Ibo Empire' in Nigeria".¹⁴² On the 28th of September, the NNDP official organ, the Daily Sketch, was quoted as launching an offensive in its editorial, "Courting disaster", stating that "the election in Western Nigeria is, as has now been clearly shown, a battle between the Yorubas and the Ibos".¹⁴³ The NNDP attacked the Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Mobile Police Unit in that area, Mr. M.A. Ibekwe, an Ibo, whom they looked at as a threat in their strategy of influencing Police officers. It was alleged the NNDP would have preferred a Yoruba Officer, Odofin Bello, because "We don't want Easterners (Ibos) to run the elections for us".¹⁴⁴ In a court hearing, Odofin Bello was said to have been found guilty of taking bribes, though acquitted; "the NNDP Treasurer and the Western Finance Minister were alleged to have had a special fund for suborning policemen [during the elections]".¹⁴⁵

Although the Federal government had drafted well over 3,000 Nigerian policemen into the West, with a substantial number of troops, still the election was not peaceful.¹⁴⁶ By the 26th of September, the day before the end of nominations, Alhaji Adegbenro of the UPGA called for an extension of the period probably because of the alleged reluctance of electoral officers to accept nomination papers from UPGA candidates. On September 28th, it was announced that twelve NNDP candidates had been returned unopposed and by the 30th, the number had increased to fifteen.¹⁴⁷ Alhaji Adegbenro retorted by claiming that eighty-six certificates had

been sent to the Western Electoral Commission and that his group had received certificates of validity from Electoral Officers.¹⁴⁸ The UPGA leader, Dr. Michael Okpara had challenged the 'unopposed' claims by the NNDP on the grounds that "the UPGA have given a good account of themselves" by submitting their nominations.¹⁴⁹ However, Chief Justice of the West was said to have dismissed a request for an injunction to prevent Electoral Officers from declaring controversial candidates returned unopposed.¹⁵⁰ To allay the fear of UPGA candidates who felt that the government was using its powers to the advantage of the NNDP, UPGA leaders maintained "that widespread falsification of results was likely, and proposed that ballot papers printed by the Western Government should not be used, that the Nigerian Police should take charge of the papers until polling day, and that after polling stations closed the Army should take charge of the boxes full of papers and transport them to the count".¹⁵¹ UPGA proposals were ignored and what came out of the election was a serious crisis.

In the election "in which ballot papers were available to government party members before the polling, and in which the regulations governing the counting of votes and the announcing of results were openly flouted", the NNDP claimed victory.¹⁵² According to Western Nigerian government sources, the result was said to be seventy-one seats for the NNDP and seventeen for the UPGA.¹⁵³ But UPGA claimed that it won sixty-eight seats and that the election had been rigged - a claim that was accepted by many observers.¹⁵⁴ For instance, Robin Luckham has maintained that the election "was openly rigged by the NNDP ... and that ballot boxes were stuffed [by the NNDP] with extra ballot papers ..."¹⁵⁵ Alhaji Adegbenro

of the UPGA with his supporters therefore announced that he had formed "an Interim Government preparatory to taking power in the region".¹⁵⁶ Almost immediately, Adegbenro and his supporters were arrested, and this brought with it the most violent situation Nigeria had ever experienced:

"Murder, looting, arson, mayhem were rife. On the roads gangs of rival thugs cut down trees, stopping motorists to ask their political affiliations. The wrong answers brought robbery or death. Within a few weeks estimated deaths were between 1,000 and 2,000".¹⁵⁷

There were allegations that the Federal Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, had "refused to acknowledge that the poll results had been rigged, and had sent the federal security forces (many of the police being drawn from the North, something that exacerbated ordinary bitterness) to support the government [of Akintola]".¹⁵⁸ To further down play the situation in the West, when appeals were repeatedly sent to him to declare a state of emergency, dissolve the disputed government of Akintola and call a fresh election in the West, the Prime Minister was alleged to have said that he had "no power" to deal with the situation.¹⁵⁹ Still to give the outside world the impression that all was well with Nigeria, when thousands of people were dying every day in actual fact, the Prime Minister "invited a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference to meet in Lagos in the first week of January 1966 to discuss the question of restoring law and order in rebellious Rhodesia".¹⁶⁰ Unfortunately for the

Commonwealth Conference, the Nigerian Army overthrew the Balewa government on January 15, 1966.*

The political implications of the Western election of 1965 also concerned the nature of the Nigerian leadership and its ability to manage conflicts. Critically minded observers have questioned the logic behind the federal government's claim that "the issues at stake pertained to the Western government only and had to be resolved in the West ..."¹⁶¹ Yet, the Federal government sent in troops who "operated in close liaison with the police and Chief Akintola's regional government, especially in October-November, 1965, during the regional election and its aftermath".¹⁶² The Prime Minister was not prepared to force Akintola to resign because the elections were rigged. Equally he was not prepared to destroy the NNDP alliance with the NPC by declaring a state of emergency in the Western Region. Observers seemed to believe that the political situation in 1965 was worse than the "crisis" of 1962, when Tafawa Balewa declared a state of emergency that placed Akintola in government.

