

## **40+ Years Later...The War Hasn't Ended...**

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### **Introduction**

The end of the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War was marked by a bold, even if noble “no victor, no vanquished” proclamation for which General Yakubu Gowon has understandably received wide acclaim. But, whether sincere or not, history continues to convey a different message, redefining this otherwise gracious gesture as being more melodramatic than realistic. To begin with, there was indeed an overbearing victor and a compliant vanquished. This is not to downplay the rare and exceptional restoration of stability after the war, which, up until that point, was perhaps only matched by what had occurred at the end of WWII between allied forces on the one hand and the Nazis (and their supporters) on the other. Ongoing or lingering conflicts in nations like Israel, Afghanistan, the Congo and Somalia, and “concluded” conflicts in nations like Liberia and Rwanda reinforce the outstanding manner in which the Nigeria-Biafra War was formally brought to an end. In the former situations, the conflicts have ultimately persisted and even when the weapons have stopped blazing an awkward aura of commotion and unease remains. Without the intervention of the United Nations or its standard peacekeeping force, or of other international initiatives, some of which are drawn out and rarely conclusive, the Nigeria-Biafra peace accord achieved a commendable degree of resolution and restored a profound measure of social normalcy.

Yet, it is this seeming state of calm that has proven most effective in masking the truth that the goals of the *federal side*<sup>1</sup> are still being pursued and relentlessly sustained. If the war ended only paper, in principle this means that it is still ongoing. This truth becomes even more evident if we revisit the reasons why federal and northern leaders<sup>2</sup> initially resolute about ridding themselves of unwanted easterners would finally renege on agreements that would have ensured such severance, albeit under a unique national framework.<sup>3</sup> The final decision to resort to fierce and uncompromisingly brutal means of preventing easterners from breaking free, forces a set of endless questions that address the convoluted nature of this unforeseen turnaround. After the federal side went back on its promise to honor the Aburi agreement, thanks to tactical reassessments by Federal Permanent Secretaries (and most likely the influence of foreign interests like the British), it was clear that its motive was more economically and politically based than it was for the sake of national unity.<sup>4</sup> On this inconsistency, many have cited the presence of huge and yet-to-be-tapped deposits of crude oil in the southeast as a foremost reason. But there were other reasons for this sudden change of heart and eagerness to “unite” with an apparently despised people.

## Resource & Economic Control

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<sup>1</sup> I use the word “federal side” in acknowledgement of the fact that the Civil War has been typically described as a war between Biafra and the “federal side” or “Federal Government” (or “Nigeria”).

<sup>2</sup> While the enemies of easterners at this time were not restricted to northerners, the north more than any other region expressed the most intense obsession with eliminating easterners, particularly Igbos.

<sup>3</sup> In *Biafra: Selected Speeches and Random Thoughts of C. Odumegwu Ojukwu* (Vol. 1) (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), Ojukwu claims that in phone conversations with Gowon, he (Gowon) specifically stated that his goal was separation (5). There are also claims that the “Araba” chant (a call for separation) became popular in the north following the second coup. Whatever the truth, the “unity” rallying cry of the federal side has come under severe scrutiny and strong doubts have been raised regarding its authenticity.

<sup>4</sup> For details on the Aburi agreement, see *Biafra: Selected Speeches and Random Thoughts of C. Odumegwu Ojukwu* (Vol. 1), 86-88 and Philip Efiog, *Nigeria and Biafra: My Story* (New York: African Tree Press, 2010), 158-165.

Belonging to a nation that was increasingly emerging as an oil mogul was one thing, having full control of the prized commodity was a different thing entirely. The Aburi accord had proposed a power sharing formula that would have actually reduced some of the powers of the Federal Government and granted the states more powers. Under a situation like this, southeasterners, even under a unified Nigeria, would have still been prevailing decision makers regarding the exploration and exploitation of their natural resources and the utilization of the wealth that would accrue thereof. To secure the autocratic powers of the Federal Military Government and clip some of the powers of the states, Gowon's shrewd decision to create 12 states on May 27, 1967 resulted in the equivalent of an *ethnic* divide and rule maneuver. Aside from weakening overall minority support for the dominant "Igbo"<sup>5</sup> east, this decision also eliminated the notion that a natural resource belonged to a single region or ethnic group. Now the property of a number of states, the Federal Government could validate its declaration of the resource as national property and gradually inch its way into appropriating it.

