A POLITICAL ECONOMY EXPLANATION OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR

By

MOSES EROMEDOGHENE UKPENUMEWU TEDHEKE
B.SC. (HONS) POLTICAL/ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES UNIPORT 1982
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OCTOBER, 2007

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation titled “A Political Economy Explanation of the Nigerian Civil War” is my work and has not been presented in any form for another qualification in any other University or Institution. Information from the works of others cited have been duly acknowledged.

……..

MOSES EROMEDOGHENE UKPENUMEWU TEDHEKE

PhD/Soc. Sci / 20895/99 - 2000

Department of Political Science and International Studies,

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled " A Political Economy Explanation of the Nigerian Civil War" by Moses Eromedoghene Ukpenumewu Tedheke meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

…….. Date……..

Professor R.A. Dunmoye

Chairman, Supervisory Committee

…….. Date……..

Dr. Sabo Bako

Member Supervisory Committee

…….. Date……..

Dr. Peter Odofin

Member Supervisory Committee

…….. Date……..

Dr. Umar Ka'oje

Head of Department

…….. Date……..

Prof. S.A. Nkom

Dean, Post Graduate School

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the down trodden and all those who became cannon fodders during the Nigerian Civil War, a product of the greed of the rentier/comprador bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy who used geo-ethnic symbols to the detriment of the masses of Nigeria and indeed the rest of us.

It is also dedicated to the maimed and the dead in the course of their struggle against the odds of existence of this dependent capitalist social formation, a struggle and suffering artificially created by the inhuman social relations of production imposed by imperialism and their Nigerian collaborators – the comprador bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy. And to the peasantry and the working class this dedication is conferred.

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ABSTRACT

The problem of seeing the post – independence crises that resulted in the Nigeria Civil War in geo-ethnic or geo-strategic terms have pervaded most if not all, Nigerian analysts of the crises which led to the shooting war of 1967 to 1970. This exercise in obscurantism and agnosticism has dominated most of the studies of the Nigerian Civil War. As a result of this reductionism we have decided to reinterpret most of the liberal / bourgeois literatures on the Nigerian Civil War whose emphasis has been on primordial explanatory variables as the primary explanatory variables of the Nigerian Civil War. We have found out in this research dissertation that the primordial explanatory variables are secondary variables or ideological cover for the sectional chauvinists and veritable tools in the hands of imperialism to continue the plunder of Nigerian human and material resources. Thus those who continue to hold on to these tools of analysis are consciously and unconsciously aiding the dynamics of imperialists and the interest of their local collaborators – the comprador bourgeoisie. We have found out in this research work that this mutual interdependence between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the Nigerian comprador bourgeoisie in the dehumanising exploitation of the working people and the surplus transfer regimes has been the fundamental basis of the Nigerian immediate post independence crises that gave birth to the Nigerian Civil War. As such, the Civil War cannot be explained away in other terms outside the economy, its class character and class relations. In this respect, therefore, ethnic or primordial explanations of the Nigerian crises of the First Republic and indeed the Nigerian Civil War are nothing but a cover for class formation. It was equally the nature and structure of the Nigerian economy and its lack of industrial base that have had the paralytic effects on the post independence political crises that led to the demise of the First Republic, the coup and counter coup that heralded the Civil War and the shooting war itself. The economic demands of the Korean War boom of 1953/54 in international commodity market and the collapse of world commodity prices resulted in the collapse of the bases of the regional enclave economies hence their deadly, intra-bourgeois struggles for federal power by the regionalised comprador bourgeoisie of the First Republic. At this point in time, as the regional economies were collapsing, that of the centre was appreciating as a result of crude oil discoveries. The do or die struggles

between the regionalised dominant classes in the First Republic, therefore, finds meaning in the post Korean War economic misfortunes that befell the unproductive comprador bourgeoise and the landed aristocracy. The decomposition of Nigeria politics in the First Republic, the remaking of the political map and post independence coalition and indeed the First Republic crises, and the coup and counter coup and the Civil War were products of the economic crisis of the international post Korean War burst of regional primary commodity products from 1955/56 through to the First Republic and its final demise. The alignment and realignment of forces forced on the agenda the rapid sliding of the precipice into the Civil War on July 6, 1967 when the shooting war began. However, the rebel invasion of Mid-West and its threat on Lagos and Western States on August 9, 1967 led to a major realignment of forces during the Civil War. It forced the fence sitting Mid-Western and Western states to the side of the Northern dominant landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeoisie against the Eastern comprador bourgeoisie and it also led to the transformation of the war from a Northern versus Eastern comprador bourgeoisie at war to a truly Nigerian Civil War. It equally changed the tempo and strategy of the war from a “Police Action” to a Total War. The economic interests in the Civil War made the struggle for the oil producing areas assumed a high degree of intensity. This interest of Euro-American imperialism is based on crude oil the king – pin of modern industries. However, for Nigeria and indeed victorious war coalition it became the entrenchment of the comprador political economy. Thus we lost the Civil War in its development dynamics as all war improvisations were not harnessed for national development. Indeed the resolution of the *national question*. in terms of nation building was not achieved, The Nigerian Civil War whether won by either sides to the war cannot be said to be a progressive war.

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ABSTRACT

The problem of seeing the post – independence crises that resulted in the Nigeria Civil War in geo-ethnic or geo-strategic terms have pervaded most if not all, Nigerian analysts of the crises which led to the shooting war of 1967 to 1970. This exercise in obscurantism and agnosticism has dominated most of the studies of the Nigerian Civil War. As a result of this reductionism we have decided to reinterpret most of the liberal / bourgeois literatures on the Nigerian Civil War whose emphasis has been on primordial explanatory variables as the primary explanatory variables of the Nigerian Civil War. We have found out in this research dissertation that the primordial explanatory variables are secondary variables or ideological cover for the sectional chauvinists and veritable tools in the hands of imperialism to continue the plunder of Nigerian human and material resources. Thus those who continue to hold on to these tools of analysis are consciously and unconsciously aiding the dynamics of imperialists and the interest of their local collaborators – the comprador bourgeoisie. We have found out in this research work that this mutual interdependence between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the Nigerian comprador bourgeoisie in the dehumanising exploitation of the working people and the surplus transfer regimes has been the fundamental basis of the Nigerian immediate post independence crises that gave birth to the Nigerian Civil War. As such, the Civil War cannot be explained away in other terms outside the economy, its class character and class relations. In this respect, therefore, ethnic or primordial explanations of the Nigerian crises of the First Republic and indeed the Nigerian Civil War are nothing but a cover for class formation. It was equally the nature and structure of the Nigerian economy and its lack of industrial base that have had the paralytic effects on the post independence political crises that led to the demise of the First Republic, the coup and counter coup that heralded the Civil War and the shooting war itself. The economic demands of the Korean War of 1953/54 led to boom in international commodity after the war market and the collapse of world commodity prices resulted in the collapse of the bases of the regional enclave economies hence their deadly, intra-bourgeois struggles for federal power by the regionalised bourgeoisie

of the First Republic. At this point in time, as the regional economies were collapsing, that of the centre was appreciating as a result of crude oil discoveries. Equally the constitutional change in revenue allocation from 100% derivation to 50% apiece to both the centre and the regions negatively affected the regions as international commodity prices dwindle. The do or die struggles between the regionalised dominant classes in the First Republic, therefore, finds meaning in the post Korean War economic misfortunes that befell the unproductive comprador/rentier/landed bourgeoisie. The decomposition of Nigerian politics and the fractured dominant class in the First Republic, the remaking of the political map and post independence coalition and indeed the First Republic crises, and the coup and counter coup and the Civil War were products of the economic crisis of the international post Korean War burst of regional primary commodity products from 1955/56 through to the First Republic and its final demise. The alignment and realignment of forces forced on the agenda the rapid sliding of the precipice into the Civil War on July 6, 1967 when the shooting war began. However, the rebel invasion of Mid-West and its threat on Lagos and Western States on August 9, 1967 led to a major realignment of forces during the Civil War. It forced the fence sitting Mid-Western and Western states to the side of the Northern dominant landed/comprador bourgeoisie against the Eastern comprador bourgeoisie and it also led to the transformation of the war from a Northern versus Eastern comprador bourgeoisie at war to a truly Nigerian Civil War. It equally changed the tempo and strategy of the war from a “Police Action” to a Total War. The economic interests in the Civil War made the struggle for the oil producing areas assumed a high degree of intensity. This interest of Euro-American imperialism is based on crude oil the king – pin of modern industries. However, for Nigeria and indeed the victorious war coalition it became the entrenchment of the rentier political economy. Thus we lost the Civil War in its development dynamics as all war improvisations were not harnessed for national development and indeed the resolution of the national question. In terms of nation building, the Nigerian Civil War whether won by either sides to the war cannot be said to be a progressive war.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. **The Problematique**

Nigeria as a collective entity has its origin in the colonial past when Britain invaded Lagos under the pretext of stamping out slave trade in 1851. From1861 when Lagos was declared a crown colony, the British became more aggressive in their colonial bids in the Niger and Benue areas that the Royal Niger Company hitherto held sway in its company government. The Niger-Benue trough and indeed the Niger Delta were well known to the British and other European powers during the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and during the period of legitimate commerce under the regime of the Royal Niger Company. Prior to the discovery of crude oil in the United States about the same time Lagos was declared a crown colony, palm oil trade was encouraged from this area as export to Europe and North America for the lubrication of the entire fabric of the industrial revolution (Nore and Turner eds. 1980:1). The importance of this area later to be called Nigeria brought about the intense struggles between Britain and France, the two largest colonisers of the West African sub-region and indeed the entire African continent. The various territories that became Nigeria were slowly hammered together from 1900 and by 1914, the Lugard's Amalgamation put the final nails that knocked together the pieces

Nigeria is located within latitudes 4^0 N, and 14^0 N, and longitudes 3^0 E and 15^0 E. It has a total land area of approximately 920,000sq. km (Adalemo and Baba 1993: 13). The country, Nigeria, is bounded in the West by the republics of Benin and Niger, in the North by Niger, in the East by Chad and Camerouns, and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean's continental shelf. Nigeria is thus located at the strategic Niger-Benue trough, two great rivers that emptied themselves through the lower Niger into what was known as the Bight of Biafra changed to Bight of Bonny, a fall out of the Civil War. As a political entity, Nigeria obtained her independence from Britain in October 1, 1960 with fanfare and euphoria of the birth of a state among the comity of nations. As the largest

democracy in Africa at independence, Nigeria in the eyes of its leaders saw the leadership of the African continent in terms of democracy and development as her natural portion. This was epitomised in Tafawa Balewa's statement that …"Nigeria will have a wonderful opportunity to speak for the continent of Africa …such that Nigeria might fulfil her destiny as the leader of the continent" (Bukarambe 1990: 55).

With raised hopes of an emerging great power, the leadership became so preoccupied with this euphoria that they neglected the contradictions inherent in the neo-colonial Nigerian state that were begging for solutions to enhance the nascent democracy in order to advance nation building. Those on whose shoulders independence was thrusted accepted the capitalist world view without the fundamentals of capitalism based on its organisational processes, revolution in the instruments of production and the productive forces. According to Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu (1986:194) "…the triumph of social democracy rests on the ability of capitalism to maintain uninterrupted development and economic growth". The Nigeria situation at independence contradicted the foregoing as there were serious contradictions between production and reward distributions. The struggles at both the regional and the national levels were over the distribution of the euphemistic national cake and not it's baking. All the armour in the arsenal of the political leaders who also doubled as comprador capitalists were used ranging from ethnicity, sectionalism, regionalism and so on. According to Ayu (1994: 131):

> The first remark about Nigeria Federalism is its preoccupation with revenue allocation or distribution of rewards. Most people who have either written about or formulated policies for Nigeria have placed emphasis on distribution or what is cynically referred to as sharing of the national cake. Unfortunately not much emphasis has been placed on baking the cake by every member and component parts or segment of the Nigerian political community. Inevitably, distribution or sharing has completely over shadowed production or effective growth.