Another important implication of the election was the persistent politicization of the army. The Nigerian army had, before this time, been used in a number of civil (political) disturbances - most of these have been noted. But in the Western election of 1965 "the pressures on the army to take sides were stronger than ever before".¹⁶³ On many occasions

* The Military take over of the Balewa Federal government and its results are not within the compass of this thesis; this work is primarily concerned with the decay of Nigeria's First Republic, i.e., the Civilian Regime. However, brief mention will be made of the military take over later in this chapter.

army officers were alleged to have been carrying party symbols on their jeeps, thus indicating that the Nigerian military was no longer the supposedly neutral organization inherited from the British.¹⁶⁴

Perhaps the most important consequence of the Western election was that it became the 'last straw that broke the camel's back' - that is, the last crisis that plunged Nigeria into the disintegration of the first Republic. When the Young Army officers took over power on the 15th of January, 1966, the Western crisis among others, became the main concern of the military, hence:

"For some time now there have been escalating political disturbances in parts of Nigeria with increasing loss of faith between political parties, and between political leaders themselves. This crisis of confidence reached a head during the elections in the Western Region in October last year. There were charges by the opposition parties of rigging of the elections and general abuse of power by the Regional Government and in the conduct of the elections. Riots, arson, murder and looting became widespread in Western Nigeria since October. The situation deteriorated and certain army officers attempted to seize power."¹⁶⁵

The Military coup was led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu,^{*} an

* Nzeogwu had Ibo and Hausa names (Chukwuma - Ibo, and Kaduna - Hausa). Most people who knew him personally identified him more as a Hausa than an Ibo. Perhaps it was because of his Ibo nationality that some people tended to regard the coup as an Ibo-inspired operation. But Nzeogwu was known as very pro-Nigerian and would definitely not carry out a coup in the name of the Ibo ethnic group. Moreover, "On the evidence now available ... there seem good grounds for believing that the coup in which Nzeogwu took part was not, at least as far as he was concerned personally, an Ibo plot". John Oyinbo, Nigeria Crisis and Beyond, p. 45.

Ibo who was born and raised in the Northern Region. But, because he failed in the coup, that is, he could not command the loyalty of the entire army, the new government which was formed in January 1966 was headed by Major-General J.T.U. Aguiyi-Ironsi, an Ibo. He was then the most senior and highest-ranking officer in the Nigerian Army. Shortly after anti-Ibo sentiments erupted in Northern Nigeria and on July 29, 1966, Northern soldiers struck in a second coup d'etat killing many high-ranking Ibo army officers, as well as the Supreme Commander, General Ironsi. Many factors were alleged to have led to the second coup:

"[T]here was the Northern fear of the South, and particularly of the Ibo, the regions had been abolished ... [by the Ironsi regime] and the civil service unified ... and there was dislike of the Ibo bureaucrats and top government advisers ... But what triggered off the coup was the widespread and nervous belief among Northern rank-and-file soldiers that a further Ibo-led coup was imminent in which more Northerners might be killed".¹⁶⁶

Following this coup, a pogrom was unleashed on September 29, 1966, which eventually gave rise to the massacre of well over 30,000 persons of Eastern Nigerian origin. (A special commission set up by the Eastern Nigerian government put the figure at 50,000.)¹⁶⁷ As a result of the pogrom, more than 2,000,000 Easterners returned by the end of 1966 to their home towns as refugees.¹⁶⁸ When all attempts, both at home (in Nigeria) and abroad, failed to bring peace between the Federal government, then led by Yakubu Gowon and the people of Eastern Nigeria, on 30 May, 1967, Lt.-Col.

C. Odumegwu Ojukwu, Military Governor of Nigeria's Eastern Region, announced the secession of Eastern Nigeria from the Federation and the creation of the sovereign and independent state called the Republic of Biafra.¹⁶⁹ The creation of Biafra brought about the disintegration of Nigeria's first Republic in 1967 and the civil war that followed (1967-70).*

In this chapter, we have examined the nature and sources of the Nigerian political crises. We have also considered the attitude of the central government in managing these conflicts. The implications of the conflicts which culminated in the disintegration of Nigeria in 1967 have also been considered.

