

Reflecting on the “No Victor, No Vanquished” Slogan of Maj. Gen. Yakubu Gowon, within the Context of Post-Civil War Peace- Building in Nigeria

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Abstract

Between 1967 and 1970, the geo-political entity called Nigeria was engulfed in a bloody war in which thousands of lives were lost and properties worth millions of naira were destroyed. It was a war defined mainly by the determination of Nigerian government under Maj. Gen. Yakubu Gowon to force a reunion on the secessionist Biafra under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Odumegwu Ojukwu. While the apologists of the secessionist Biafra prefer to call the war Nigeria- Biafra war, for, to them, "there was a country", the Yakubu Gowon leadership of the Nigerian nation described it merely as Nigerian civil war which ended with "No Victor, No vanquished" slogan. However, the post-war peace building efforts which was anchored on the principle of '3Rs' - Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and reconciliation left much to be desired. Relying mostly on secondary sources of data collection, this study investigates the reality or otherwise of the "No Victor, No vanquished" slogan viz-a- viz the application of the 3Rs within the context of post-war peace building efforts in Nigeria, particularly in Igboland. The paper concludes that the slogan as well as the principle of '3Rs' was not strictly adhered to. It is obvious that Nigerian government failed in many instances to fully implement the policy of '3Rs' in the true sense of it. The study concludes that the general infrastructural deficit in Igboland, which was the major theatre of war and the failure to harness the potentials of young Igbo technologists and scientists, and converting their expertise into national development, is not only a pointer that Biafrans were treated as the vanquished of war, but also is the major cause of the nation's underdevelopment.

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Introduction

The quotation, "No Victor, No Vanquished" entered into Nigeria's military and political lexicon in 1970, as a statement credited to the then military Head of State, Maj. Gen. Yakubu Gowon. It was a mantra perceived by many to have concealed an underlying euphoria that the three years bloody war had ended on the one hand, and that the Biafrans have been defeated at last on the other hand. There seem to be an ongoing debate among scholars on Nigeria-Biafra War which tend to obstruct a broader understanding of the war, that many regard as the first major conflict in independent Africa, and the only Cold War secessionist crisis¹. While this study strives to extricate itself from being swayed by the numerous personalized account of the war as espoused by some writers who were either actively or passively, directly or indirectly involved in the war, it however, attempts to contribute to the debate by juxtaposing the "No Victor, No Vanquished" mantra against the practical realities of the war in terms of government policies and programmes during and after the war, and the impacts of such policies on both Biafra, on one hand, and the larger Nigerian state on the other hand. The study is motivated by the dearth of materials in available literature that take specific look at the '3Rs'- Reconciliation, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation as it concerns the former combatants, especially those from the secessionist state of Biafra. This study attempts an interrogation into how former Biafran soldiers and civilians were reconciled, reintegrated, and rehabilitated into Nigerian society, and the challenges thereof.

Overview of the War and the Gowon/Ojukwu Factors.

When conflict is analysed from individual level, it reveals to a great extent how personal ideocincrazy of individual leaders can determine, to a reasonable extent the possibility of war or conflict. In other words, the action of states or nations is a direct reflection of ideologies and philosophies of individual leaders that rule such state. This calls to mind the circumstances that surrounded the emergence of Yakubu Gowon as Nigeria's Head of State in 1966. When Yakubu Gowon, then a Lt. Col, assumed leadership at thirty-one in July 1966, he was apparently one of the youngest Heads of State in the world. Like Ironsi, he took over the reins of government in no less a tense political atmosphere which in the case of Gowon, subsequently degenerated into a civil war from 1967-1970.²