The phenomenon of reward distribution without an organised indigenous authentic capitalist production had been characteristic of Nigerian politics from its inception in the 1950s when authentic nationalism was lost to opportunism. The importance of the state

in this reward distribution made the struggle for state power both at the local, regional and national levels a do-or-die affair or a life-and-death matter (Ake 1976; Turner in Cohen and Daniel 1981: 155- 168). This becomes more dangerous when capitalism is organised as a caricature with the predominance of the precapitalist modes of production that are called to the aid of the dependent capitalist social formation. Most of these states could be termed as rentier states as they depend on tributes, taxes, rents, and royalties to accumulate funds for national development (Lenin 1983:94-6; First in Nore and Turner 1989:111). The danger signals as in Nigeria of this type of economy would appear and become clearer when fortunes of the base of this rentier economy collapsed and the fortunes of the then regions changed for the worse with the collapse of world agricultural commodity prices after the Korean War induced booms of 1953. As the fortunes of Federal Government became enhanced with the discovery of crude oil at Oloibiri in 1956, the struggles for Federal power intensified between the regions and the regionalised trading and comprador bourgeoisie.

One, therefore, has to view the crises that led to the Nigerian Civil War in the foregoing perspective or analytical glasses beyond the ethnic lens so as to get at the roots. The nature of the colonial economic penetrations in Nigeria and indeed all over Africa was such that it created series of economic enclaves linked not to each other but to the metropoles through the export of primary commodities such as tin, palm produce, cocoa, coffee, groundnuts, cotton and rubber. In this way, a low level of economic integration worked to compartmentalise ethnic groups that made up independent Nigeria. Capitalism has as one of its basic contradictions the law of uneven development. This unequal modernisation which most liberal social scientists see as the cause of subsequent communal conflicts had been rather a symptom of the structures of the colonial and neo-colonial capitalism. Another area in which the economic dimension has been relegated is the tendency to view the Nigeria Civil War almost entirely through the ethnic lens. This leads to a silence on the question of social classes, especially, the roles of the feudal aristocracy in the North and the emerging comprador bourgeoisie of the East and West in manipulating ethnic sentiments for their own ends (Randall and Theobald 1985: 50; Nnoli 1978).

What we aim to investigate is the notion that the Nigerian Civil War is a product of intense inter and intra-class struggles in the process of class formation through primitive accumulation by a rising regionalised comprador bourgeoisie in a dependent capitalist social formation which became a do-or-die affair between this fractured class. The intensification of the crises of primitive accumulation prior to and in the First Republic was caused by the collapse of the world commodity prices of agricultural products in the 1950s which the regions depended on for survival as their main revenue or economic bases. Consequently, the appreciation of the federal centre with the discovery of crude oil made it more attractive and the struggles for federal power became a do-or-die affair for the fractured regionalised ruling class.

The point which has always been avoided by conventional social scientists or analysts is that the dependent Nigerian capitalist political economy under the grip of colonial and later neo-colonial imperialism has given vent to a ruling class that depends on spoils of politics for primitive accumulation for its survival. Since this class is fractured along regions in the First Republic, the struggles for political spoils became translated into false consciousness based on primordial sentiments in the forms of ethnic, regional, cultural and religious differences as it were. This is what Ake (1881) sees as the raising of secondary contradictions into prominent contradictions and the relegation of primary contradictions into non-prominent contradictions. It is the turning of objective reality upside down.

This process of the falsification of objective reality, of making or turning secondary contradictions into prominent contradictions and making or turning primary contradictions into non-prominent contradictions is the key problem in the analysis of the Nigerian Civil War and indeed most national crises. In other words, the playing down of the material conditions that inform the class formation and therefore inter and intra-class struggles, which resulted in the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted is the key problem in most, if not all the studies so far, of the Nigerian Civil War. The conventional social scientists always neglect the materialist interpretation of the Civil

War to our detriment hence their reliance on primordialism or what one would call the geo-cultural models of explanations. This will push to the back burner the internal class struggle and the impact of the global system on the intensification of the inter-class and intra-class struggles in the class formation processes in a peripheral capitalist social formation like Nigeria.

Turner (1982:158) succinctly said that the foregoing produces crises in a commercial capitalist social formation. The struggles for material interests by what she calls the "commercial triangle" involving international capital, the state officials and the middlemen always creates and intensifies internal crises. She said:

> The political economy of commercial capitalist society is defined largely by effort to establish these triangular relationships and to operate them profitably. Instability is endemic in the struggle among the middlemen for state patronages, and in the competition among officials of state for control of decisions. In these circumstances, politics is a form of business through which actors seek influence in the state, not in order to make and apply general rules, but in order to secure advantages.

The centrality of the state in the distribution of patronages becomes crucial and therefore the intensification of struggles for state power increases, especially in the periods of state and world economic down turn. Turner (1982: 160) further stressed:

> Since governments are responsible for a great deal of expenditure in poor countries, the full pressure of an oligopolistic market is brought to bear on state officials. Local intermediaries and foreign businessmen who are unable to gain access to the decision-makers of the moment look forward to their replacement. State officials who cannot obtain positions which allow them to influence decision-making similarly seek to unseat those in power. In this conflict-ridden context the power of guns and money plays an everyday role.

In the foregoing, Terisa Turner was interested in the political economy of the post Civil War crises in Nigeria which however fits in well for the pre-Civil War crises and indeed the Civil War itself. The fact that these crises are expressed in the false consciousness of ethnicity makes Turner's analysis relevant. In all peripheral capitalist social formations that lack sound industrial bases but based on commercial capitalism,

including pre-industrial Europe, the intensification of such crises are felt more in the periphery, which assume various forms. Marx and Engels (1977:289) said

> While, therefore, the crises first produce revolutions on the continent, the foundation for this, nevertheless, was always laid in England. Violent outbreaks must naturally occur rather in the extremities of the bourgeois body than in its heart, since the possibility of adjustment is greater here than there.

One of the greatest problems in explaining national crises is limiting the explanations of theses crises to primordial factors. Bowen (1996) said these conflicts though involve ethnicity but such is a cover for material interests. They are not really products of ethnic diversities.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Lacking the explanatory model of historical dialectics would make analysts of the liberal tradition to situate the Nigeria crises and the Civil War that followed in explanatory models of ethno-religious, geo-ethnic and primordial variables which at best explain only secondary contradictions and leave out the primary contradictions which are based on economic and class relations which Post and Vickers (1971) and Obasanjo (1980) maintained wrongly as the primary causal variables. In the foregoing respect, therefore, **this study sets out to investigate as a problem the impact of the socio-economic forces on the outbreak and prosecution of the Nigerian Civil War from 1967 to 1970. Our emphasis is on the primacy of economic factor as the primary moderating force that laid the foundation for the immediate post-colonial crises that heralded the Coup and Counter Coup and consequently the Civil War**. Engels (1975:92) said that active social forces work exactly like natural forces blindly, forcibly, destructively-so long as we do not understand them and take them into account. However, when once we recognise them and understand their action, their trend and their effects, it depends solely on ourselves to increasingly subject them to our will and attain our ends through them.

Nwankwo (1987:16) said that our problems lie in the acceptance of the misinterpretations of African realities by Euro-American conventional social science

which lags behind the essential features of the African condition. As such the amorphous nature of categories used by Euro-American reactionary social science for explaining the African condition has been uncritically plagiarised by the African ruling class and their intellectual megaphone who employ such concepts which are inappropriate but still juxtaposed on the African reality. As a result, the error of language has nursed a corresponding error of policy (Otero cited by Frank 1972:1). Hence Nwankwo (1987 :15) strongly stressed that:

> The main task of political analysis should be to understand and explain, theoretically and empirically, how to mobilise and control active social forces operating in the milieu of militarised neo -colonialism. A related task is to recommend the necessary action in accordance with the cognised necessity, and from there to facilitate the struggle for dynamic stability…

Falola and Ihonvbere (1985:6) have observed that in a distorted, crisis ridden and backward peripheral capitalist society… where it has been the tradition of the dominant class to (localise) the unequal and exploitative relations of production, exchange and distribution, the state can hardly meet the basic needs of the people. Hence they correctly assert that "… the intra-bourgeois class struggle to win access to the state and thus preside over the allocation of public funds prompts the manipulation of the means of coercion, politicisation of the bureaucracy and armed forces, and the use of ethnic, state and religious chauvinism". Nwankwo (1978:19) noted that arising from the foregoing is a correlation between peripheralisation of a socio-economic formation in a neo-colonial society and the regulated use of coercion in order to perpetuate the status quo. He asserts that the armed forces are part and parcel of class dynamics in society. Thus the violence which neo-colonial society unleashes to perpetuate itself is equally capable of generating counter force for its own destruction (Nwankwo 1987:9 cited Falola and Ihonvbere 1985:6). Thus the Coup and Counter Coup of 1966 which were products of economics of imperialism, of the crises of peripheral capitalism and intra-bourgeois class struggles of the landed aristocracy/comprador classes within split the military down the middle and sent the country down the precipice onto a Civil War. The problem is that these economic factors of class struggle, imperialism and class formation in post-colonial Nigeria and

Africa are explained away in the concepts of geo-ethnic or primodial secondary variables.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

We set for ourselves the following objectives in this dissertation:

1. To critique the geo-cultural explanations and highlight their inadequacies in explaining the Nigerian Civil War and other ethno-social crises.
2. To examine the role of imperialism and its local agents, the landed aristocracy and comprador bourgeoisie, in generating social disorder.
3. To get at the nature and structure of the Nigerian economy that resulted in the crises that led to the Civil War and sustained it.
4. To examine the social structure/classes that led to the Civil War and fueled it while it lasted.
5. To the examine interest of metropolitan bourgeoisie in the sustenance of the Civil War.

1.3 Propositions

For this study, the following propositions would be our guide in the explanation of the events that led to the Civil War and sustained it.

1. The intensification of the contradictions between the comprador landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie in periods of global economic depressions lead to acute social instabilities and even War in a dependent capitalist social formation like Nigeria.
2. The rebel invasion of Mid West and its threats on the Western State including Lagos led to the realignment and coalescence of other ruling class factions of the comprador class forces against their Biafran counterparts.
3. The importance of Crude Oil to the comprador landed/comprador classes and imperialism resulted in the intensification of the War in order to secure the Oil producing areas.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The Nigerian Civil War was fought between July 1967 to January 1970 the period we have covered. The nature of materialist method results in the deepening of the analysis of economic history to enable us to have a clear understanding of the interaction of social forces based on the development process. The economic history approach based on the dynamics of the movement and the interrelations of social forces was neglected all along by the analysts of the Nigerian Civil War. This has always led to limiting the scope of our understanding of events that led to the Civil War and how they sustained the War.