The next chapter (Chapter Six), which is the conclusion of this thesis, will concentrate on what Nigerian peoples should have done to

* There are many sources on the Nigerian military and the Biafran/Nigerian War. For those interested in this area of study, some of these references might be helpful:

Arthur A. Nwankwo and Samuel U. Ifejika, The Making of a Nation: Biafra (London: C. Hurst, 1969); Peter Lloyd, B.J. Dudley et al. (ed.); Nigerian Politics and Military Rule: Prelude to the Civil War (London: Athlone Press, 1970); Frederick Forsyth, The Making of an African Legend: the Biafran Story (England: Penguin Books, 1977); E. Wayne Nafziger, "The Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria", The Journal of Modern African Studies, 11, 4(1973), pp. 505-536; John Oyinbu, Nigeria: Crisis and Beyond (London: Charles Knight and Co., Ltd., 1971); C. Odumegwu Ojukwu, Biafra, Vol. 1 (especially those diaries of events between 1966-1970).

avert the disintegration of the first Republic. In this respect, though purely academic, certain institutional alternatives such as the politics of accommodation will be discussed, bearing in mind that the problem with the disintegrated first Republic was mainly due to what is generally called 'Mill's Law of Instability' in a federal system like Nigeria. That is to say, "that there should not be any one state (or Region) so much more powerful than the rest as to be capable of vying in strength with many of them combined. If there be such a one, and only one, it will insist on being master of the joint deliberations".¹⁷⁰

FOOTNOTES

1. Harold Lasswell, Politics: Who Gets What, When, How (New York: Peter Smith, 1950).
2. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 208. Also see E. Wayne Nafziger, "The Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1973), pp. 505-536 esp. p. 506 and p. 510.
3. James Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 362.
4. Ibid., p. 362.
5. E. Wayne Nafziger, op. cit., p. 510.
6. Robin Luckham, op. cit., p. 209.
7. Ibid., p. 209.
8. John Ostheimer, Nigerian Politics (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973), p. 39.
9. Ibid., p. 39; also see John Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 560-61.
10. James O'Connell, "Political Integration: The Nigerian Case", Arthur Hazlewood (ed.), African Integration and Disintegration (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 166. See also B.J. Dudley, "Federalism and the Balance of Political Power in Nigeria", Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, Vol. 4, 1966, pp. 16-29.

11. O'Connell in Hazlewood, p. 166; Ahmadu Bello's refusal was in keeping with his definition of Northernization - which meant to have "Northerners gain control of everything in this country". (Dudley, op. cit., p. 21). There were allegations that the West also wanted the complex sited at Ikare in their own Region. Ahmadu Bello's action prompted a quick reaction from the East which outlined projects that had gone North: "Take a look at what they (the Northerners) have done with the little power we surrendered to them to preserve a unity which does not exist: 'Kainji Dam Project - about £150 million of our money when completed - all in the North; Bornu Railway Extension - about £75 million of our money when completed - all in the North; Spending over £50 million on the Northern Nigeria[n] Army in the name of the Federal Republic; Military training and all ammunition factories and installations are based in the North, thereby using your money to train Northerners to fight Southerners; Building of a road to link the dam site and the Sokoto cement works £7 million when completed - all in the North; Total on all these four projects about £265 million.' Now they have refused to allow the building of an iron and steel industry in the East ..." (Eastern House of Assembly Debates, March 19, 1964), Cols. 352-4, quoted in Mackintosh, Nigerian Government and Politics, pp. 557-58.
12. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 209.
13. Ibid., p. 217.

14. Ibid., p. 217.
15. Ibid., p. 217.
16. Ibid., p. 210.
17. M.J. Dent, "A Minority Party - the UMBC" in John Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 446.
18. Bernard Nkemdirim, Social Change and Political Violence in Colonial Nigeria (Great Britain: Arthur H. Stockwell, Ltd., 1975), p. 118.
19. See Table 1, Chapter 4 of this thesis, esp. the section on 1959 Federal election in the North. It is said that the UMBC/AG candidates won an aggregate of over 85% of Tiv votes; the total for NPC was just over 10% - coming mainly from local chiefs and Tax collectors who were enjoying the patronage of the NPC government. Also see Dent, op. cit., p. 486.
20. Bernard Nkemdirim, op. cit., p. 121.
21. M.J. Dent, "A Minority Party - the UMBC", p. 448.
22. Ibid., p. 448.
23. Nkemdirim, Social Change and Political Violence in Colonial Nigeria, pp. 121-125.
24. Dent, op. cit., p. 491.
25. "The Northern Regional Government White Paper on the Government's Policy For the Rehabilitation of the Tiv Native Authority" (Kaduna: Government Printer, 1965), as cited by Nkemdirim, p. 127.
26. Dent, op. cit., p. 493.
27. Ibid., p. 493.
28. Ibid., p. 493.