Meanwhile, the events of 1966-67 had proven that the military was fast emerging as a formidable politico-economic force to contend with. Garnering dominant military power would therefore become one of Nigeria's missions. The process was greatly facilitated by the conducive location of most major military institutions in the north (at secondary and post-secondary levels). Prominent among these are the Nigerian Military School (formerly Boys Company), Zaria; the Nigerian Army School of Infantry (NASI), Jaji, Kaduna; the Nigerian Defense Academy, Kaduna; and the Nigerian Military Training College (NMTC), Kaduna.<sup>6</sup> Later, other prominent and prestigious institutions would also be established: the National

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<sup>5</sup> Although distinctions are made between "Igbo" and "Ibo," in this paper I will keep things simple by using "Igbo" throughout to represent the people and their language. I regret if anyone is offended by this decision.

<sup>6</sup> Ibrahim Babangida, Muhammadu Buhari, the late Sani Abacha and the late Mamman Vatsa are among well-known officers that passed through NMTC.

Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos; the Training and Doctrine Command, Minna; the Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, Kaduna; and the National Defense College, Abuja (formerly National War College).<sup>7</sup> Kalu N. Kalu has reacted to the upsurge in the postwar creation of these officer-centered institutions, suggesting that, aside from offering military training, most of them are merely “indoctrination” and “political centers” deliberately designed to convince “the military elite that political governance may in fact be a part of their manifest destiny.”<sup>8</sup> He goes on to describe these facilities as becoming increasingly “redundant to the extent that many of their functions duplicate each other” since they invariably handle “specialized training of the officer corps in both military logistics and general administration....”<sup>9</sup>

After Gowon created 12 states from the former four regions, he appointed military governors to all of them, except East Central State to which he appointed a civilian administrator, Ukpabi Asika. His message was clear in his refusal to give any Igbo military officer such recognition or legitimacy. Of course not all Igbo officers had prior knowledge of the first coup, or even sanctioned or took part in it. It was an Igbo officer, the late Major General J.T.U. Ironsi, after all, that had foiled it. Surely Gowon could have found a loyal, worthy Igbo officer to fill the position, but he deliberately refused to appoint one. Up until that point, southerners in general had dominated the officer cadre of the Nigerian army. They did so through a fervent pursuit of educational and vocational training; they were not recipients of political gifts.<sup>10</sup> Partly instigated by the British, there would be a desperate move

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<sup>7</sup> Though some would argue that this facility is not in the north, it is certainly more accessible to the north than it is the south.

<sup>8</sup> Kalu N. Kalu, *State Power, Autarchy, and Political in Nigerian Federalism* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008), 113.

<sup>9</sup> Kalu N. Kalu, 113.

<sup>10</sup> In his book, *The Trouble with Nigeria, Reissue Edition* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 2000), Chinua Achebe recaptures this adventurous, outgoing, and ambitious spirit among easterners (particularly Igbos) when he says, “Unlike the Hausa/Fulani he was unhindered by a wary religion and unlike the Yoruba, unhampered by

to recruit northerners into the officer corps from the late 1950s and into the 60s, and to accelerate their advancement. It is this move that resulted in the questionable but meteoric rise of the highest-ranking northerner, Brigadier Zakariya Maimalari, prior to the first coup of January 1966. It was also this recruitment effort that eventually ushered in the likes of General Ibrahim Babangida, rtd, into the army. Ironsi would inadvertently augment the emergence and rise of northern officers in his attempts to appease them after the first coup. Among the beneficiaries of his gesture were Captains Ibrahim Haruna, Murtala Muhammed, and Mohammed Shuwa who were all promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (even though they were Acting Majors). Usman Katsina was also promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and he, like Murtala Muhammed, would become a key player in the ousting and murder of the Commander-in-Chief. But perhaps the biggest beneficiary was Gowon who Ironsi appointed Chief of Army Staff over and above his superiors. He, too, would be instrumental in the overthrow and murder of the General.