The bloody coup of July 29, 1966 that ushered in the regime of Yakubu Gowon, claimed the lives of his boss, Gen. Ironsi and unaccountable military officers mainly of Igbo extraction. Put more succinctly, Otoghagua observes that a clear survey of all that took place on that day of great bloodshed in Nigeria reveals that the coup was a revenge from the military personnel of Northern Region (backed by their civil society) against the Easterners. The pogrom which herald the coup itself had climaxed in the ambiguous killings, and further exacerbated tribalism among the Ibos and Hausas³. As a prelude to the civil war era, several Igbo living in the north were massacred in their numbers. The northern elites and top military officers frown at the emergence of Maj. Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi at the demise of the first republic. They interpreted the overthrow and death of Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa as a calculated attempt by officers of eastern Nigeria to capture the reins of power from the North. Such perception could hardly be faulted considering the fact that the said coup that ended the first republic was led by Maj. Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, a supposed Igbo man. Little wonder then that there was a counter coup in July 1966 with which the northern elements in the military carried out a reprisal attacks on the Igbo and took over power. It was under this tensed atmosphere shrouded with ethnic sentiment and mutual tribal suspicion that Yakubu Gowon emerged Head of Nigerian State.

It is however instructive that the emergence of Yakubu Gowon runs foul of conventional practices in military appointment base on hierarchy of seniority. If not for any other thing, some military officers like Brig. Babafemi Ogundipe was senior in rank to Yakubu Gowon who was then a colonel before his emergence as Head of State. Secondly, some members of the Supreme Military Council like Odumegwu Ojugwu were excluded in the consultative meeting where the choice of Yakubu Gowon was made. All these points to the perceived desperation of northern elements to take over power willy-nilly. It is therefore on this premise that apologists of secessionist Biafra averred that the government of Yakubu Gowon was not capable of protecting the generality of Nigerians, particularly the Igbo as they were being marginalized, maimed, killed, and were secretly eliminated by the Hausas in the Northern Nigeria.⁴ Put differently, it was a case of genocidal attacks against the Igbo people who had no other option than to return to their ancestral homes in eastern Nigeria.

It is on the strength of the above assertion that the Ojukwu factor and personality loomed large, at least within the Biafran enclave. A flamboyant enigmatic personality whose social status and academic background imbued with uncommon attribute of boldness and sterling leadership qualities, Ojukwu's radical disposition became visible from the first day he

enlisted into the Nigerian army. As a thorough breed soldier, he rose through the ranks to become the Military Governor of Eastern Region of Nigeria at a time when the Nigerian military has become polarized along ethnic lines, climaxing into mistrust and divided loyalty among the military personnels. What followed was that insurrection of high magnitude engulfed the Nigerian State. Odumegwu Ojukwu who was then the Governor of the Eastern Region refused to take instructions from Yakubu Gowon. After series of diplomatic steps, and peaceful negotiations failed to resolve the impasse between the two leaders, the use of force could no longer be avoided. Thus, between May 3, 1967 and July 6, 1970, the Federal republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Biafra were engaged in a fierce and bloody war. It is worthy of note that the war would have been averted if due military process based on seniority was followed in choosing Aguiyi Ironsi's successor.

Igboland as Theatre of War.

Following the collapse of the Accord reached in Aburi, Ghana between the federal government of Nigeria and the Biafra team led by Odumegwu Ojukwu, the conflict metamorphosed into a shooting war on July 6, 1967 amidst confusion in governance within the Biafran territory. The confusion was brought about by calculated attempts to reduce Col Ojukwu's powers and area of influence. Earlier in May, 1967, Federal Government under Col. Gowon had announced the creation of twelve states out of the existing four regions. Under the new arrangement, the core Igbo territory of the defunct Eastern region now came under the East central State with Mr. Ukpabi Asika as Sole Administrator. Expectedly, Ojukwu refused to recognize the state creation exercise and continued to hold sway as the de facto leader of Eastern Nigeria. What this meant, was that the Igbo territory now came under two separate administrations: the existing authority under the leadership of Col. Ojukwu and the new East Cenrtral State which had Mr. Ukpabi Asika as Sole Administrator. There were yet parts of Igboland that were still located within Rivers, Southeastern and Midwestern states as newly constituted by the state creation exercise. This further complicated the task of governance⁵.