Based on the materialist method we have examine the relationships between the regionalised ruling classes during the de-colonisation process and in the First Republic prior to the Civil War. We have equally examine the nature and structure of the Nigerian economy in both the colonial and the neo-colonial economic settings that made it prone to social disorder, or political instabilities. We therefore locate the impact of the inner causation that gave birth to regionalised political parties, the West Regional crises, the 1964 census crisis, the realignment of alliance politics, the electoral crisis of 1964-5 and so on. Also we have examined the political economy of the coup and counter coup of 1966, the intensification of the crisis which heralded the Civil War. We have also to examine the class character of these crises by bringing out clearly the hopelessness of the ruling class as it lacks economic underpinnings and as a result, with rapid succession, bringing about the inevitability of the Civil War.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

We have taken on this study of the Nigerian Civil War in order to reopen what one sees as an inconclusive debate on the causes of that war. Most studies of the Civil War in Nigeria are based on ethnic or cultural irredentism which such scholars see as the best explanatory models of the causes of the Civil War. Thus they see ethnic, religious, cultural and geographical or regional differences as the best tools to explain the causes of the Nigerian Civil War (Obasanjo 1980:144; Post and Vickers 1973:1). We view these models of ethnic or cultural irredentism, though accepted as some levels of

explanation, to be obscurantism, agnosticism and only sufficient at the level of secondary contradictions. So far, the prevailing models of explanation push to the back burner the primary or independent variables of economic and class interest. In other words, using the materialist interpretation to understand the configuration of forces in the crises that led to the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted has been relegated. As such, it is creating the wrong notion of the intractability of the crises of nation building in Nigeria to date.

Our first point of departure would help the course of nation building both nationally and internationally and would properly shape intellectual focus on the causes of the Nigeria Civil War. It removes the earth from under the feet of "…those who contend that African politics (Nigeria being a particularly salient case) is primarily 'ethnic politics' and that certain "primordial" identities inevitably determine political affiliations and inter-group relations. And place the earth under the feet of'… an approach which has been greatly influenced by Marxism (which) considers ethnicity to be a dependent variable (the real motivating force being class formation), a form of 'false consciousness' in which ethnic consciousness is superimposed over the interest of the masses and thus serve to camouflage the more fundamental and 'objective' interests of competing classes" (Joseph 1999:5).

Bowen (1996:3) has noted that much of recent discussions of international affairs have been based on the misleading assumption that the world is fraught with primordial ethnic conflicts. In the Nigerian situation, Post Vicker (1971), Obasanjo (1980) and many other analysts of the right wing intellectual tradition see ethnicity as the primary or independent variable in their discourse of the Nigerian crisis prior to the Civil War and the war itself. Bowen (1996:3) stated emphatically that although "some of these conflicts involve ethnic or cultural identity, but most (if not all) are about getting more power, land, or other resources. They do not result from ethnic diversity; thinking that they do send us off in pursuit of wrong policies, tolerating rulers who incite riots and suppress ethnic differences".

Our second point of departure is that using the inadequate analytical model of ethnic irredentism as our fundamental causal variable would work against creating the building bridges that could strengthen centripetal forces instead of reinforcing forces of centrifugation. So far, Nigeria's emphasis on primordial approach to their community and national relations has worked against inter-community harmony and nation building. If Nigerians could identify the centrifugal forces that tear them apart as a deliberate national policy then they will be able to locate their social enemies and strengthen community and national unity. For example, the Niger-Delta inter-ethnic crises, the Tiv-Junkun crises, the Zango-Kafaf inter-ethnic crises, the inter-religious crises in Nigeria and so on are some of the fallouts of our emphasis on the inadequate instruments of analysis in our national life.

Our third point of departure is a critique of the reductionist paradigm that places every crisis in Nigeria and indeed Africa on ethnic politics thus creating false consciousness which is a divergence between consciousness and productive existence. This false consciousness, however, cannot survive in serious confrontation with scientific objective reality based on productive existence. The task, therefore, is to confront ethnic consciousness with class consciousness (Nnoli 1978: 12). This very task, we have set for ourselves in reopening the debate on the Nigerian Civil War, using the class perspective or political economy as the basis of our analysis.

Finally, emphasis on ethnicity as the independent variable which however is false consciousness diverts attention away from the role of imperialism prior to and in the Nigerian Civil War and indeed other African crises. According to Nnoli (1978:13) it covers up imperialist exploitation and the resultant distortion of African economic and social structure. Thus, ethnicity performs the function of mystification and obscurantism. In this respect, it helps to perpetuate imperialism and militates against the imperative of revolutionary struggles by hampering the development of a high level of political consciousness of its victims. In the Nigerian situation, the collapse of the prices of primary export agricultural commodities from 1955/56 resulted in the collapse of the regional economies. It produced the intense struggles by the regional ruling classes for

federal power which they gave the false consciousness of ethnicity. Our model of analysis, therefore, will bring out the place of imperialism in the Nigerian crises that resulted in the Civil War and indeed sustained it while it lasted.

Raising false consciousness has been the ball game of all pro-imperialist social science and intellectual endeavour. Dixon (1976: 111) said that intellectuals of the arts and social science have a duty to the people and humanity which they must fulfill. The first is to be critical of the established order, to confront its injustices, inequalities and corruption and to provide explanations for their origins. It is also to act to translate theory into practice, to be a direct personal participant in the historical process of social transformation and political and economic revolution which has marked our century. That intellectuals had their education through the sweat of the people and have to defend their interests at all costs. Nothing summarises this more than our purpose of this study on the Nigerian Civil War as reflected in Dixion's position. It is to make analysts move from the blind ally to the correct bearing in their analysis of the Nigerian Civil War. It is also to raise the level of scientific intellectual discourse on conflicts in Nigeria in particular and those of Africa and the world at large. It is to make very valuable contribution to our understanding of the primary causal variables that could make conflict resolution easier as we get to the basics of such conflicts, crises or wars.

1.6. Justification for this Study

The place of sufficient reason for this study springs from "...a question of understanding how the fundamental structural characteristics of a determinate social order assert themselves on the relevant scale and circumscribe the alternative mode of conceptualisation of all major pratical (empirical – my emphasis) issues" (Meszaros 1986: xiii). The fact that most if not all Nigerians, have not grown beyond looking at issues from ethnic or primordial variables is a product of the determinate peripheral and unproductive social order based on enclave peasant economic and extractive industrial order subjected under imperialist hegemonic control. As such without recognising the epochal determination of ideological forms as the practical social consciousness of class societies, their internal structure would remain thoroughly unintelligible (Mezzaros

1986:xv). The fact that the ideology of an unproductive peripheral, dependent capitalism and indeed capitalism of primitive accumulation makes the explanations based on primordialism as fundamental to the explanations of crises of peripheral capitalism highly inadequate.

Undertaking the ethnic approach as the fundamental to the Nigerian crises prior to the Civil War meant a seriously reductionist paradigm to the understanding of the crises that heralded the Nigerian Civil War. Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu (1986:172) in reference to the 1982 Nigerian crises that led to the fall of Shehu Shagari's administration said, "… the crisis ought to be located at the structure of the economy in order to be able to understand its character, general tendency towards recurrence and the class logic of the specific policies which have been implemented to contain it." The regions were conferred with much economic power as control of commodity boards were regionalised in 1954 setting the stage for massive funds derived from the exploitation of the peasantry transfered to regional governments, Despite the foregoing, the post Korean commodity prices slump created very negative conditions for the regions(Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986: 1975 – 6). According to Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu (1986:176-7):

> The crisis of 1955/56, however, had deeper structural roots with the secular collapse of the agrarian basis of capital accumulation as witnessed by the gradual drop in earnings from agriculture in the gross domestic product from 61% in 1964 to 18% in 1982. This produced a series of crises in the 1960s (1962 – 1964 and 1966 – 1970) exposing the structural fragility and instability of the political economy …

The fact remains that most analysts of the crises of the First Republic limit their explanations of the crises that resulted in the Nigerian Civil War and sustained it while it lasted to ethnic and primordial variables as primary, is a deservice to nation building. It has tied Nigerians to the wrong and at best inadequate perception of the primary causal variables of the crises of the First Republic that resulted in the political crises of that republic and the coup and counter coup and consequently the Civil War. This is the justification for this dissertation. We are of the unwavering conviction that limiting the

explanatory primary causal variables to ethnic or primordial irredentism is quite insufficient to illuminate the fundamental cause(s) of the Nigerian Civil War and indeed the crises that heralded it. We therefore accept that:

> The various structural contradications of the world capitalist economy have been woven into the fabric of the Nigerian economy through the operations of transnational corporations, the local business companies, international banks and the Nigerian state itself which has become a powerful agency for the capitalist penetration of the economy. The various activities of these business agencies transmit, and sometimes generate within the Nigerian economy, the contradictions and crises of the global economy (Bangara, Mustapha and Adamu 1986:72).

The evasion of the structural contradictions both within and without Nigeria is a product of the weakness of citizenship education. One is, therefore, not surprised that the issues of class interests, class formation, class struggle and imperialism are always swept under the carpet. Nigerian analysts of the Civil War are the worst offenders in this regard. For example, the January 1966 coup plotters like the politicians they overthrew saw issues in regionalism instead of a product of global economic crises that grew out of the collapse of regional primary export crops products at the world market in the post Korean burst of 1954. As such, they did not comprehend the basis of the Nigerian First Republic crises. It was the same story with the participants of the July 29, 1966 counter coup that was based on revenge rather than reason. In both cases, not knowing the inner logic of the Nigerian crises of the First Republic would lead to the anarchical tendencies of both coup plotters in elimination and counter elimination of opponents and politicians. In venting their anger leading to pogrom against the Ibos was a confirmation of the misinterpretation of the issues that led to the coup and later the counter coup of 1966. No one is against the use of ethnicity as a level of analysis and indeed Marxists have very indepth analysis of the issues in the nationality and the national question. Nwoli (1978) has written a classic on the politics of ethnicity using the Marxiam class dimension. Babu (1984:14) warms that:

> … the ruling classes of Western imperialist powers have vested interest in our misinterpreting the realities of current affairs since our ignorance can be exploited for their strategy of world domination, and especially their economic exploitation of Africa.

Thabo Mbeki said that the tragedy of Africa is that there are some of us, media men and intellectuals who claim to be Africans but who now rationalise the upside – down way of looking at Africa, according to which "abnormal is viewed as normal …" (Mbeki 2004:24). Ngugi wa Thiongo said "the very fact that what a common sense dictates in the literary practice of other cultures is questioned in an Africa writer is a measure of how far imperialism has distorted the African view of realities. It has turned reality upside down: the abnormal is viewed as normal and the normal is viewed as abnormal. Africa actually enriches Europe; but Africa is made to believe that it needs Europe to rescue it from poverty. Africa's natural and human resources continue to develop Europe and America. But Africa is made to feel grateful for aid from the same quarters that still sit on the back of the continent. Africa even produces intellectuals who now rationalise this upside-down way of looking at Africa … unfortunately, some Africa intellectuals have fallen victims – a few incurably so – to that scheme and they are unable to see the divide –and - rule (Ngugi wa Thiongo 1986). For the foregoing reason hence we have decided not to limit ourselves only to the blind ally of ethnic or primordial causal variable as the primary causal variable of the Nigerian Civil War. We have gone thus ahead to place the primacy of the econmy based on class formation, class struggles and imperialism as the underpinnings of the crises that are often explained in ethnic, cultural and regional or primordial models. This is our justification for this study.