29. Ibid., p. 496.
30. Ibid., p. 496.
31. Ibid., p. 507.
32. Ibid., p. 507.
33. See John Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, pp. 427-460 for an elaborate discussion of the crisis and the feud between Awolowo and Akintola.
34. Daily Express, 12 March, 1964, as cited in K.W.J. Post and Michael Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria 1960-65 (London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1973), p. 75.
35. Sunday Post, May 20, 1962 in Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 446.
36. Ibid., pp. 446-7.
37. John Ostheimer, Nigerian Politics, p. 48.
38. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
39. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 448.
40. Ibid., p. 448.
41. Ibid., p. 449.
42. Parliamentary Debates, First Parliament, Third Session, May 29, 1962, Col. 2171 as quoted in Ibid., p. 449.
43. John P. Mackintosh, "The Action Group: The Crisis of 1962 and its Aftermath", in Ibid., p. 449, as quoted by John Ostheimer, Nigerian Politics, pp. 49-50.
44. Ibid., p. 50.
45. John Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 450.

46. Federation of Nigeria Official Gazette, Supplement to No. 38, Vol. 49, May 29, 1962, as cited by Mackintosh in Ibid., p. 450.
47. Ibid., pp. 450-51.
48. John Ostheimer, Nigerian Politics, p. 50.
49. For a detailed account of the trial of Awolowo, see John Mackintosh, op. cit., pp. 452-460; also see Frederick Forsyth, The Making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story (Great Britain: The Chaucer Press, Ltd., 1977), pp. 28-29.
50. Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 456.
51. Ibid., p. 456; there was an allegation that his friends, including the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, were opposed to holding an early election in the West in order to test the popularity of Akintola over Awolowo, see Post and Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, p. 88.
52. Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 457.
53. Ibid., p. 457.
54. John Ostheimer, op. cit., p. 50.
55. James O'Connell, "Political Integration: The Nigerian Case", Arthur Hazlewood (ed.), African Integration and Disintegration, p. 156.
56. Mackintosh (ed.), op. cit., p. 547.
57. Ibid., p. 547.
58. Frederick Forsyth, The Biafra Story, p. 29.
59. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 212.
60. John Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 549.

61. Ibid., p. 549.
62. Ibid., p. 551.
63. Ibid., p. 552.
64. West African Pilot, February 29, 1964; also see Mackintosh (ed.), p. 552, Post et al., p. 99.
65. Dr. Okpara's objections are quoted in Mackintosh (ed.), pp. 552-553; Mackintosh himself claims to have heard of "one junior Northern official who had himself been counted six times" (Note 3, p. 554).
66. West African Pilot, March 11, 1964.
67. West African Pilot, February 29, 1964, as quoted in Mackintosh (ed.), p. 555.
68. Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 555.
69. Ibid., p. 560.
70. Ibid., p. 563.
71. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 213.
72. Daily Express, July 30, 1964, cited in Mackintosh, p. 564.
73. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 564.
74. Ibid., p. 565.
75. West African Pilot, May 9, 1964. Also see Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 576; Post et al., op. cit., p. 143; 147.
76. The Daily Express, June 2, 1964, as cited by Post et al., p. 143.
77. West African Pilot, June 4, 1964.
78. Post and Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, p. 147.
79. See West African Pilot, December 3, 1964, for a list of such actions by the NNDP administration.

80. West African Pilot, October 14, 1964, as cited by Post and co.,
in op. cit., p. 147.
81. Ibid., p. 147.
82. Daily Express, August 24, 1964, in Ibid., p. 557.
83. Mackintosh (ed.), p. 577.
84. West African Pilot, December 3, 1964 as cited in Mackintosh (ed.),
Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 578.
85. Ibid., p. 578.
86. West African Pilot, October 27, 1964, in Ibid., p. 578.
87. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 147.
88. Ibid., p. 148.
89. Ibid., p. 148.
90. Mackintosh (ed.), op. cit., p. 579, citing West African Pilot,
November 21, 1964.
91. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 148.
92. Ibid., p. 149.
93. Ibid., p. 149.
94. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 579; West African Pilot, October 12, 1964,
reported the arrest of 82 people in Kano alone following clashes
between NPC and UPGA supporters.
95. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 149.
96. Ibid., p. 149.
97. Ibid., p. 149.
98. Daily Express, 28 October, 1964, cited in Ibid., pp. 145-46.
99. Daily Express, November 4, 1964, in Ibid., p. 149.

100. Ibid., p. 149.
101. Ibid., pp. 149-50.
102. Nigeria (Electoral Provisions) Order in Council, 1958, Section 29, brought in as an Act by the Electoral (Transitional Provisions) Act of 1961, cited by John Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 576.
103. West African Pilot, October 6, 1964.
104. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 576.
105. Ibid., p. 576.
106. Post and Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, pp. 170-71.
107. Ibid., p. 171.
108. Mackintosh, op. cit., pp. 583-585; B.J. Dudley, "Federalism and The Balance of Political Power in Nigeria" has many examples of those tactics - Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, Vol. 4, 1966, pp. 25-26, in particular.
109. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 171.
110. Daily Express, December 17, 1964, cited in Ibid., p. 173.
111. Ibid., p. 174.
112. Morning Post, 22 December 1964, as quoted by Post and Vickers in Ibid., p. 174.
113. Ibid., p. 174.
114. Ibid., p. 174.
115. Ibid., p. 174.
116. Ibid., p. 174.
117. Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 585.

118. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 175.
119. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 587.
120. Ibid., p. 587.
121. Ibid., p. 587.
122. West African Pilot, December 29, 1964, cited in Ibid., p. 558.
123. West African Pilot, January 2, 1965, January 4, 1965, in Ibid., p. 590.
124. Ibid., p. 590.
125. Ibid., pp. 590-91.
126. For a brief summary of some of the Constitutional arguments on the powers of the President and those of the Prime Minister, see Mackintosh, pp. 591-595.
127. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 193; Mackintosh, pp. 592-93.
128. Daily Express, 5th January, 1965, as quoted by Post and Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, p. 193.
129. Ibid., p. 195.
130. Daily Express, January 5, 1965, as quoted in Ibid., p. 195.
131. Ibid., p. 195.
132. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 596.
133. Ibid., p. 596.
134. Post and Vickers, p. 213, cite The Daily Express of March 20, 1965 for detailed results of what they call 'Little Election'.
135. Nigerian Daily Sketch, September 13, 1965, as quoted by Post and Vickers, p. 221.
136. Quoted in Ibid., p. 221.
137. Northern Debates, March 12, 1964 Passim. as quoted in Mackintosh (ed.), Nigerian Government and Politics, p. 557.

138. Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 222.
139. Ibid., p. 224. See Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 218, for a discussion of the measures taken by the NNDP government to win at all cost.
140. Nigerian Outlook, September 27, 1965, cited in Post and Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, p. 224.
141. Ibid., p. 224.
142. Nigerian Daily Sketch, September 27, 1965, as quoted in Ibid., p. 221.
143. Quoted in Ibid., p. 225.
144. Quoted in Ibid., p. 225.
145. Ibid., p. 225. Also see reports in West Africa, May 7 and 14, 1966; June 4, 1966.
146. Post and Vickers, Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, p. 222.
147. Ibid., p. 225.
148. Ibid., p. 225.
149. Nigerian Outlook, September 29, 1965, cited in Ibid., p. 226.
150. Ibid., p. 226.
151. Nigerian Outlook, October 2, 1965, cited in Ibid., p. 227.
152. James O'Connell, "Political Integration: The Nigerian Case", Arthur Hazlewood (ed.), African Integration and Disintegration, p. 171; also see Post and Vickers, op. cit., pp. 227-229; Frederick Forsyth, The Biafra Story, pp. 32-33; Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, pp. 218-219.
153. Frederick Forsyth, The Biafra Story, p. 33.

154. Ibid., p. 33.
155. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 218.
156. Nigerian Outlook, October 13, 1965, cited in Post and Vickers, op. cit., p. 227.
157. Forsyth, The Biafra Story, p. 33.
158. James O'Connell in Hazlewood, op. cit., p. 171. See Daily Times, November 20 and 23, 1965 for Mr. Esua's charges of malpractices in the Western Election.
159. Frederick Forsyth, The Biafra Story, p. 33, also O'Connell in Hazlewood, op. cit., p. 172.
160. Forsyth, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
161. O'Connell, in Hazlewood, op. cit., p. 172.
162. Robin Luckham, The Nigerian Military, p. 249.
163. Ibid., p. 249.
164. Ibid., p. 249.
165. The Official statement made at the time of the coup which took place on January 15, 1966 as cited by John Oyinbo, Nigeria: Crisis and Beyond (London: Charles Knight and Co., 1971), p. 36; also see West Africa, July 17, 1978, p. 1410, where Col. S.K. Omojokum, Director of the National Youth Service Corps, maintains in a lecture - "The History of the Nigerian Army Since 1960" - that "one of the immediate causes of the 1966 take-over [by the military] was the rigging of the 1965 general elections in the former Western Region by politicians who later demonstrated beyond doubt that they were not capable of handling, without the Army, the situation they had created".

166. James O'Connell in Hazlewood, op. cit., p. 176.
167. Odumegwu Ojukwu, Biafra, Vol. 1 (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1969), p. 7.
168. Ibid., p. 7.
169. Paul Anber, "Modernization and Political Disintegration: Nigeria and the Ibos", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1967), p. 163.
170. J.S. Mill, Representative Government (Everyman's Edition, 1948), pp. 367-368.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: POLITICS OF ACCOMMODATION

This thesis has explored the effects of ethnicity on the Nigerian polity of the first Republic. It is worth retrospectively looking at some of the problems with Nigerian integration discussed in the introduction of this work. The major issue was that the territory defined as Nigeria was artificial and so did not elicit the national feelings of the different ethnic groups who lived within this territory. The different groups - the Hausa/Fulani, the Ibo, and the Yoruba (among others) - are ethnic groups who had lived separately and had developed specific cultures that were not compatible with one another. In this respect, these peoples had been socialized internally within their ethnic groups to the extent that they regarded Nigeria not with the same amount of commitment as being Hausa, Ibo, or Yoruba would have generated.