In the ensuing war, Igboland and the entire Eastern Nigeria was the only theatre of war. In the face of gruesome murder of Igbo population as a result of severe bombing and heavy military presence in the entire eastern region, there were far reaching negative consequences on the Igbo population. Igbokwe acknowledges the fact that up to one million lives may have been lost from deaths resulting from combat, starvation, disease or even shock⁶. Ojukwu himself

puts it this way; The war came reluctantly. That a conservative estimate of 50,000 unarmed people from a specific area of the nation were massacred is a fact. That I urged them back to the north and they were subjected to an even greater massacre was also a fact. That I was the foremost advocate of reconciliation between the vicious and his victim is also a historical truth. And so, chased back to their homes, the alternative as perceived by the Igbos was to resist and I stood at their head to resist⁷. The general atmosphere of insecurity occasioned by the war was not conducive for socio-economic activities. Thus, the socio economic activities of the entire Igboland came into a halt in the face of severe air strike and raid by the federal troop. Life was miserable for the entire Igbo population as a result of the collapsed economy of the area which depended majorly on food production and commercial activities.

To make matters worst, the federal government of Nigeria as part of its war strategy placed an economic blockade on Biafra, right from the inception of the war in 1967. The Blockade was placed on June 1, 1967, essentially to prevent the export of palm produce and crude oil so as to destroy the economic basis of the secessionist Republic, seen as a potent weapon for achieving quick victory. Indeed, the strategy worked as the economic foundations of Igboland was crumbled throughout the war. With virtually nothing coming in from outside, the people of eastern Nigeria were forced to produce all they needed. The result was large Scale frustration, hardship and poverty, as the resources of the food producing areas already under pressure due to insecurity, became over stretched and obviously gave up in the face of grave challenges resulting in food shortage⁸.

As the adverse effects of the war became more severe with each passing day, the Biafra leadership began to develop strategies for war time survival. In the first place, efforts were made to urgently address the issue of food shortage. In the light of this, rehabilitation commission and Food Directorate was created by the Biafran leadership. The mandate of the Food Directorate was to achieve self-sufficiency in food production through direct farming. Large expanse of lands were acquired in the hinterland where the directorate cultivated food crops to avert or atleast reduce the ravaging hunger in Igboland. Local farmers were equally persuaded, through the Biafran Information Service, to embark on extensive food crop production in order to cover the gap in food supply created by the economic blockade. Adequate publicity and recognition was given to farmers and craftsmen who contributed to the war effort.

Similarly, military personnels, craftsmen and traders were encouraged, motivated and given recognition to practice their enterprises that would enhance economic development during the

war. Ogbudimkpa observes that Biafran Land Army was constituted to mobilize people towards effective food production. By using initiative resourcefulness, ingenuity, hard work, and trust in God, the Land Army was able to attack every available piece of land to produce yams, maize, okro, groundnuts, beans, cassava, plantain, cocoyams etc⁹. The essence was to achieve massive food production to cushion the effect of the economic blockade with its attendant food shortage in Igboland.

At the onset of the war, Col. Ojukwu had through his international contacts envisaged tremendous support from major world powers that strongly believe in the principle of self-determination. Unfortunately only few countries recognized Biafra during the war namely: Gabon, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Haiti and Zambia. With the exception of France, most developed Nations of the world as well as OAU member states threw their weight behind the federal republic of Nigeria through logistics, material and military supports. With the blockade slammed on Biafra, the Biafra army soon ran into shortage of arms and ammunition. And in the face of severe ground and air bombardment on them, the Biafrans had no choice than to resort to emergency production of arms and ammunition using local resources. Thus, the Biafran government constituted some of the best scientists and technicians of Igbo extraction into the Research and Production Board (RAP).