1.7 Research Methodology

1.7.1 Methods of Data Gathering

The difficulties even by the major actors in the Nigerian Civil War in understanding the economic and class dimensions of the War makes it imperative to get at the economic dimensions of the War from the involuntary and inchoate materials at our disposal from secondary sources. Since political economy and indeed dialectical and historical materialism is based principally on secondary sources of data, it is very pertinent that one focuses on historical analysis of economic dimensions. The fact is that the materials at our disposal though not properly organised but one can still piece together from available materials for this research work. Since the presenters of these

secondary materials were participants, their sources are to a certain degree authentic. Most of the participants presented events of the moment on accounts of the Civil War. It is mostly foreigners that recounted the economic causation of the Civil War but were not detailed on the class dimension and nature of classes and indeed on imperialism. However their materials when subjected to class analysis gave out the dynamics of the Civil War. In this respect, using …the materialist method shall limit oneself to tracing political conflicts back to struggles between interests of the existing social classes and fraction of classes created by the nature of economic development. As such have to prove the particular political parties to be the more or less adequate political expression of these same classes and fraction of classes (Engels 1983).

As historical and dialectical materialism is a historical science, secondary sources of materials and indeed library research is the most appropriate for the purpose of this study. In this respect, therefore, materials have been gathered from existing publications on wars and civil wars. These have included materials from books, symposia, newspapers, magazine publications, journals and unpublished works. Since one is using the political economy approach, materials on comparative basis, especially, the political economy of civil wars across geographical time and space shall be consulted. Such extant materials on wars, conflict and civil wars and indeed political and socio-economic struggles, especially, materials that cover the pre-civil war crises in Nigeria will be of benefit to this dissertation. We will call to our aid materials across time and space that have focused on the idea of political economy approach to our understanding of wars and indeed civil wars.

We shall also employ the unstructured questionnaire to solicit responses from those who were direct participants in the Nigeria Civil War and those who did not take active part but were observers in their own rights during the war. In this respect, we have interviewed Nigerian war veterans, those of Biafra and some civilians that were witnesses to the events that triggered off the crises of the First Republic. Thus we have focused on the causations of these crises and how they heralded the coup and counter coup and the Civil War. Since our focus is on the political economy causation as the

primary causal variable of the Nigerian Civil War, we stressed less of secondary causal variables of primordial or ethnic models as explanatory models. We have not rejected the primordial variables as explanatory variables but we see them as secondary. Hence our unstructured questionnaire is focused on economic causation, class character both internal and external that caused the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted.

1.7.2 **Method of Data Analysis**

As our approach is dialectical logic, we shall expose the two strands of current scholarship in the world which are bourgeois (formal) logic and dialectical logic. In bourgeois logic there is always the isolationist and obscurantist approaches in the analysis of social crises and indeed human and societal phenomena. For the bourgeois metaphysician, things and their mental images and ideas are isolated to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, fixed, rigid object of investigation given once and for all. … for him a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis one to the other (Engels 1975:65).

Ake (1981:3) said that one of the main weakness of Western social science is its discouragement of dialectical thinking, a weakness that has also spilled over to African studies. It is a social science that cannot give answers to complex issues in a social world. According to Nzimiro (1986:2) "When any social theory cannot give man insight into the workings of his society, and cannot therefore guide his actions, then the theory is in crisis. It is the crisis of irrelevance. In such a situation, a re- examination of the existing theory and the substitution of old ideas with new ones become imperative. Otherwise, human society will decay mentally and therefore culturally". Engels (1982:63) said that dialectics abstracted its laws from the history of nature and human society and as such are nothing but the most general laws of these two aspects of historical development, as well as of thought. Dialectics can be reduced to its main components which are: (i) the law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa, (ii) the law of the inter-penetration of opposites; (iii) the law of the negation of the negation.

In stating the dialectical logic, Engels (1975:67-8) said, "…every organic being is every moment the same and not the same; every moment the cells of its body die and others build themselves a new; in a longer or shorter time the matter of its body is completely renewed and is replaced by other molecules of matter, so that every organic being is always itself, and yet something other than itself. Therefore dialectics grasps things and their conceptual images essentially in their interconnection, in their concatenation, their motion, their coming into and passing out of existence …" In this respect therefore, historical dialectics or dialectical materialism view social issues from their interconnections and indeed historical motions in the dialectical process and hence historical transformation or change. This is summed in Marxian scholarship in thesis – antithesis – synthesis. This change can be in common progress of society or in its common ruins (Engels 1983).

The dialectical motion in the Nigerian State both colonial and the post colonial states and the dialectical contradictions it enthroned were not for common progress but for common ruins. It could have been for common progress if the post-colonial state was a progressive developmental state but contrary was the case. The post-colonial state was neither progressive nor developmental because the material basis for its transformation were lacking hence the dialectical contradictions between the sub-structure and the superstructure, that is between the economy and society which are the spheres of economic production and indeed civil society and the state or the spheres of "authoritative allocation of value". The nature of the dominant class in Nigeria which is basically parasitic, lacking the organisational capabilities to transform the economy to aid the superstructure was the basis of the dialectical contradiction between the Nigerian State or superstructure and the substructure or economy and society. This disjuncture between the state and the economy, its class character and class formation, is the explanatory kernel of the crises that heralded the coup and counter coup of 1966 and the 1967 to 1970 Nigerian Civil War. As such the theory of dialectical logic or dialectical materialism when counterpoised against the geo-ethnic or primordial explanatory models standouts. Thus the wrongly assumed primary explanatory of

primordialism models as being posed by bourgeois scholars and the Nigerian ruling class, that are profiting from the transformation of secondary contradictions into prominent contradictions detrimental to nation building is of paramount importance.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

1.8.1 Conceptual Clarifications

As a result of the very hardened positions in the presentation of facts of the Nigerian Civil War and their inadequacies in the clarifications of the primary causal variables of the war, we have to delve into the various concepts that will give us the clue to the primary causal variables that stimulated the crises that heralded other intervening variables or dependent variables that pushed Nigerians into the Civil War. In this respect, we have to define the various concepts that will provide us with the necessary rigor in our analysis that will bring out the primary variables as causations of the Nigerian Civil War. One is equally conscious of the fact that many scholars will dispute the fact that economy and class struggle are the primary causal variables and indeed including imperialism and its law of uneven-development. The clarifications of concepts that will aid us in our understanding of primary causal variables will make us grasp the inner dynamics of the primary causations that aided or gave room to the secondary or intervening variables that resulted in the crises of the First Republic which heralded and gave birth to the Nigerian Civil War. One is not saying that primordial models cannot be transformed into prominent and important contradictions but we are saying that it is not primary.

1.8.2 Nationality, Nation and the National Question

It is very important that we should examine the concepts of nationality, nation and the national question as they relate to relations that emerged during the colonial and neo-colonial Nigeria. A clear understanding of these concepts will clear the way for us to get at the roots why Nigeria could not emerge at independence as a coherent whole and why equally the regions could not evolve the same. *Nationality* is a product of material development in the teleological process of the emergence of forms of community of people which follows historically the clan and tribal community. It was formed in the

period of the consolidation and merging of tribes, of the replacement of the relations inherent in pre - class societies (primitive communal systems) by those of private property and of the emergence and development of classes. The coming into being of the nationality is a product of the change from blood relationship to territorial community, from a variety of tribal to a common language with a number of local dialects still in use. Each nationality gets collective name and accumulates elements of common culture (Engels 1983; Frolov 1984:285; Fedoseyev et al 1977; Glezerman 1980). The Marxian worldview has it that the transition from tribal ties to ties based on territorial community is one of the main and qualitatively new properties resulting in the emergence of nationalities. Thus nationality unlike the tribe, blood ties and common origin play a far smaller role or none at all in its own constitution into a group (Fedoseyev et al 1977:44; Glezerman 1980).

The rise of nationalities from the ruins of tribal relations or community was the process of the passage from “locality to the nation “(Fedoseyev et al 1977:45 cited K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*). The exclusiveness of the pre-capitalist nationalities derived largely from specific features of peasant production, from their self-sufficient character in the feudal epoch. Thus there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond, and no political organisation among them” (Fedoseyev 1977:45 cited K.Marx and F.Engles Selected Works in (in 3 volumes) Vol. 1: 479). In the Nigerian situation, Nnoli (1978) was able to identify the various pre-colonial Nigeria as having the properties or elements of restricted nationalities. Hence he traced the development of coherent ethnic nationalities in Nigeria to colonialism and he gave the concepts of “ethnicity in itself and ethnicity for itself” which is the rise from inchoate intra-ethnic relations to ethnic consciousness during British occupation.

Despite the fact that ethnic properties might be conspicuous, nationalities and nations that succeeded them were first and foremost the products of social development. Their historical birth was as a result of the increasing division of labour and productivity of labour force, giving impulse to the weakening of clan ties and their replacement by

territorial associations. This was as a result of the emergence of private property and social differentiation within the clan and the tribe. Hence Engels (1983:165) said …the old society built on sex ties burst asunder by the division of society into classes. As a result of class antagonisms, the new society became constituted into a state, the lower units were no longer groups based on ties of sex but territorial groups and the social relations based on private property system. The processes, Fedoseyev et al (1977:45) said:

> …gave rise to but the form historical from of nationality-the antique, the slave owning nationality. Then and again due to the elimination of the social impasse of the slave society at the end of its existence, came the medieval, feudal nationalities. Not all of them developed into nations. When feudalism gave way to capitalism, many of them fused into united nations or evolved into capitalist nationalities.

The concept of "nationality" was used in two senses by the founders of Marxism. Mostly, it was used to mean the socio-historical communities from the period of disintegration of tribal system to the inception of capitalism and the formation of nations. It was used to mean a people in general whether a nation, a nationality, a national or ethnic group (Fedoseyev et.al 1977:45). However, there is some difference between the nationality and the nation and what the nationality needs to become a nation. The main historical conditions for the nationality to transform into a nation are the existence of a considerable numbers (population), one territory and a developed national feeling, which on the socio-economic plane means a striving for unity and independence. In the nation, the people must be large enough and united and have the capacity for national existence. In order for a nationality to become a nation historically, therefore, it must begin when it has enough strength, enough unity and the capacity and opportunity to ensure national development in the setting of world-wide historical tendency towards the assimilation of nations. It is not just enough to have the same language and culture which is peculiar to all nationalities, however, to become a nation the nationality must develop the capacity for independent existence, to ensure national development. The *nation,* therefore, is a new historical form of community of people, which came into being on the basis of developing capitalist relations. Since under capitalism, pre-capitalist relations still remain along with those of capitalism, not all

nationalities grow into nations. As a rule, the consolidation of nationalities and their growth into nations are hindered in the dependent countries oppressed by monopolies of the imperialist countries (Frolov 1980:285).

Nabudere (1977:50) cited Frederick Engels that, “once the language groups were bordered off… it was natural that they should serve as basis for the formation of states and that nationalities began to develop into nation states”. He also cited Joseph V. Stalin who said that a nation is “…a historically constituted, stable community of people formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture”. In locating the nation within its historical specifics, Nabudere cited Joseph V. Stalin again who said that, “A nation is not merely a historical category but a historical category belonging to a definite epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of the elimination of feudalism and the development of capitalism is at the same time the process of the constitution of people into nations” (Stalin cited in Nabudere 1977). Lenin (1977:27) said that, “Developing capitalism knew two historical tendencies in the national question. The first is the awakening of national life and national movement, the struggle against all national oppression and the creation of the national state. The second is the development and growing frequency of international intercourse in every form, the break-down of all national barriers, (globalisation of capital – my emphasis) the creation of international unity of capital”.