At the end of the civil war, the *castration* of Igbo officers and a significant number of non-Igbo officers was complete. They had either been killed or were dismissed from the military. The dismissal of Brigadier Hillary Njoku from the army at the end of the war is paramount here, and reinforces my point.<sup>11</sup> Some Igbos were reabsorbed but at ranks well below their contemporaries. Even loyal, non-Igbo eastern officers were not spared. During the second coup, Majors Ekanem and Isong from present Akwa Ibom State, for instance, were murdered, and even those that remained loyal and fought on the side of Nigeria faced considerable prejudices. Brigadier Wellington Bassey, an Ibibio officer, was one of three highest ranking officers (majors) in the Nigerian Army in 1959, the other two being Majors

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traditional hierarchies. This kind of creature, fearing no God nor man, was custom-made to grasp the opportunities, such as they were, of the white man's dispensation" (46).

<sup>11</sup> Brigadier Njoku disagreed with General Ojukwu on a number of issues prior to the war, and this resulted in Njoku being incarcerated during most of the conflict. At the end of the war, what was his crime?

Ironsi and Ademulegun. Gowon was only a Second Lieutenant at the time. But by 1966 Gowon had leveled with Bassey and both men were Lieutenant Colonels. Eventually Gowon would rise to the rank of four-star, full General while Bassey wouldn't get past the rank of one-star General (Brigadier).

This takeover was crucial in the wake of an evolving military that was steadily becoming an economic force and a replacement or influential agent for civilian politicians that had erstwhile backed their careers with economic power and fraud. This is particularly evident in the truth that there was nothing like a millionaire military officer until the postwar era. Military might had ultimately become synonymous with sociopolitical authority and supremacy. (Even if usurping eastern civilian managerial positions was not a priority, it became an added bonus as hundreds of federal administrative positions previously occupied by Igbos in Lagos would largely be ceded to westerners and minorities.)

### **Demarcations in the Struggle for “Unity”**

But it is perhaps in ethnic and boundary conflicts—intensified by the historical creation and more recent recreation of states—that the caustic vestiges of the civil war continue to be preserved. As has already been stated, states creation initially weakened minority support for secession, though several minorities still fought on the side of Biafra. Nonetheless, for the first time eastern minorities were experiencing a sense of autonomy and visibility, and were not lost in the otherwise customary focus on the majority Igbos of the east. Good propaganda on the part of the federal side as well as imminent confrontations between Igbos and some minorities further widened the chasm that was steadily building between the groups. Minorities in captured areas were appeased by the security and semblance of economic revival that Nigeria reintroduced, which is why they were easily bought over and crossed over. As in any war, too, the losing side begins to look for internal

reasons for its gradual capitulation, all in a bid not to give the enemy credit. This was also the case in Biafra, at least partially. The more exacting things became for the ailing nation, the more the majority Igbos began to suspect the minority “strangers” in their midst, giving birth to the oft-delusional “sabo” phenomenon. Violent confrontations took place and sometimes escalated to the burning of villages and loss of lives. In his book, *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War*, Alexander Madiebo briefly touches on this scenario:

Civil Defense Organizations from Umuahia and Aba, acting on orders from sources unknown to me or Army Headquarters, carried out an exercise to “comb” out saboteurs in the area of Ikot Ekpene. During that exercise some over-zealous civilians, particularly along the Umuahia road, in their search for saboteurs, burnt down a few thatched houses belonging to the Annangs.<sup>12</sup>

My own uncle, Sergeant Gabriel Effiong, was almost shot at a checkpoint because he couldn't speak Igbo. Fortunately for him, he was recognized and his identity confirmed by an observer who witnessed the near-disastrous incident. Ironically, too, my uncle was a Biafran soldier at the time. These occurrences were especially distressful for people of present-day Akwa Ibom State, since their son and brother, Major General Philip Efiang, was Biafra's second-in-command. But even he was caught up in the muddle and was subsequently accused by some of his own people of masterminding the violence against them. The allegations continued well after the war.

The creation of states and ensuing wartime ethnic clashes has created a cycle of unending resentment that continues to this day and the prime beneficiary (militarily, economically, and politically) is the “federal side,” particularly the north. Except things have

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<sup>12</sup> Madiebo, Alexander. *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co., 2000.

recently changed, after the war most people from present Akwa Ibom State would rather vote in a Hausa or Yoruba president than they would an Igbo president. People who had lived in harmony for many years, despite cultural and linguistic differences, demonstrated a postwar bitterness that has resulted in several boundary clashes and violent disputes. Driving in from Aba to Ikot Ekpene, for instance, there were once gray areas where the people intermingled, married, and freely learned and spoke each other's languages. Harmony that once existed among these people was eaten up by the war and they have practically lived like sworn enemies that are fanatical about the cultural and ideological borders separating them.