Nigerians were aware of the very fragile nature of their political existence, viewing it from their socio-political histories, and their attitudes towards the state. Yet, Nigeria adhered to the British majoritarian system of governance which in the long run intensified ethnic conflicts. This was so because Nigerian groups saw politics as a means of achieving ethnic objectives. As a result, undemocratic pressures were brought to bear on the political system, hence census figures were manipulated, elections openly rigged; citi-

zens were detained without trial, even murdered. The very democratic principles which the British supposedly bequeathed Nigeria were grossly abused, though the loose phrase 'government by the majority' was studiously adhered to.

One might pose the question as to why the Nigerian ethnic groups did not develop secondary attachments to the state which might modify their primordial ties to their groups. This work has shown how difficult this would have been, viewing it from a number of circumstances. First, there were cultural differences - of language, of religion, of leadership patterns - among the major ethnic groups. Secondly, there were problems with the Western education that was implanted in the Nigerian system which was shaped in a mould cast by colonial powers in Europe, notably British, with the result that "History" for instance, meant for Nigerians the history of Great Britain (the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, the Abolition of Slave trade, the Introduction of Legitimate trade to the Nigerians, etc.), and the colonial territories of Great Britain. There was little emphasis on the Nigerian peoples except that certain products, (hides and skins, coal, rubber, tin, etc.) were usually associated with specific regions. The heroes of Nigeria were Wellington, Lloyd George, and Churchill, and never Awolowo, Azikiwe, or the Sardauna of Sokoto - Ahmadu Bello. A typical holiday in Nigeria was King George V's birthday, Empire Day, or the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

Moreover, the educational policies were not the same all over Nigeria. In the North, for instance, the emphasis was on the creation

of a few elites, through a limited number of schools, where "... matters of dress, correct practice in the form of salutation and courtesies to chiefs and those in authority ... [would be exemplified]".¹ The policy in the North, therefore, helped to widen the educational gap between the South and the North. The Southerners had embraced education through the large number of mission schools spread all over that region. Integration would be very difficult because of this imbalance between Westernized Southerners and the non-Westernized masses of the North.

Another major problem with national integration in Nigeria was in a fundamental way a problem of communication. As James S. Coleman put it in one of his numerous works:

The problem of integration and the building of consensus in Africa's new territorial political systems [as Nigeria] is largely a problem of developing patterns of communication which transcend, rather than coincide with prevailing discontinuities and communal divisions.²

Indeed, it is not unreasonable, therefore, to argue that an effective mass media system is a necessary (though by no means sufficient) condition for national integration in a plural state like Nigeria. But, unfortunately, the media in Nigeria, like the political parties, as has already been seen in this work, followed the same ethnic arithmetic which made integration difficult.

Perhaps if Nigerians had sought for an alternative system of

governance, say the politics of accommodation, as it is being practised in certain European nations, that first Republic might have been saved from crumbling the way it did. It is worth clarifying the true nature of this politics of accommodation, or what has been better known in the literature as consociational democracy (elite accommodation). The term 'consociational' has often been used to characterize a pattern of political life in which the political elites of different 'national' groups manage to establish a stable state by accommodating one another.³ In the case of such countries as Nigeria, Belgium, Switzerland, Lebanon, etc., where there are different cultures, languages, disparities in the stages of modernization, consociational democracy would connote "deliberate efforts [by the elites] to counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation".⁴ In this connection, Claude Ake believes that a heterogenous state can still "achieve a degree of political stability quite out of proportion to its social homogeneity [by consociational means]".⁵ Furthermore, Hans Daalder has seen this method of governance as "[a] process of building up a new political society ... in which deliberate [understanding] by elites [of different ethnic origins] carefully circumscribe and limit the extent to which political power can be wielded by one political centre [or ethnic group] ...".⁶ In consociational democracies, according to Lijphart:

The leaders of the rival subcultures may engage in competitive behavior and thus further aggravate mutual tensions and political instability, but they may also make deliberate efforts

to counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation.⁷

Often times,

the essential characteristic of consociational democracy is not so much any particular institutional arrangement as the deliberate joint effort by the elites to stabilize the system.⁸

In this regard, consociational democracy means a "government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy".⁹

Consociational democracy, according to Lijphart, violates the principle of majority rule (the one that Nigeria adhered to), but it is still in agreement with normative democratic theory.¹⁰ After all, there are no universal laws of democracy to suit all the peoples of the world; democracy in this connection means a government by the elites duly chosen by the people to govern, in order to achieve peace and stability.