Like the nation, a nationality becomes united chiefly by the virtue of material relations and interest. However, its productive forces, especially under peripheral capitalism are of a lower level than a nation’s. The economic and political ties of nationality-which, it indisputably possesses at all stages, including the capitalist are still very loose and more parochial than anything else. This is precisely how the properties of a nationality should be seen: they resemble those of a nation, but are different in quality, in the degree of maturity (Fedoseyev et al 1977:46). The resolution of the national question is therefore … the question of national liberation and the conditions for the free development of nationalities into nationhood. The *national question* in the period of the emergence of nations, involved the overthrow of feudalism and their liberation from

foreign national oppression. In the epoch of imperialism, the national question has become an interstate problem, has merged with the general problem of liberation from the yoke of imperialism or monopoly finance capital. It is linked with the peasant question, because the majority of participants in the national movements are peasants (Frolov 1984: 284).

The concrete historical situation in which the nationalities can develop is of much importance in the resolution of the *national question*: whether it is free or it is oppressed, whether it is able to establish its state, a constituent of a multinational states or under imperialist oppressive relations. Despite the rudiments of industries, a nascent national bourgeoisie, a working class and intelligentsia, their degree of national unity and aggregate strength are usually insufficient for the capitalist nationalities of the dependencies or neo – colonies to turn into nations. Sometimes, their capacities for independent national existence do not even come into evidence. Where it does awaken, however, partly, the conditions for its materialisation in national development are not always available (Fedoseyev et al 1977:46). In the post-1945 emergent independent societies and even in Latin America quite frequently, nationalities are being proclaimed nations before the objective conditions, principally the economic, political and spiritual ties, are strong enough and before the nationalities comprising the population of a community merge into one whole in terms of the main social aspects. The present conditions, stage and outlook in the development of nationalities require closer studies, particularly in capitalist societies that are unable to become nations due to their numbers and other factors, augmented in capitalist conditions by national oppression and inequality (Fedoseyev et al 1977:47).

Chief Obafemi Awolowo is often cited as having said that Nigeria is not a nation but a mere geographical expression. He forgot to add that Nigeria as a country is just an agglomeration of nationalities. The condition for the emergence of nations under capitalism is underlined by concrete features of independent national economic, political, and indeed social development. These were completely absent under British colonialism that made Nigeria an appendage of Euro-America imperialism. In chapter

three of this research work, we have shown sufficient evidence for the independent emergence of the various European and indeed North American nations. It is sufficient to strongly state that their emergence as nations were products of very strong economic development based on independent processes in their development of science and technology, research and development, and indeed industrialisation. This is almost completely absent in Nigeria and indeed Africa hence the lingering of the *national question* and its non-resolution. It resulted in the Nigerian Civil War and in the various post-Civil War crises that we have experienced as a collectivety. This must have been responsible for the saying that Nigerians have learnt nothing from the political tragedy that heralded the Civil War and indeed the lessons from the Civil War itself.

1.8.3 Political Economy

The concept of political economy as a field of study of social relations of production emerged with capitalism as a new subject matter to understand the new mode of production in the 17th and 18th centuries. The main attention of this field of study was first directed by mercantilists to the sphere of circulation as such political economy was accordingly treated as the science of the balance of trade, which envisaged an excess of exports over imports. The physiocrats considered political economy as the creation of surplus value (net product) in agriculture being its main area of investigation. Adam Smith sees it as the science of wealth hence he titled his book *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. David Richardo in his book The *Principles of Political Economy* has the same perspective as Adam Smith. Samuelson (1973) in his textbook *Economics* defines the subject matter as the study of wealth. The definition of the subject matter of political economy as the study of wealth cannot be said to be correct. This left out the structures of societies and the contradictions inherent in them as a result of economic and material relations. Western liberal economists view of political economy as the study of aggregate of things or material goods, their production, distribution and consumption is not adequate to define the subject matter of political economy. However, political economy being a Social Science does not study things or material goods (that is the business of other sciences) but the economic

relations, the relations of production between people (Smirnov, Golosov and Maximova 1984:25).

The relations people enter in the course of material production whether in cooperative relations in egalitarian societies or oppressive/exploitative relations in societies of private property are called ***social relations of production or relations of production*** for short. During the era or epoch of the primitive communal system or primitive communism, the relations were non – exploitative or egalitarian. When society splits into classes as a result of private property, the relations became oppressive and exploitative. In this respect, therefore, the most famous and most important example of social relations of production is the relation between the ruling classes and subordinate classes. In the historical process the first class society that superceded the primitive communal system was the slave epoch and the relations of production was based on the ownership of slaves by the slave masters. The second class society that emerged in the historical process was the feudal society in which the relations of production was based on ownership and control of land by the feudal master over the landless serf or peasant. Under capitalism the relationship is now based on the ownership and control of capital by the capitalist classes over the non–capitalist classes – the working classes or the proletariat/peasantries (Ake 1981:12). As capitalism became internationalised, it created the situation for the emergence of subordinate or dependent capitalist classes variously called the dependent, comprador, landed/aristocracy, commercial bourgeoisie or classes who are junior partners (Alavi 1979:40) in the chain of the dominant imperialist classes. Thus there is intra–classes struggle between the landed/comprador bourgeoisie of the third world and their metropolitan mentors or the dominant imperialist classes. Equally there is the struggle between imperialism and their landed/comprador classes on the one hand, the working classes or people on the other. This struggle over the impoverishment of the working people of Third World lead to civil wars and crises in these territories.

1.8.4 Imperialism

The spirit of pacifism as a product of enlightened self- interest pervades the writings of classical liberal economic thoughts. To them "… the explanation of imperialism is to be found in the perpetuation into the mercantile economy of remnants of an earlier type of economy …"(Brown 1978:34). In the words of Schumpeter (1955:65 cited in Brown 1978:34) "… it is an atavism in the social structure". Thus he (Schumpeter1955:93cited in Brown 1978) stressed:

> The bourgeoisie did not simply supplant the sovereign … it merely wrested a portion of his power from him and for the rest submitted to him

It is therefore, the belief of the classical school that both the militarism and nationalism of the absolute monarch survived into the era of capitalism not only in the institutions and personnel of the state but even in the mental attitude of the bourgeoisie themselves, and particularly towards peoples still not incorporated within their boundaries (Brown 1978:34). For the classical school to believe that imperialism is psychological and inherited from the past and that it is not the feature of capitalism at a certain stage of its development is to feign ignorance of the internal logic of capital which drives it on. The Keynesians unlike the classical school see things differently. In their view, the protection of home and colonial markets, colonisation and colonial rule and the terms of trade are all to be regarded as expressions of a national policy of power, in which political, military and economic power reinforce each other (Knapp 1973:35 cited in Brown 1978:46). They, therefore, see political bargaining and the use of military power as important expressions of national economic interest … (Brown 1978). Thus the Keynesians knock off the earth upon which the pacifist theory of the classical school stood. With them conflict is a part of imperialism; it is its logical process of power. However, the Marxian school of thought traces imperialism to a particular socio-economic formation and to a particular stage of that socio-economic formation. In their view,

> "…particular social formations based on particular economic and technological structures necessarily involve particular forms of economic expansion. Thus Marxists see capital accumulation necessarily driving capitalist societies to assimilate and transform non-capitalist societies, just as land grabbing was necessary to a feudal society and slave raids to a slave society" (Brown

1978:47).

From the forgoing, the classical and the Keynesian school of thought can be seen as highly distortive and grossly misrepresentative of the phenomenon of imperialism. They both do not meet the logic of our analysis as a result of the gross inadequacies of both schools; one has decided to accept the Marxian interpretation of imperialism. According to Lenin (1978:84) “Imperialism is capital in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international thrust has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed”. The African position expressed by Cabral (1980:127) approximated to the foregoing thus:

> … imperialism may be defined as the worldwide expression of profit motive and ever-increasing accumulation of surplus value by monopoly financial capital in two regions of the world: first in Europe and later, in North America. … if we wish to place the fact of imperialism within the general direction of the evolution of the epoch-making factor that has changed the face of world, capital and the process of its accumulation – we might say that imperialism is piracy transplanted from the seas to dry land, piracy reorgnised, consolidated and adapted to the aim of plundering the material and human resources of our peoples.

The survival of imperialism is dependent on its relationship with the underdeveloped countries or Third World. Parenti (1992:1099) defined imperialism to “…mean the process whereby the dominant economic and political elements (ruling classes-my emphasis) of one nation expropriate for their own benefit the land, labour, raw materials and markets of another nation”. The idea that monopoly capital is imperialism as originally posed by V.I. Lenin is confirmed by Parenti (1992:1100) thus “Some 400 companies control about 80 per cent of the capital assets of the entire non-socialist world (and are extending their control into former socialist countries of Eastern Europe). The larger portion of these investments is still in industrial countries but more and more is going into the Third World. Citibank, for instance, earns about 75% per cent of its profits from overseas operations, mostly in less developed countries. The US and other Western corporations have acquired control of more than 75% per cent of known major

mineral resources in Asia, Africa and Latin America". Parenti (1992) concluded that "…US multinational profit margins at home have tended to shrink in the post – war era, earning abroad have risen dramatically".

Imperialism in trying to enhance its processes of accumulation tries to suppress and restrict the opportunities of the peoples it has incorporated and deprived of getting at the true civilisation or development. The struggles between the international capital and the comprador/landed classes at the local level to redistribute surplus results in the increasing contradictory relationship, a product of the class structure in the dependent capitalist social formations. The classes are not products of the class struggles in the dependencies but products of the distorted classes formations in the peripheral capitalist society such as Nigeria as influenced by imperialism. Alavi (1979:40-1) stressed the influence of metropolitan bourgeois state and through colonial rule thus;:

> In carrying out the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in the colony, however, the metropolitan bourgeoisie has to accomplish an additional task which was specific to the colonial situation. Its task in the colony is not merely to replicate the superstructure of the state which it has established in the metropolitan country itself. Additionally, it has to create state apparatus through which it can exercise dominion over all the indigenous social classes in the colony.

The processes of creating the dependent state with social classes that owe their existence in the material production relations principally on the peasantry and working class in the extractive industries but tied to the social relations of production of metropolitan capitalism is the greatest distortion in the material relations of production. In Nigeria, and indeed all of Africa, it gave imperialism the strength to distort the material base of the various social classes. It led to the birth of the landed/comprador classes variously referred to as the comprador/commercial bourgeoisie. According to Nnoli (1978) the uneven-development and the rapid urbanisation of colonial Nigeria and the creation of regional economic enclaves led to the rise of ethnicity and indeed ethnic consciousness, the ideological camouflage of the comprador/landed classes. In order to go unchallenged in its processes of realisation of surplus value, imperialism had to place obstacles on national integration in Nigeria through the policy of divide-and-rule.

It laid the basis for ethnic politics, regionalism, politics of cultural and religious differences which laid the foundation for the Civil War.