Prior to the war it was not uncommon to have a Hausa Mayor of Enugu, as indeed was the case with Alhaji Umaru Altine. It was also not uncommon to have streets in Enugu named after Annang and Itigidi families as was the case with Akpabio and Imoke Streets in the Government Reserved Area.<sup>13</sup> Such ethnic accord has since been curtailed by a consciousness and phobia that inhibit acceptance and impose interactive restrictions.

As the war progressed, therefore, the concept of secession for minorities would eventually evolve into a potential economic and political threat. Aggravated by clashes with Igbos, this situation is succinctly explained by Raph Uwechue:

For the minorities of the Eastern Region it shut the safety valves that gave them access to political and economic protection which the larger and more

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<sup>13</sup> According to Alex Ekwueme:

In the First Republic there were several cases of a pan-Nigerian outlook in election of some candidates for political office. A few examples will suffice: Hon. Ebubedike from Ozubulu in present Anambra State was member for Badagry East (Ajeromi District) in the Western House of Assembly at Ibadan; Hon. John Umolu from Agenebode in present Edo State was Member for Port Harcourt in the Eastern House of Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier at Enugu; the first elected Mayor of Enugu Municipality was Alhaji Umaru Altine from then Sokoto Province; Hon. S. G. Ikoku from Arochukwu in present Abia State was elected to represent Calabar Municipality in the Eastern House of Assembly where he featured as Leader of Opposition; Alhaji Ibrahim Imam from Borno was elected to represent a Tiv constituency; etc. ("How Maitama Sule Stepped Down for Shagari in 1979")

powerful Federation provided them. In this respect therefore, it can be said that secession only shifted the problem of domination—the very same problem it purported to solve—in favor of the majority tribe—the Ibos—at the expense of the minorities.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Unique Rivers Situation**

Even more intriguing is how the unfolding ethnic divide and resentment has played out in present-day Rivers State. I have read and listened to allegations by the people of this State, including the renowned Ikwerre writer, Elechi Amadi, about how Igbos had tried to drag them into Biafra, annex their homeland and destroy their lives during the war. One of the initial self-assertive moves undertaken by the people of Rivers was by way of the “Abandoned Property” controversy, for which Igbos have alleged an unconscionable and underhanded seizure of their pre-war properties. To further reassert themselves and reclaim their communities, the Rivers people have painstakingly prefixed the names of some of their towns with an “R” in order to eliminate any notion that these towns belong to the Igbos. Subsequently, “Umuomasi” is now “Rumuomasi,” “Umuobiakani” is “Rumuobiakani,” “Umukurushi” is “Rumukurushi,” and “Umuigbo” is “Rumuigbo.” I certainly do not question the rights of Rivers people to struggle for self-determination and just as I do not claim full knowledge of the factors that have stirred their disputes with Igbos, I also do not have any moral right to discount the contention that they have merely reclaimed the authentic names of their towns, thus stemming a complete takeover by the Igbos. My concern, however, is the truth that tensions between Igbos and the people of Rivers State, whether they existed prior to

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<sup>14</sup> Raph Uwechue, *Reflections on the Nigerian Civil War: Facing the Future*, Revised (Paris: Jeane Afrique, 1971), 64.

the war or not, were certainly and intentionally exacerbated by the conflict. In the end, neither the Igbos nor the people of Rivers benefit from their subsisting discord. The real beneficiary is the Federal Government or “federal side,” which, from the onset of the war, deviously warmed its way into the hearts of the Rivers people, masking itself as their genuine friend.

I will digress briefly. For a long time I have observed, and have been somewhat baffled by the fact that most of the Ikwerre people I have met from Rivers State bear Igbo names and speak Igbo in addition to their indigenous language. I remember while taking part in the NYSC<sup>15</sup> and an Igbo participant snidely asked a young Ikwerre man whose name was “Amadi,” “why don’t you change your name to ‘Ramadi’ so that you will no longer bear an Igbo name?” Without all the proof I need, I suspect that Ikwerres and Igbos have a historical, cultural, and linguistic connection that runs deep. How ironic if this were true. But, then again, I have also listened with much interest to Ikwerre nationalists who assert that their sociolinguistic connection to Igbos is similar to the connection between the Dutch and Germans, or between Italians and the Spanish. If no one is saying that these groups of people are “similar,” then people ought to stop claiming that Igbos and Ikwerres are “similar.” This argument seems to carry some validity.