It was observed by Ikechukwu that the Research and Production Board (RAP) relied mainly on local resources and content to delve into all areas of production, from the building of refineries to the production of home grown wine. The local arms industry developed by RAP was specifically for the situation as was unsophisticated compared to contemporary standards. Nevertheless, the Biafra hand-made grenades, *Ogbunigwe* (Igbo name for bomb) rockets, and guns kept Biafra steady on the war fronts after they lost access to external sources¹⁰. That local arms industry was able to sustain Biafran army throughout the three-year war with a level of effect on the federal troop, shows that the indigenous arms manufacturing industries in Igboland had evolve significant innovations in technology. At this stage, the blacksmith industry that had flourished in Awka and other parts of Igboland was harnessed for war-time manufacture of arms and ammunitions. Unfortunately, all of these innovations were crumbled during the war. The war time technological and industrial foundations of Igboland were totally destroyed by the federal troop and no recourse was made to them even after the defeat of Biafra.

Post War Igboland: Interrogating the '3Rs'.

The principle of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation was introduced by Col. Yakubu Gowon, at the end of the war, as a conscious post-war policies to keep the Nigerian state united and stable. The '3Rs', premised on the concept of “No victor, No Vanquished” was to kick-start the process of rebuilding Nigeria, both economically, politically, and infrastructurally. Perhaps it is important to examine the meaning of the three concepts above. Ikechukwu opined that the idea of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconciliation have essential common features. In general parlance, reconstruction connotes the process of changing or improve the condition of something or the way it works, the process of putting something into the state it was before; the activity of building again something that has been damaged or destroyed. Rehabilitation connotes the process of helping someone to have a normal, useful life again after he/she has been deprived for a long time; to begin to consider that someone is good or acceptable, after a long period during which he/she was considered bad or unacceptable; to return a building to its previous good condition. Reconciliation represents an end to a disagreement and the start of a good relationship again, the process of making it possible for two ideas, facts, etc, to exist together without being opposed to each other¹¹.

The above explanatory framework is quite apt in describing the intents and purposes of the '3Rs' enunciated by the Federal Military Government, led by Yakubu Gowon, to drive home the 'No Victor, No Vanquished' declaration, which marked the end of Nigeria-Biafra war. These pronouncements were greeted with high optimism that the magnanimity of the federal government will guarantee post-war recovery, mutual co-existence, and overall socio-economic and political developments of Nigeria. Infact, St. Jorre who referred to the war as 'The Brothers War' remarks that this was probably the only armed conflict of its magnitude in history, perpetrated with so much viciousness and bitterness, where no reprisals, trials, or executions occurred¹²

However, a cursory perusal and thorough scrutiny of the federal military government's pronouncement reveals that it was more sensational than real, while the policy of '3Rs' were not realized, at least in the eastern region that was theatre of war. There is indeed a big question mark hanging on the head of Gowon's administration as regards the sincerity of purpose in his 'No Victor, No Vanquished' mantra viz-a-viz his implementation of the '3Rs' policy. Much as the various harsh policies of war era ranging from economic blockade, expulsion of humanitarian organizations perceived to be assisting Biafran population, could

be understood as measures taken to ensure quick and timely defeat of the Biafran side. However, some of the post-war policy trust of Gowon's administration left imprints of bias against the defeated Biafran people. How can one explain the post-war enactment of the Public Officers (Special Provisions) Decree No. 46 of 1970?. This is one decree that prevented senior Igbo civil servants and public corporation personnel from being reabsorbed on the grounds that they were accomplices who had aided Biafra's war effort¹³. Can this be said to be in the spirit of genuine reconciliation? Pursuance to the above decree, Gowon administration ensured that top-ranking civil/public servant from the East central state were either dismissed or compulsorily retired from the federal civil service, military and paramilitary agencies. Paul Obi-Ani re-echoed the adverse effects of the Decree No. 46 of 1970 when he states that Decree No. 46 of 1970 succeeded so well in accomplishing its hidden objective of marginalizing the Igbo and frustrating most of them who had devoted their time and energy in ensuring the progress of this country¹⁴