For the elites to be successful in consociational democracy, Lijphart has suggested that certain conditions have to be met:

- (1) That the elites have the ability to accommodate the divergent interests and demands of the subcultures.
- (2) This requires that they have the ability to transcend cleavages and to join in a common effort with the elites of rival

subcultures.

- (3) This in turn depends on their commitment to the maintenance of the system and to the improvement of its cohesion and stability.
- (4) Finally, all of the above requirements are based on the assumption that the elites understand the perils of political fragmentation.¹¹

Perhaps some insight into the nature of consociational democracy in some countries is relevant at this point; this will help in establishing the fact that there are no universal principles of consociational democracy - all that matters is the nature of the country concerned.

In his study of the Netherlands, Arend Lijphart has maintained that certain 'rules' govern the 'game' of accommodation on the elite level.¹² Moreover, these rules depend on the "role-culture" developed and accepted by the elite and not that of the mass culture.¹³ Rule I: The Business of Politics. "The first and foremost rule of the Dutch political game is that politics should not be regarded as a game at all." It should be "a serious means to a serious end". Rule II: The Agreement to Disagree. "[T]he Dutch political business is [governed by a] pragmatic acceptance of the ideological differences [of the people] as basic realities which cannot and should not be changed." This involves the realization that "Disagreements must not be allowed to turn into either mutual contempt or proselytizing zeal". Rule III: Summit

Diplomacy. "The politics of accommodation entails government by the elite. The leaders of the religious-ideological blocks have the duty to make the political decisions and work out compromises." More serious political issues have to be handled by a higher elite level to ensure that the rules of the business are properly adhered to.

Rule IV: Proportionality. "The rule of proportionality is simple procedural device capable of solving a host of troublesome problems. The most important of these is the allocation of the necessary scarce financial resources at the government's disposal." This rule was adequately applied in 1917 when "all schools [in Holland], private as well as public, would receive government funds in proportion to the number of students enrolled". Rule V. Depoliticization: "Proportionality is one method for the neutralization of potentially divisive political disputes. But, it can be applied only when there are ... [quantifiable] items like appointments, subsidies, or broadcast hours to be distributed." Rule IV. Secrecy. "Successful accommodation by the block leaders requires a high degree of flexibility. They have to be able to make concessions and to arrive at pragmatic compromises even when religious or ideological values are at stake." Rule VII. The Government's Right to Govern. "All rules discussed so far are closely related to the first rule or axiom that politics is a serious business. What is important in both politics and business is to get the job done..."¹⁴ Lijphart has further argued that "no convenient book of rules exists", all that really matters is the action of the elites to accommodate dif-

ferent views.¹⁵

Other examples of consociational experiences existed in Austria after World War II, and in Belgium in the early 19th century:

The fragmented and unstable Austrian First Republic of the interwar years was transformed into the still fragmented but stable Second Republic after the Second World War by means of a consociational solution. As Frederick C. Engelmann states, "the central socio-political fact in the life of post-1918 Austria [was that] the Republic had developed under conditions of cleavage so deep as to leave it with a high potential for - and a sporadic actuality of - civil war". The leaders of the rival subcultures [Catholic and Socialist Lager] were anxious not to repeat the sorry experience of the First Republic, and decided to join in a grand coalition after the Second World War.¹⁶

In Belgium, the Catholic and Liberal leaders had learned "the great lesson of mutual tolerance from the catastrophic experience of the Brabant Revolution of 1789, when the civil strife of their predecessors had so soon laid the country open to easy Habsburg reconquest. It was a remarkable and self-conscious 'union of opposites' that made the revolution of 1830, wrote the Constitution of 1831, and headed the government in its critical years."¹⁷

The grand coalition is but one of the many types of consociational arrangements in fragmented polities. "... In Austria" for

example, "not the cabinet itself by the small extra-constitutional 'coalition committee', on which the top Socialist and Catholic leaders were equally represented, made the crucial decisions."¹⁸

Consociational democracy could have helped Nigeria in a number of ways: it would have eliminated the fear of domination of one group by the other which characterized the political scene because the leaders (elite) of the major ethnic groups would have been accommodating. Secondly, the quest for political power which culminated in the distortion of census figures, and undemocratic practices during elections, might have been averted. Finally, the disintegration of the First Republic might also have been prevented.