The bottom line, however, is that it is much easier to control people in conflict with each other; they can’t fight back because resistance demands unity. Meanwhile, the north, in spite of its ethnic diversity, remains substantially united and continues to wax strong politically and militarily, courtesy of the Hausa language widely spoken in that region, the prevalent practice of Islam and its civil war victory.

If the Rivers people have not learned that their professed wartime friend was never really their friend, they should revisit their abandonment to the environmental hazards caused by oil exploration on their lands. Ken Saro Wiwa, onetime outspoken opponent of Biafra,

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<sup>15</sup> The National Youth Service Corps is an equivalent of the Peace Corps, except that it is done locally.

would eventually find himself in an intense and bitter postwar struggle with former “federal” friends over the degradation of Ogoniland and waterways by oil companies. He finally lost his life as a result of this faceoff. Ultimately, government took sides with the oil companies and not Saro Wiwa or the Ogoni people. Oil companies will only get away with whatever a ruling government allows them to get away with and the only way a government would permit oil companies to get away with ecological destruction is if the government has little or no regards for the victims of the problem. This has apparently been the case in oil producing parts of Rivers State. It is absurd to expect oil-producing states to be responsible for maintaining security and proper professional conduct regarding drilling activities when they have no say in the commercial management of the product. Such protection should come from the sole regulator of the product, the Federal Government. The apparent indifference of the Federal Government indicates that oil takes precedence over the quality of life of the people from whose land the resource is tapped. There are those who claim that Biafra would have also had a similar exploitative attitude towards oil producing areas if it had won the war. While I disagree with this projection because there is no basis for it, I guess we will never know....

In January 2009, the Governor of Rivers State, Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi delivered a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. (which I attended) on the economic and infrastructural progress being made in his state.<sup>16</sup> He admitted, however, that his greatest problem is dealing with a bogus federal structure made up of weak federating units. With absolute rights over all mineral resources in Nigeria, he accused the Federal Government of profiting enormously off of oil from states like his, while the indigenous owners of the resource are unable to see, smell, touch or fully benefit from it.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Governor Amaechi’s lecture was titled, “Addressing Conflict and Underdevelopment in The Niger Delta.”

<sup>17</sup> Rivers State produces 60 percent of Nigeria’s gas supply and 40 percent of the country’s crude oil.

He traced this injustice to an increasing reduction in derivation that began with 100 percent under the British Government, shifted to 50 percent and then fell to zero after the civil war.<sup>18</sup> Coincidence?

### **Preserving Biafra in Grief and Anger**

While this essay is not intended to boil down to a personal gripe over postwar Nigeria, the truth is that beyond the larger political and ethnic issues already mentioned, the war never ended on more personal levels. I remember the in-law who spent his postwar years inching his way through life on the one leg that he managed to protect as the other was blown to bits when he fought for a Biafran vision that he firmly and deeply believed in. Popularly called “War Condition,” this man eventually died around 2004. Obviously the war never ended for him until his death. His story is the story of hundreds of Biafran amputees who recreated a semblance of normalcy within a system that lacked rehabilitation and that simply left them to rot.

Caught between the guilt he was forced to feel and the initial animosity by some of his own people, I personally witnessed another man pine away until his death, frustrated and filled with indignation, all of which were intensified by the total loss of a career that he had sweated so hard to build. Even his 11-year-old son was not spared the postwar onslaught and was denied a secondary school scholarship just because he was this man’s son.<sup>19</sup> I know because I am that boy.

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<sup>18</sup> Derivation is a sharing principle that is supposed to allot proceeds derivable from natural resources in all states of the federation, based on levels of productivity.

<sup>19</sup> My father eventually wrote the man responsible for my being denied a scholarship and promised that even if he had to beg he would make sure I receive an education. I eventually graduated from the university and my father again wrote and invited this man to my graduation ceremony. Of course he didn’t show up. However, my father kept to his word and today I have a Ph.D.