Another policy of Gowon's led administration that has been criticized for jeopardizing the national reconciliation process was the promulgation of indigenization Decree of 1972. This decree made provision for foreign companies in Nigeria to sell part of their shares to Nigerians to ensure that such companies and enterprises are owned and controlled majorly by Nigerians. While this effort at indigenization of companies and enterprises in Nigeria was viewed as a welcome development, the choice of the immediate post-war period, when the Igbo had been economically emasculated by war-time economic realities could not have been in good faith. The policy came at a time when the Igbo had been incapacitated from full-scale involvement in the indigenization and other economic programmes of the government. Thus, it was viewed by apologists of the Biafra secessionist agenda as a deliberate effort to exclude people of Igbo region from deriving the full benefit of the Indigenization policy of the federal government.

At the end of the war, the federal government set up National Commission for Rehabilitation (NCR) to work in conjunction with Nigerian Red Cross Society for the purpose or providing relief material and medical attention for the numerous Igbo population who were sick, homeless and malnourished. Unfortunately, these provisions were grossly inadequate due to government ineptitude. It was alleged that Gowon's administration was selective of the humanitarians and countries permitted to give relief materials or aids to the stranded Igbo population for reasons of having supported Biafra Republic during the war. St. Jorre captures it more succinctly; All the countries like France, South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia which

had Supported Biafra were told to keep their aid and stay out. Relief organizations in a similar position, notably caritas and the World Council of Churches, were also barred. Let them keep their blood money Gowon cried. 'Nigeria will do this itself. The Catholic priests and nuns in the enclave were gradually rounded up and expelled. They came to no harm physically but their removal left a crucial gap in a rapidly deteriorating relief situation¹⁵. The blacklisting of countries and humanitarian organizations and barring them from participating in the post-war rehabilitation efforts has been interpreted by many as a continuation of Gowon's war-time strategy of starving the Igbo to submission. This explains why more and more Igbo people continued to die even after the war due to inadequate food and medical supplies.

Similarly, the fate of Biafran soldiers who sustained severe injuries was a source of concern to many at the end of the war, It has been recorded that in Owerri Division alone, there were two hundred ex-Biafra soldiers blinded during the civil war who could not receive appropriate medical attention.¹⁶ Also, the East Central State Commission for Rehabilitation identified 6,000 amputees who needed assistance¹⁷. These figure does not include the numerous ex-soldiers that sustained spinal cord injuries and other life-threatening deformities. These victims were initially accommodated at the Government Technical College in Enugu with little attention, medication and food provided by the Medical Corps of the federal troop. With the passage of time, these war victims were resettled at Oji River within a facility named "Wounded Soldiers Camp".¹⁸ However, the condition of the ex-soldiers did not improve.

Those who survived the war and are healthy were not re-absorbed into the Nigerian military, those who were deformed and disabled were not properly catered for. Thus, the Ex-Biafran soldiers were thus, left to bear their pains like the vanquished. No recourse was made to the orphans and those who lost contact with their parents as a result of the war. All these people were left at the mercy of charitable organizations and humanitarian aids agencies who had to close in the gap without government support let alone incentive. With this scenario, it becomes difficult to convince an average Igbo man that the rehabilitation policy of federal government of Nigeria was real.

Next is the policy of Reconstruction as it regards the educational, industrial, agricultural, health care, housing, communication, commerce and financial sectors in Igboland. As mentioned earlier, all the above facets were kick-started or received a boost during the war in response to the exigencies of war. Unfortunately, all the advancements recorded in the above

sectors, were set decades backwards as a result of massive destructions that characterized the war. The education sector had a serious setback during the war as schools were closed down throughout the three academic years as a result of hostilities and insecurity that characterized the period. Physical infrastructure were devastated and shattered by bombing and air raids. Library and laboratory equipment's were either destroyed or looted.