The problem of our structural integration into world imperialist capital and its implications for national economic and political stability is being confused by the conventional social scientists in terms of primordial ideologies. It has made us not to see the implications of this imperialist integration in the performance of both the Nigerian economy and its national bourgeoisie (Osoba 1978:66). In its shielding of imperialist exploitation and the resultant distortion of African economic and social structures, ethnicity performs the function of mystification and obscurantism. Consequently, it helps to perpetuate imperialism … by hampering the development of a high level of political consciousness by its victims (Nnoli 1978:13). This is why understanding imperialism lays the foundation for the proper understanding of the workings of the peripheral capitalist social formations like Nigeria which would lay the foundation for the proper understanding of the Nigerian crises from pre-to-post Civil War.

1.8.5 Social Classes

For Weber (1968:305 cited by Gidden 1973:48) class formation does not depend only on market relations. He is of the view that it depends equally on status groups, occupational groups and skills. In this regard, Weber categorised the manual workers; the petty bourgeoisie; propertied and propertyless classes, white-collar workers; the privileged property owners; and the privileged educated elite as different classes. The Weberian conceptualisation of classes has made many Nigerians to classify the political group as a whole as a class hence the so-called political class. Despite Weber's use of the concept of class, his classification and categorisation of classes did not afford us a clear-cut understanding of the place of property relations in the determination of classes. Although he accepted the two major categories of propertied and propertyless classes, his sub-division of these two categories, especially, the propertyless class into many classes blurs his analysis of class formation. In this regard, his position on class and class formation would not help us in our analysis of

class structure and class struggle, let alone, imperialism or the internationalisation of the class struggle.

As a result of the inadequacies of the Weberian approach to the understanding of classes and class formation, we accept as our tool of analysis class in the Marxian sense. In this regard, social classes could only be defined in their mutual opposition, antagonistic dialectical relations in class practices or class struggles (Poulantzas 1975:14). This, however, has to be situated principally within the production process, i.e the economic sphere but not exclusively the determining factor. The economic place has a principal role in determining the group of social agents known as social classes. However, we cannot conclude that this economic place is sufficient to determine exclusively social classes. If we accept the economic place (infrastructure) as sufficiently determinant of social classes then we become too mechanistic. This will make us to assume the position, which has been erroneously taken by some African scholars of a classless African Society. Those who held the view that there were no classes in Africa, who advanced all sorts of theories about African socialism, have been proved wrong with the concrete experiences of the recent years since independence (Nabudere 1977:57).

The economic does indeed have the determinant role in a mode of production of a social formation, but the political and the ideological (combined making the superstructure) also have a very important role (Poulantzas 1975) which Marx, Engels and Mao made clear. Without this structural approach to class analysis, class dynamics and class formation, it would be difficult to place the African and indeed the Nigerian dependent (landed/comprador) dominant classes, as they do not in the real sense of the word own the means of production but control it as a result of the place they occupy in the imperialist chain, in the power equation of their various countries. According to Poulantzas (1975):

> …class determination, while it coincides with the practices (class struggle – my emphasis) of classes and it includes political and ideological relations, designates certain objective places occupied by the social agents in relations in

> the social division of labour, places which are independent of the will of these agents.

In the foregoing perception, therefore, a social class is defined by its place in the essemble of social practice i.e. by its place in the social division of labour as a whole which includes not only economic (positional) but both political and ideological relations (relations of domination and subordination). It is within this reasoning that the reference to the Nigerian landed/comprador ruling class as a political class makes some sense in the place they occupy in the global imperialist division of labour. This has restricted their role to the political sphere through which they plunge themselves into the economy for primitive accumulation. Lenin (1974:421) defines social classes as:

> … large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relations (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

Thus implicit in Lenin's definition of classes is the structural determination of social classes as he did not limit himself to the positional (economy) aspect of classes but takes it to the realm of law which includes politics and ideology. In this regard, therefore, we agree with Poulantzas' view that the structural determination of classes must be distinguished from class position in each specific historical epoch or social formation. He stressed "…the importance of the political and ideological relations in determining social classes and the fact that social classes only exist in the form of class struggle and practices". He warned that class determination must not be reduced in a voluntarist fashion to class position (Poulantzas 1975:14-15). He is of the view that at times a distance arises between the structural determinant of classes and class position in the conjecture. In this regard he stressed, "A social class or a fraction or stratum of a class may take up a position that does not correspond to its interest (class interest-my emphasis), which are defined by the class determination that fixes the horizon of the class struggle" (Poulantzas 1975:15). This often explains the vacillating positions taken always by fractions or strata of the petty bourgeoisie, the working class

and so on in the class struggle. This accounts for intra-class struggle, which would be of importance to us in our analysis of the Nigerian situation and the Civil War which followed. The typical example given by Poulantzas is that of labour aristocracy which in certain conjecture takes up class positions that are in fact bourgeois which would not mean that such actions have transformed them to be part of the bourgeoisie but as a matter of fact they still remain a stratum of the working class.

1.8.6 Class Consciousness and Class Struggle

The issue of social class is blurred in liberal Social Science that stresses consensus and conflict, social contract and solidarities or order in the social system. The influence of value system in the study of society, especially, among the conventional social scientists, those who are the ideological philosophers of the capitalist system, who want the status quo to be maintained cannot be over–emphasised. Peil (1977:4) said that "values can pose a serious problem for the scientist …because it is always hard …to study behaviour in a neutral way. We are all biased by our values and this means that we often ignore what Weber calls "inconvenient fact". The bias in Western social science has made it impossible for a balanced scholarship that can afford all the level of classes the necessary class consciousness. However, the level of economic development in the capitalist countries of the West has created the conditions for class consciousness. Marx identified the two stages in the development of class consciousness as that of a "class in itself and a class for itself" in today's classical capitalist countries. He said:

> Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of people of the country into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In this struggle of which we have pointed out only a few phases, this mass becomes a class for itself. The interest it defends becomes class interest. But the struggle of class against a class is a political struggle (Marx 1975:59).

The development of class consciousness has been the basis or the setting for organised class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries. Marx (1975) said that the concentration of large-scale industries bring a crowd of people together united in common interest of wages. This constitutes them into group as the capitalist in their

turn unite for the purpose of repression, and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more necessary to them than that of wages. In this struggle-a veritable civil war, all elements necessary for a battle unite and develop. Once it has reached this point, association of the workers takes on a political character. This stage Karl Marx says is the stage of class struggle. Lenin (1976:87) defines class struggle "…as a struggle of one part of the people against the other, a struggle waged by the masses of those who have no rights, are oppressed and engaged in toil, against the privileged, the oppressor and drones; a struggle of the wage-labourers or proletarians against the property owners or bourgeoisie".

Marx and Engels (1977:35) refer to the period of written history which they pointed out as underlying all hitherto existing societies, in which they saw the origin of class struggles. They saw these struggles arising from the irreconcilable contradictions of property relations depending on the type of society, as that between freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, oppressor and oppressed standing in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes. And they added, "The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, and new forms of struggle in place of old one (Marx and Engels 1977:35-6). If all written history is underlain by class struggles which could either lead "…in a revolutionary reconstitution of society … or in the common ruin of the contending classes", then we examine the Nigerian society prior to the Civil War with the tools of class struggles, based on the nature of economic relations and structure.

Cabral (1979:56) from the African perspective said that we have to denounce the preconception held by many people "… that imperialism made us enter history … for somebody on the left, and for Marxist in particular, history obviously means the class struggle. Our opinion is exactly the contrary. We consider that when imperialism arrived Guinea it made us leave history-our history. We agree that history in our country is the

result of class struggle, but we have our class struggles in our country; the moment imperialism arrived and colonialism arrived, it made us leave our history and we enter another history. Obviously we agree that class struggle has continued, but it has continued in a very different way; our whole people are struggling against the ruling class of the imperialist countries, and this gives a completely different aspect of the historical evolution of our country". This is our point of departure in the understanding of the Nigerian social classes and the class struggles. We earlier cited Basil Davidson who said that colonialism, imperialism, capitalism have utterly failed to raise structures-whether social or moral, political or economic-upon which the deprived peoples, the abused peoples, the underdeveloped peoples …can carry themselves into a new civilisation capable of standing and evolving on its own foundation. The nature of colonial economic development created the avenue for the development of an unproductive ruling landed/comprador classes or the comprador bourgeoisie. The comprador bourgeoisie depend on the fall-outs from the state for its accumulation process, in the case of Nigeria; it is primitive accumulation, that is, accumulation without production.

The whole of the Nigerian state or the superstructure or the avenue of class domination was therefore built around the surpluses from the peasantry and working class in extractive industries hence the dominance of agricultural and mineral productions during the colonial periods and in the First Republic to date. In this respect, therefore, class formation was built around primitive accumulation of the surpluses from the peasantry and mine workers by the emergent dominant regionlised landed/comprador classes through their oppressive dominant capitalist relations. With the regionalisation of the enclave economies of the colonial period and that of the immediate post colonial state, the ruling comprador engaged in intra-class struggles that assumed the toga of ethnicity and sectionalism which became the ideological weapons for primitive accumulation in the process of class formation. According to Joseph (1999:5):

> The dominant pattern of political behaviour we find in Nigeria can be defined, on the one hand, in terms of incessant pressures on the state and the consequent fragmentation, or what I have called prebendalising of state power. On the other hand, such practices can also be shown to be related to a certain

> articulation of the factors of class and ethnicity. In order to come to grips with the essentials of Nigerian politics, it is necessary to develop a clearer formulation of the dynamic interaction between these two social categories. Moreover, the most problematic aspect of this discussion will be the delineation of ethnicity, since the ways class interests are pursued will be shown to involve, to an important degree, the emphasizing of ethnic symbols and boundaries in the struggle for wealth and power.

The struggle for wealth and power under unproductive parasitic landed/comprador capital takes various dimensions in Nigeria. At the ideological level, it takes the form of primordial sentiments based on ethnicity, regionalism, cultural and religious differences and so on. At the political economy level, it takes the form of commercial activities with the middleman or comprador trying to access foreign sellers to local markets. Since government or the state is the major market, access to the state therefore becomes a do-or-die affair. According to Turner (1981:155):

> Now, more than during the colonial or pre-second World War period access to national markets is restricted by the state. State control stems mainly from its role as a major buyer, but also from its regulatory powers over other commercial activities. Because the state controls opportunities to profit through commerce, politics becomes dominated by struggles for positions in the state or for access to those who have influence over government decisions.

With the collapse of the economic bases of the regions as a result of the downward plunge of the various agricultural commodities and pre-oil minerals that sustained the regions, the struggles for federal power intensified. With the fragmentation of the ruling comprador bourgeoisie along regional and ethnic lines, the struggles for federal power took a deadly dimension among the comprador elements. It led to the intra-class struggles but coloured by the ideologies of ethnicity or sectionalism. The extreme intensification of these struggles led to the coup and counter coup of 1966 and consequently the Nigerian Civil War.

1.8.7 Concept of the State

The Greek philosophers saw the emergence of the state as the quintessence of the development of man and society. They therefore took a teleological view of the development of the state from individual, the family, society and finally the state. The

Greek philosophers of antiquity though did not emphasize the class character of their state which was however implicit in their analyses but they agree that the state came into being for the sake of the "good life" and continued in existence just for that sake alone. Leeds (1981:73-4) in positing the view of Rousseau said "… that the King and Government were only the agents of the sovereign people. Government was created by a contract among the people and derived its powers from them. Government existed for the benefit of the people, who had the right to change it when it proved no longer satisfactory". Hobbes according to Leeds (1981:71) considered self-interest to be the predominant motive in man as he saw man to be basically selfish, pursuing his own interests at the expense of others. The life in the state of nature was one of insecurity and anarchy; without strong coercive powers centralised in the state the ambitions of men would not be controlled. He advocated obedience to an absolute ruler, since he reasoned that man would attempt to escape from the intolerable conditions under which he existed in the state of nature.