The war lives on in the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), whether you agree with its philosophy or not, whether you take its members seriously or not. In MASSOB's efforts at resuscitating the defunct state of Biafra, there is an underlining indication of ongoing anger and dissatisfaction over the manner in which the Nigeria-Biafra War was waged, and the fact that many people still grieve over what they consider a major miscarriage of justice during and after the conflict. Especially poignant is that many of the people revisiting, condemning and grieving this macabre experience are young people who were either not born during the conflict or who were very young at the time. They include writers like Chimamanda Adichie who was born seven years after the war but whose *Half of a Yellow Sun* does a remarkable job of recapturing some of the social and familial traumas engendered by the war and its consequences. They include young musicians who have re-evoked the ordeal through songs that celebrate Biafra even as they lament, accuse and threaten.<sup>20</sup>

The fury and acrimony will continue to be provoked by lies and distortions of the truth. At the book lunch of *The Untold Story of the Nigeria-Biafra War* by Luke Nnaemeka Aneke in Abuja in 2008, Gowon who like me was in attendance, claimed that he had great admiration and respect for the Igbos, which is why he didn't want to let them go. (Through all the war crimes that were committed against Biafra, he certainly had a unique way of expressing love and respect.) Gowon also claimed, with seeming remorse, that when he acquired military warplanes and other armaments from Russia, he didn't anticipate that they would cause such vast destruction. I couldn't help but wonder at the ludicrousness of the

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<sup>20</sup> Some of these music videos can be accessed on *YouTube* (<http://www.youtube.com>). They include: "Biafra (Land of the Rising Sun)" by ETCETERA (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9zrcB2kgXc&feature=related>); "Let My People Go!" artiste unknown (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSEWZ5o9t30>); "Promise Land," artiste unknown (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9DTjOOoFDU&feature=related>); "Stop Killing Our People," artiste unknown (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m43A43x60o0&feature=related>); "Unity Peace and Love," artiste unknown (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y36wDjqL0v8&feature=related>); "All We Need is Freedom," artiste unknown (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FedM8hjnleo&feature=related>). Note, however, that videos on *YouTube* can be taken off the site at anytime for a number of reasons.

latter statement. How does a General not know the potential destructive magnitude of specific weapons? Like I said, lies and distortions of the truth will ensure that the war lives on in the anger and bitterness of those most affected by it.

## **Final Thoughts**

While Hitler's vision was the extermination of Jews, it never fully came to fruition because he was confronted by allied forces. If he had won the war, it is at this time that the extermination of Jews would really have taken place. Whoever wins a civil war enjoys the luxury of pursuing wartime goals, and in a relatively stable setting that offers little or no resistance. To him, the clichéd "All's fair in love and war" becomes a sacred declaration of truth. War lives on in its aftermath and the war against Biafra has also persevered in deliberate efforts at refusing to afford the defunct nation any recognition. Under incalculable and intense pressures, and while lacking basic resources and facing an enemy that was well equipped by Britain, Russia and Egypt; Biafra was still able to build two functioning refineries on lands not traditionally recognized as oil-producing. The first was in Uzuakoli, which had to be abandoned after the town was overrun by Nigerian troops. The second was in Amandugba near Owerri. These refineries practically kept Biafra going until the war ended. The various Biafran Directorates<sup>21</sup> embarked on a series of innovative projects that produced weapons, armored vehicles, clothing and foodstuff. One of Biafra's most successful and notorious creations was the high explosive popularly called "ogbunigwe." But in postwar Nigeria every step has been taken to suppress Biafra's resourcefulness and ingenuity, and nothing has been done to build on the inventions that were carried out in the former nation. The decision to deny Biafra all credibility and validity is deliberate and designed to preserve the notion of a rogue nation out of which nothing good could possibly emanate.

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<sup>21</sup> The Directorates were Research and Production, Transport, Food, Housing, Fuel, Clothing, and Propaganda.

The real test of whether there was no victor or vanquished after the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War lies in what has happened in the years following the war, and not what was declared on the day that hostilities formally ended. As long as the underlying goals of the federal side remains unchanged and are still being pursued meticulously (which is its relentless hold on the proverbial “spoils” of war), the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War will continue to rage, even if just in the hearts and minds of those who endure the impact of its aftermath.

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