At the end of the war, the task of rebuilding schools to enable early resumption of pupils and students rested squarely on the East Central State government. In the face of federal government ineptitude or insensitivity towards the Igbo, the East central State had to appeal to spirited individuals and humanitarian organizations. The financial support from humanitarian organizations particularly UNICEF quickened the pace of reconstruction of a large number of the schools. The contribution of UNICEF in this regard in East Central State during the period 1970 1972 amounted to N2.4million.¹⁹

Similar gesture applies to the Agricultural, commerce and industry, communication, health and housing sectors, all of which were bombarded and completely devastated during the war. On the basis of the economic emasculation of Igbo industrialists and business-men, and against the backdrop of lingering uneasiness arising from federal government's lukewarm attitude towards reconstruction of destroyed business premises, companies and industries in Igboland, there was lack of confidence in some cautious investors who for fear of possible conflict escalation in Igboland were reluctant to invest in Igboland. Only a combination of state government's interventions and indigenous industrialists of Igbo extraction kick started a new move to reconstruct and revamp the various sectors of economic lives in post war Igboland.

The situation perhaps would have been different if Gowon's administration had been more receptive to humanitarian organizations and other countries willing to deliver relief materials to Igbo victims of war. Nigeria's socio-economic and industrial attainments would have been better today if conscious efforts were made by Gowon administration to rebuild or reconstruct Igbo's industrial achievements that were shattered by the war. It is a common knowledge that Igbo's technological and industrial achievement, though borne out of the exigency of the war, had reach a level of sophistication before it was uprooted and dismantled by the war. The best Gowon's administration could offer was to collate and assemble the relics of such technological inventions at the National War Museum, Umuahia, without identifying the brilliant Igbo scientists and technologist that invented such war equipments.

In the face of economic blockade enforced by Gowon's administration, great ingenuity and unprecedented innovations were achieved by Biafra technologists. Biafra scientists from the Research and Production Unit developed a great number of rockets, bombs, and telecommunications gadgets, and devised an indigenous strategy to refine petroleum²⁰. Unfortunately, the intelligence and technological prowess of the Igbo scientists and technicians could not be harnessed by Nigerian government, even after the defeat of Biafra. The knowledge and expertise of these Igbo scientist was urgently needed in post-war Nigeria to advance the nation's industrial growth. But this could not happen due to jealousy and deep-rooted hatred against the Igbo of eastern Nigeria. Hence Nigeria has remain a backward state scientifically and technologically.

It is in the light of the above that Paul Obi-Ani argues that Nigeria did not take advantage of the Biafran technological innovation at the end of the civil war. The Igbo people who developed some local hardwares like rockets, explosives, anti-aircraft guns, the *ogbunigwe*, land mines and anti-tanks weapons were not encouraged to improve upon these military hardwares²¹. Bad enough, after the overthrow of Gowon in 1975, subsequent military regimes which were equally dominated by northern elements in Nigeria military did not attempt to address the 'Igbo question'. No regime deemed it necessary to recall the Biafra war files, to atleast acknowledge the Igbo scientists and technologists who manufactured the Biafran weapons that were deployed during the war. No doubt, a little encouragement from Nigerian government would have boosted the Igbo technicians to put Nigeria on the path to technological advancement in the manufacturing of military hardware needed to launch Nigeria into the realm of super power politics. Instead, stricter measures were put in place to systematically marginalize the Igbo. It has been argued that the stigma of rebellion has always been as an excuse to deprive, and marginalize the Igbo of Nigeria. Following the neglect of Igbo scientists, technologies and technicians; and against the backdrop of obvious continuous marginalization of Igbo people, there was a renewed consciousness among the Igbo for self-preservation. This can be seen from the emergence of numerous Pro-Biafran organizations.

Conclusion.