Thus the social contract theory pervaded most, if not all the liberal theories of the state. Implicit in the social contract theory of the state is seeing the state as an impartial arbiter mediating between social groups or classes. This liberal view of the state sees the state as a geographically delimited segment of human society united by common obedience to a single sovereign. The term may refer either to society as a whole or, more specifically, to the sovereign that controls it (Sills 1968:150). According to Bodin (1962, cited in Sills 1968:150) … there ought to be in every state, a single recognised lawmaker, or sovereign, whose decisions were recognised as having final authority. As against the sovereign no vested interest and no sort of jurisdiction, secular or spiritual, could rightfully prevail. This view of the state was squarely in line with Western tradition of respect for the rule of law. It did not border about the historical specificity, the socio–economic and class character of law/the state.

There has been a spurious fantasy since the 19th century still gaining rounds in certain quarters that a state can exist that plays no role in the economy. No such state has yet existed and there were ample theoretical grounds for believing it impossible.

Persuasive evidence have it that the so-called laissez-faire government had no hesitation in applying crushing force to the unprotected classes in order to keep them in that status. This use of its power to maintain a specific social order is one of the primary aspects of the state and the analysis of ancient, classical and the exotic legal codes confirms that points in the social order that are considered strategic have invariabiy been as economic statuses (Sills ed. 1968:147-8). Several approaches stress economic factors portraying the state as the precipitate of the social organisation of economy at a particular level of productive and distributive efficiency. The emergence of the pristine state, therefore, was a solution to the problems of organisation of increasingly complex re-distributive economics (Polanyi 1957 cited by Sills ed.1968:148).

In presenting the state as not being partisan in the economy and class; the ancient, the classical and liberal theories of the state do not offer us the necessary tools of analysis to make us comprehend the historical types of states, the dependent capitalist state and its class struggles. This brings us to the perspective of Marxian political economy, which we have adopted for this research that see the state as an emergent power of an economically dominant class. It sees the historical development of the state as arising from the creation of surpluses being cornered by a tiny minority, freed from productive activities but parasitic, the exploiting classes who foisted their power over and above society. The struggles between the exploiting classes and the exploited classes became irreconcilable contradictions which society became powerless to dispel. In order to keep society within the bounds of ‘order’ and to prevent society from consuming itself in fruitless struggles, a power of the dominant economic interest which arose out of society and placing itself above it and increasingly alienating itself more and more from it, is the state (Engels 1983:166). For Marxists, the dynamics of class power is always expressed in the state and the state as a material historical expression of this class power. “Thus the state of antiquity was above all the state of the slave owners for the purpose of holding down the slaves, as the feudal state was the organ of the nobility for holding down the peasant serfs and bondsmen, and the modern representative state is an instrument of the exploitation of wage labour by capital

"(Engels 1983:168). Marx and Engels (1977) expressed their famous view that the capitalist state is nothing but the "Executive Committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie and its political power being merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another ". This is the Marxian primary view of the state. Hence Engels (1983:169) said:

> In most of the historical states, the right of citizens are besides, apportioned according to their wealth, thus directly expressing the fact that the state is an organisation of the possessing class for its protection against the non-possessing class.

1.7.8 The Rentier Economy and the Rentier State

The idea of a rentier economy grew from the emergence of a class of profiteers in the advance capitalist countries who got richer and richer by simply investing just in securities; people who live by clipping coupons, who take no part in any productive enterprise whatsoever, whose profession is idleness and yet make lots of money. The term or concept of rentier economy is a product of capitalist imperialism which more or less completely isolates the rentier classes from production and sets the seal of parasitism on a whole country. Thus a "rentier state" (Rentnerrstaat) or userer state is a state of parasitic, decaying capitalism and this circumstance cannot fail to influence, all socio-political conditions of the countries concerned (Lenin 1983:94-7). V.I Lenin cited Hobson, a liberal economist who said that the greater part of Western Europe in their time may assume the appearance of character of parasitism already exhibited by traits of country in the South of England, in the Riviera and in the tourist …ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthly aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat large group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a large body of personal servants… This sort of economy was seen not forwarding the cause of civilisation but introducing the great perils of a Western parasitism whose upper classes drew vast tributes from Asia and Africa with which they supported the masses of retainers thrown off agriculture and manufacturing, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy (Lenin 1983:97 cited Hobson 1902).

The key feature of a rentier political economy which is parasitism relegates production efficiency to the background and in fact, there is at best a tenuous link between individual income and production activity. Thus the intense struggle is in the form of getting access to the rent circuit which is of a greater preoccupation than attaining production efficiency (Beblawi & Luciani 1987:13 cited by Ibrahim 2003:53). The importance of access to a rentier economy leads to what has been termed a rentier mentality which embodies a break in the work-reward nexus. Reward-income or wealth is not related to work and risk bearing, rather it is related to chance or situation. For a rentier, a reward becomes a windfall gain, an isolated fact, situational or accidental as against the conventional outlook where reward is integrated into a process of the end result of a long, systematic and organised production circuit (Beblawi 1987:52 cited by Ibrahim 2003:53). There is thus a glaring contradiction between rentier and production ethics. The rentier state is oriented away from the conventional role of providing public goods through taxation since tax bases are negligible thus the state becomes a provider of private favours from rents. The fact remains that the rentier state is not a production state but an allocation state makes it near impossibility to wrest reasonable proportion of taxes from its citizens and this has very serious implications for political reform or, rather lack of it (Luciani 1987:70 cited by Ibrahim 2003:53).

As we have noticed, a rentier state is not a production state but an allocation state and as such it is only capable of generating some degree of legitimacy when the state succeeds in guaranteeing access to resources for a relatively large cross-section of society. If such is no longer possible as a result of a short fall in rent or its monopolisation by a small oligarchy or both, the rentier state and class could only remain in power through extreme coercion. The rentier state and its dominant classes tend to face regime crisis when they face drastic shortfalls in rent and are thus unable to allocate resources at a level they have had prior to shortfalls in rent. The tendency is for a ruling elite (rentier class or factions of the rentier class) to exclude more and more people from access to resources, thereby creating the basis for widening political crises. This has been the situation in Nigeria (Ibrahim 2003: 53 – 4). Jibrin Ibrahim wrote about the crystallisation of these features in post Civil-War Nigeria, especially

under the political economy of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the 1980s to date. However, the rentier political economy preceded the crises of the First Republic. Marx (1978:9) cited Hegel who said "…all events and personalities of great importance in world history occur, as it were twice". He said Hegel forgot to add: "… first time as tragedy and the second as farce" One is not therefore surprised that the post-Civil War and indeed the SAP crisis looks a play out of the pre-Civil War crisis, the crisis of non-productive state in the face of increasingly declining or stagnant rent proceeds in the face of increasing population and increasing politico-economic demands on the regionalised rentier classes and their state. Prior to the Nigeria Civil War and in the various post-Civil War crises, the rentier state and its regionalised rentier/landed classes have focused their attention on struggles for access to the declining rents available to the state. It is therefore not surprising that primordial identities have hardened and conflicts including violent ones have increased (Ibrahim 2003:53)

1.8.9 The Rentier Landed Classes

The landed/rentier classes are the gamut of classes that are sustained as dominant classes on the proceeds from the land. This does not mean only the landed aristocracy but all the classes who as a result of modern organisational capabilities in production depend on minerals and all the proceeds from the land. The amalgam of these dominant classes is what Lenin (1975:27) calls "…the landlords …large land ownership and …all manifestations or survival of feudalism… (or) where precapitalist relations predominate…" Concerning the whole of Africa, Goody (1971:31) observes "Though there were no landlords, there were of course lords of the land – the local chiefs of the centralised states, who from the stand – point of food production, were in a sense carried by the rest of the population". In the process of capitalist penetration of Nigeria during colonial imperialism, the "…non – capitalist relations of production were adapted to suit and serve the purposes of capitalism. In order to secure their own profit, colonial interests blocked the development of indigenous capitalist productions in Nigeria. It did so at the expense of craft and peasant producers and consolidated the incorporation of Nigeria into the world capitalist economy" (Williams 1976:12). Thus the encouragement

of rentier class and state that survive on the proceeds from the land, that is, on proceeds from the peasantries and from extractive industries based on minings, forest products and so on.

The landed/rentier classes can be so identified because of the feudal and semi-feudal relations imposed by colonialism in Nigeria. In the process of their enforcement of indirect rule and divide-and-rule, British colonialism in Nigeria and indeed in most of Africa brought into being the creation of warrant chiefs encouraging the pre-colonial structures where they did not exist. According to Williams (1976:20) the colonial "…Government imposed on Nigeria a patrimonial system of administration in the ideological guise of indirect rule in order to enlist the dominant status groups in the service of colonial rule and to contain political consequences of changes in the class structure. Ideally, all relations within a patrimonial system are vertical ties of domination and dependence, with subordinate clients jostling for favour of their patron… Where an indigenous partrimonalism existed as in the Moslem emirates, the British rapidly established their control over appointments, and rationalised the system of tax collection and administration. Where no indigenous patrimonalism existed, they transformed the institutions of nobility to serve their purposes, raising rulers to authority over their fellows, subject to their retaining the favour of the resident and turned titled offices into a system of patronage. Where no indigenous nobility existed or ruling houses appeared recalcitrant to British purposes, they simply appointed intermediaries with no royal or noble status, in some cases even strangers to chieftaincies. This very institution of chieftaincy is a colonial imposition which standardizes rank and function to the requirements of colonial administration".

Despite the fact that Karl Marx did not articulate a theory of a rentier state but he noted the features of an emergent rentier/landed class in the emergent classical capitalist social formations that was dependent on a modern landed property ownership based on ground rent. On the relationships between the two forms of property, Marx (1973:276 cited by Massarrat 1980:39) said, "By its nature as well as historically capital is the creator of modern landed property, of groundrent; just as its action therefore

appears also as the dissolution of the old form of property in land. Rent is not merely an income earned by landlords but is in general a reward for ownership of all natural resources (Ibrahim 2003:52), hence the rentier class can also be classified as the landed class. It is in the foregoing respect that Massarrat (1980: 45-6) said "…The national capitalist classes of the countries of the 'Third World' are as the land owing classes of their countries in a position to utilise their landed property for the appropriation of ground rent". This is what informs the continuous struggles between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and their third world creation for the redistribution of surpluses in the global capitalist relations of production. This captures the main kernel of the changing relationships between some elements of the landed or rentier classes and the dominant classes of world imperialism or monopoly financial capital. In some cases, these struggles for the redistribution of surpluses transform the pliant dependent rentier/landed classes into "radical" progressive and reformist bourgeoisie. In the process of intra-class struggles, the landed/rentier class becomes, to a certain degree, a breech on the hands of metropolitan capitalist imperialism (Tedheke 1993:66). This happened in Nigeria during the "indigenisation policy", the Buhari/Idiagbon's counter-trade policy and so on.