However, there have been some references on Nigeria as being consociational because of the political coalitions among the major (ethnic) political parties.¹⁹ But, a critical assessment of the nature of the coalitions shows that, indeed, consociational democracy as defined earlier, was not the motive. The Nigerian Census of 1952^{*} had left the North with a majority population and the outcome of the Federal election of 1959 did not guarantee any major (ethnic) political party the majority to form the government at the central House of Parliament. The alternative, therefore, was a coalition government of any of the

* Nigeria was divided into 213 electoral seats based on the census; of these the North was allotted 174, 73 to the East, 62 to the West, and 3 to Lagos Federal Territory. See Chapter Five of this work.

three parties. The actual result gave the NPC 134 seats, the NCNC 89, and the AG 73. On this basis, the NPC formed a coalition government with the NCNC, while the AG formed the opposition party. This action was deliberate by the two 'marrying' parties: firstly, there was the competitive bitterness and lack of trust between the Yoruba and the Ibo - the two 'modernized' groups vying for supremacy in Nigerian politics. Secondly, "there was the resistance of the Western NCNC (especially those from the Macauley faction - NNDP) to a pact with the Action Group: the Edo (a group in the Mid-West, then part of the West) thought that it would involve a compromise that would cost then the possibility of a Mid-West region".²⁰ Thirdly, the NCNC leadership was not prepared to polarize Nigerian politics into a North-South affair because that would have led to breaking up the country. Furthermore, a coalition of the North with the West at that time would have been impossible, given the personalities of Awolowo and the Sardauna who did not get along politically. (See Chapter 5, especially on the formation of the NNDP.)

Another attempt of a coalition of the North with the Akintola faction of the West in 1964 was not a consociational measure because it was only aimed at consolidating the position of the North in national politics. In short, the coalitions alienated one major group each time they were attempted (contrary to the ethnic character of Nigeria). In that of 1959, the West was alienated (not accommodated) in favour of the North, and to some extent the East. That of 1964 was aimed at eliminating the East so as to strengthen the position of the North, and equally to an extent, that of the Akintola West.

If Nigeria had tried a form of accommodation of the major ethnic political elites (for example, see below), the First Republic would have survived. In this respect, certain suggestions have been attempted aimed at achieving this goal:

- (I) There should have been a Presidential Council of three - made up of the Hausa/Fulani, the Ibo, and the Yoruba, with an attempt to rotate the chairmanship at least once every year.
- (II) There should have been no need for the office of the Prime Minister since such a responsibility would be subsumed by the Presidential Council.
- (III) The Cabinet should have been formed with equal number of representation of the major ethnic groups, with some key ministries (defence, finance, external affairs) evenly distributed among the different groups.
- (IV) Attempts should have been made to allocate resources according to the needs of the Regions on conferences of regional ministers and Premiers.
- (V) The arrangements made at the centre (accommodating the major ethnic groups) should have also been made in each Region to accommodate the minority groups.

Some of these measures would have helped greatly to achieve unity in Nigeria - unity not in the sense of destroying ethnic identity (which has become a social reality in Tropical Africa, Eastern Europe, Britain, Canada, Asia, and Latin America), but 'unity in diversity' which would

have aided political integration. From this perspective, political integration in Nigeria would have been the creation among those previously unrelated peoples living within the geographical territory of a common political identification. This would have involved:

- (a) a desire (backed up by the willingness) to identify with the nation-state, at least among the elites;
- (b) a feeling of common citizenship which transcended ethnic boundaries; and,
- (c) acceptance of the legitimacy of the political system (that is, the rules and norms of the system).

FOOTNOTES

1. D.W. Bittinger, "An Education Experiment in Northern Nigeria in its Cultural Setting" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1941, p. 214), as quoted by Alan Peshkin, "Education and National Integration in Nigeria", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. V, No. 3, 1967, p. 324.
2. James S. Coleman, "The Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa", in Gabriel Almond and J.S. Coleman (eds.), The Politics of the Developing Areas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 345.
3. Hans Daalder, "On building Consociational Nations: The Cases of The Netherlands and Switzerland", International Social Science Journal, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1971), p. 355.
4. Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy", World Politics, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1969), pp. 207-225 as quoted in Kenneth McRae, ed., Consociational Democracy: Political Accomodation in Segmented Societies (Canada: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1974), p. 75.
5. Claude Ake, A Theory of Political Integration (U.S.A.: The Dorsey Press, 1967), p. 113.
6. Hans Daalder, op. cit., p. 355.
7. Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy" in McRae, op. cit., p. 75.
8. Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy", World Politics, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1969), p. 212.
9. Lijphart, in McRae, op. cit., p. 79.
10. Ibid., p. 77.
11. Ibid., p. 79.

12. Arend Lijphart, The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), p. 122.
13. Ibid., p. 122.
14. Ibid., pp. 122-134.
15. Ibid., p. 123.
16. Lijphart, in McRae, op. cit., p. 75.
17. Val R. Lorwin, "Constitutionalism and Controlled Violence in the Modern State: The Case of Belgium", as quoted by Lijphart, in McRae, p. 76.
18. Ibid., p. 76.
19. Ibid., p. 79.
20. James O'Connell, Political Integration: The Nigerian Case, in Arthur Hazlewood, ed., African Integration and Disintegration, p. 156.

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