This paper has been able to examine the "No Victor, No vanquished" proclamation of Yakubu Gowon at the end of Nigeria-Biafra war, within the context of intra-state conflict that has characterized post independence existence of most African countries. The paper observes

that the war carried with it, symptoms of genocidal attacks on the Igbo of eastern Nigeria, which culminated in the death of over three thousand people of Igbo extraction as the eastern region was the only theatre of War while it lasted. Although Gowon, proclaimed a "No Victor, No Vanquished", at the end of the war, the policies of his administration, within the context of the '3Rs', and the attitude of his administration towards the Igbo people proved otherwise. Subjecting such proclamation and the implementation of the '3Rs' to critical analysis, it becomes apparently clear that the administration of Yakubu Gowon did not realize the full potentials inherent in the avowed policies of reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. In the area of reconciliation, our research effort revealed that no significant reconciliation has been achieved. The various components of the Nigerian society is still as divided as they were prior to the civil war. National values and patriotism have been sacrificed on the altar of ethnicity and tribal loyalty. This explains why the "Igbo question" has not been effectively addressed. The perceived or real marginalization, hurt, injustice and hatred against the Igbo, as conceived before the civil war are still very visible in the post-war era. And this has culminated in the proliferation of neo-Biafra separatist groups and movements among which are; Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Biafra Youth Congress (BYC), Biafra Liberation Council (BLC), Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM) Coalition of Biafra Liberation Group (COBLIG), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and Eastern Security Network (ESN). All of these groups either seek to attract federal government attention to the predicament of the Igbo group since the end of the civil war, or agitate for continuation of outright secession of Biafra.

Similarly, the idea of rehabilitation is far from being realized in the immediate post-war era. Our finding revealed that war veterans of Biafra extraction were not adequately integrated into the Nigerian Society after the war. This research effort revealed that former Biafra soldiers who suffered one form of injury or the other, in the course of the war were neither appropriately catered for, nor fully re-absorbed into the Nigerian military after the war. Evidence abound of federal government's ineptitude towards the plight of Igbo victims of war. The various obnoxious military decrees, like decree No. 46 which contains harmful provisions, are eloquent testimonies of ill-treatment meted out to former Biafran soldiers, and civilians alike. Such verifiable discontent could not allow for proper rehabilitation and reintegration of all segments of the Nigerian society in the post-war era.

If there is any sphere where government's failure is easily noticeable, it is in the reconstruction policy. War, especially intra-state war like that of Nigerian case under study,

comes with its negative and positive effects. The ability of the actors to leverage on its positive effects is what makes the difference. America, for instance emerged from the civil war of the 1950s, with a radical reconstruction programme which resulted in the rise of big businesses and industrial growth. It was this feat that gave America the vantage position in world affairs, which eventually saw America emerging as a World Power after WWI and WWII. Similarly, Russia found its path to industrial growth after the 1917 revolution. Again, the French Revolution of 1789 put France on the path of industrial recovery and growth.

Unfortunately, in the case of Nigeria, similar lessons were not learnt, neither were there conscious efforts to convert the positive effects of the war (no matter how little) into national growth. It is regrettable that the federal government of Nigeria did not take full advantage of the scientific and technological innovations of the Biafran Research and Production Board (RAP) to navigate the country on the path of industrial growth and development. Prof. Felix Oragwu, who was the head of Biafra Research and Production (RAP) is still alive. It is on record that Biafra RAP developed *Ogbunigwe*, and successfully processed palm oil to power jet airplane throughout the war. It is instructive to lay emphasis on the Biafra RAP innovations and invention, as such novel ventures had one hundred percent local content. A feat that had never been achieved in Nigeria before the war. One would have expected that in the true sense of post-civil war reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, the federal government would assemble all such technologists and technicians who excelled in such novel inventions, and encourage them with incentives to develop a road map for Nigeria's industrial policies. Such efforts would have quickly healed the wounds, fostered greater integration, inculcated the spirit of patriotism, and above all, put the country on the path of industrial growth.

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