In living the pre-colonial structures interact to serve capitalism hence the indirect rule system which gave prominence to uneducated chiefs and their vassals, gives credence to defining the colonial and neo-colonial ruling classes in Nigeria as landed classes. The landed classes theory initially applied to a class of parasites profiting from speculations in the metropolitan capitalist countries and equally on those who profited from securities in their colonial possessions in the Third World. It equally applies to the Third World ruling classes that are parasitic who generally rely on proceeds from their privileges based on the land. Like their mentors that had to benefit from the increasing appreciation of the land as a result of industrialisation and capitalised agriculture, the same applied to the neo-colonial dominant classes as their land appreciates as a result of agricultural products and mineral deposits. This class in a semi-feudal relation based on the control of people in a peasant agricultural relations and working class in extractive mineral industries can also be referred to as a rentier class. It is because the

relation of ownership or control by this class is based on the land and its people. The cases of the murdered Ogoni Chiefs in 1995 and the issue of crude oil, the privileged elite and the Niger Delta crises are cases in point which exposes the Nigerian ruling class as a landed/rentier class especially with the ferocity with which the then Federal Government approached the Ogoni crises (CLO:1998) and now the general crisis in the Niger-Delta.

In Japan, the landed/rentier classes that were equally trading capitalist that depended on rents and royalties were transformed into industrial capitalist class (Sunno 1975). The same happened in Britain, Germany, France and the USA which were transformed into industrial capitalist. Thus in all these countries, the wars fought for this purpose were wars of revolutions or progressive wars. In Nigeria and indeed in Africa the colonial impositions made such transformations impossible. Colonialism ossified such progressive transformation in purgatory. It did not give room to the emergence of an advance class but a stagnant class in feudal and semi-feudal relations based on their control of proceeds based on extraction from the land. This is why this class that bears the tail not the head of capitalism is either labeled a rentier class or a landed class. If a state only organised the distribution of rewards obtained from proceeds of the land, taxes and rents in addition to custom and excise duties and so on and not articulation of productive processes and is more to it in reward distribution than actual production, then the state is a rentier state and the dominant class a rentier or landed class. They are rentier classes because they owe their living to rent collections based on proceeds from the land, taxes, rents, and custom and excise duties, windfalls from mineral or extractive industries, peasant surpluses and so on. They are landed classes because they owe their existence to feudal or semi-feudal relations on the lands or communities they have power over in the political economy of power play.

The fact that the colonial state is always influenced heavily is expressed in the fears by the Nigerian ruling class to vie into alternative process of development. It has tied Nigeria to the crises of global capitalist down turns, crises from the problems of the realisation of *surplus value*. The Nigerian state has become a dependent capitalist

comprador or rentier state. A comprador state is a state whose ruling dependent class has the function of organising themselves as agents for foreign capital to access their state and its markets and hence Turner (1982:157) referred to them as gatekeepers. The Nigerian state can also be termed as a rentier state. A rentier state is a state that depends on parasitism instead of production processes in its domestic economy (Lenin 1983:94-6); First (1980:119). Turner 1982:158) noted that comprador capitalist state in its dependence on commercial capitalism and in its relationship with foreign capital and its local merchant capital creates a triangular relationship which it seeks to operate "successfully" and profitably. In the process instability is endemic in the struggle among middlemen for state patronage, and in the competition among officials of state for control of decisions. In theses circumstances, politics becomes a form of business through which actors seek influence in the state, not in order to make and apply general rules, but in order to secure advantages. Thus Nigerian politics becomes a do-or-die affair for access to state power and those who have influence over governmental decisions. These struggles and crises in their wake characterised the post independence First Republic that resulted in Civil War. The post-Civil War situations are not even better. This is why to understand the dynamics of the Nigerian state we have to vie into the rentier state, its class character and its class struggles.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

War as a concept has a lot of literature, which would be picked on for review. This poses the problem of selection of materials from a maze that is far flung in different epochs and ideological hue. However, we intend to pick on a few for review with a focus on the concepts of war, the causes of war and selected cases of Civil Wars including that of Nigeria. This will not just be a mere account of the different literatures at our disposal because we shall not accept facts as given. Since we are dealing with the issues of wars and Civil Wars in perspective with an alternative explanation in political economy, it is, therefore, imperative that our literature review must be situated in the materialist interpretation of history or dialectical materialist dynamics. Conventional war or security studies seem to be quite fuzzy as concrete analysis of economic forms structures and indeed classes are not taken into consideration in their analysis of war. Thus secondary tools of analysis are taken into consideration in the place of primary tools based on the nature, structure of economy and classes in the political economy. This would make liberal views on the causation of war inchoate and indeed ideological to cover up the class character of wars and indeed their economic causations and material transformative values and interests as products of the revolutionary changes from the old society to the new one (Marx 1984:21);

> At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms – with the property relations within the framework of which they had operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters, then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. In studying such transformations it is necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic-in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out

The issues of material transformative and non- transformative values and interests make it necessary for a peculiar method in our literature review. Hence we started with the confusions in liberal theories of causation of wars, the left liberals and left or Marxists theories of wars in order to drive home our points on the political economy of wars and indeed civil wars. This perspective has coloured our brief analysis of the various cases of the Civil Wars we reviewed their literatures. This covers from the English Civil War, the American Civil War, the French to the Russian and the Chinese Civil Wars and finally the Nigerian Civil War. The imperatives of the political economy approach is to get at the social forces of society whether they are of the transformative or the non – transformative values and interests. It is to arrive at the dynamics of nation building and the possible fetters in its process. Thus the political economy approach in our literature review is of much importance in grasping the fundamental nature of wars and indeed Civil Wars.

2.1 Confusions on the Primary Causations of War

There is a general agreement on what war is from all shades or schools of thought. Their major disagreement is in the area of the causes of war. The common trend in liberal scholarship is that "war (is) a conflict between social groups, between rival political groups by the force of arms". By limiting the understanding of war to the political thus excluding the economic, classes and class struggles (or the political economy perspective) would play safe in two ways for the bourgeois society. First, it would cover-up the internal dynamics and antagonistic structures of bourgeois societies and project conflicts and wars as the inevitable and immutable course of all human societies (Howard 1983:7). Secondly, it obscures the class character of such conflicts and wars and in the process blurs the collective vision of the working class and people and in the event of such wars, whips them into line as cannon fodders.

In viewing wars as inevitable in history, Howard (1983) argued that "…war has been throughout history a normal way of conducting disputes between political groups. Thus Howard and other liberal theorists of war see war as normal human occurrence

especially, with man “innately being aggressive”. This liberal variant, therefore, deposits the causes of wars on human and groups aggressiveness. The lack of clarity in the causes of wars would make Howard (1983:9) to posit that “…there has been the tendency to argue that because that war (First World War) caused such great and lasting damage … it must have arisen from peculiar complexity and profoundity, from the neuroses of nations, from the widening class struggle, from crises in industrial society”. At one point the innately aggressive nature of man is the root cause of war, at another it is neuroses of nations, yet at another the widening class struggle and finally a crisis in industrial society. These shifts from right to left in the ideological spectrum spell the confusion in liberal theories of war. The liberal obscurantism on the causations of war can only be removed when the political economy approach is used as a methodology of analysis. In this regard Mao Tsetung (1972:2) posited that:

> War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states, or political groups and it has existed since the emergence of private property and classes.

The linkage between struggles for colonial possession and continental wars in Europe was made by Holsti (1991:95) thus:

> Colonial competition continued unabated during the eighteenth century … that the tangle of actors and interest – privateers, smugglers, colonialists, overseas troops and commercial spokesmen in courts and legislative assemblies – all became embroiled in development of state policy. Colonial politics frequently became “high politics” even if they never commanded as much attention as did continental affairs. It was no longer a question of conflicts between private trading companies and a few settlers. Colonial governors, national navies, forts, and garrisons representing the monarchies were all involved. As the economic stakes in the colonies increased, so did the commitments of the sovereigns to promote and protect these interests. Colonial policy and the linkage between colonial wars and continental wars became firmly established.

The foregoing knocks off the earth upon which the “pacifist theory of capitalism and free-trade” stands. Though inchoate as Holsti analysis is, it brings out the linkages between capital, capitalist classes; the capitalist states and the wars in the age of imperialism. Schumpeter (1955) the ideologue of non-conflict in the nature of free trade and capitalism avers “… there would be conflicts in economic interest or nor neither

among different nations'. He further stressed that: "The orientation towards war is mainly fostered by the domestic interests of the ruling (aristocratic) classes… also by the influence of all those who stand to gain individually from a war policy, whether economically or socially" (Schumpeter 1955:65).

According to Nelson and Olin Jr. (1979:61) Schumpeter rejected the view that the business bourgeoisie were principally responsible for the aggressive foreign policies of the various capitalist states or nations. Rather, he located the major pressures for imperialism and wars on the aristocratic, military and bureaucratic leaders. Indeed, in his opinion, capitalism is not war-like when compared to earlier systems. In this regard Schumpeter (1955:69) said:

> The competitive system absorbs the full energies of most of the people at all economic levels … In a purely capitalist world , what was once energy for war becomes simply energy for labour of every kind…A purely capitalist world therefore can offer no fertile soil to imperialist impulses.

Thus, he concluded that imperialism could be explained in the survival into the mercantile economy of the remnants of an earlier type of economy. In his view both militarism and nationalism of the absolute monarch is seen to have survived into the era of capitalism (Schumpeter [1955 cited by Brown 1978]). Eclecticism would not allow Schumpeter to acknowledge the fact that no epoch is pure, that only a dominant relations of production defines an epoch or a socio-economic formation. Marx (1984-21) said:

> No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society.

2.1.1 Liberal and Radical Theories of War

The liberals and the radicals view the causes of war according to their ideological positions and the class interests they want to defend. As such their theories of war reflect different views hence some emphasise the status quo/conservative theories, others emphasise a behavioural perspective which inform the liberal theories of war.

On the other hand the radicals (both the right and left radicals) see the causes of war from the oppressive material power relations in society and between nations. This will be reflected in this section of our review of literature.

2.1.2 The Status Quo/Conservative Theories of War

Edmund Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, Thomas Hobbes, Saint Augustine and so on, were the major status quo theorist of war. Burke (1981 cited by Nelson and Olin, Jr. 1976:61) believes in the organic linkage between the living, the dead and the yet to be born. It is his view that society is a partnership …"Nelson and Olin Jr. (1979:10) made a summation of Burke's theoretical position thus:

> The social cement for this partnership was not human love, nor even sense of human fraternity, but rather esteem, deference, awe and respect. The reverence for 'the great primeval contact of eternal society' led Burke as it has led consequent conservatives, to prefer tradition over innovation, experience over experiment, stability over change.

Tocqueville (1945:333) lamented the fading authority of the aristocracy which held its supremacy over civil society. He expressed his fears thus; "in our days men see that constituted powers are crumbing down on every side; they see all ancient authority dying out; all ancient barriers tottering to their fall, and the judgement of the wisest is troubled at the sight---." Hobbes (1709 said"…the bonds of words are too weak to bridle man's ambition, avarice, anger and other passions, without the fear of some coercive power." Saint Augustine (1950) cited by Nelson and Olin, Jr. 1979) saw conflict as either (1) arising from human passion and unregulated desires or (2) occurring in obedience to the will of God… In either case Augustine was convinced that war fulfilled the useful purpose of reminding man just how weak and dependent he actually is.

The conservative or status quo theories of war view the animalistic nature of man as the obstacle to peace and the lack of maintenance of hierarchy of authority. The basic focus of the status quo theory of war is on two strands. The first is "…that individuals and nations are basically aggressive in behaviour as animals are often thought to be." The second suggests "…that wars result when nations lose their internal discipline and

order, or when international hierarchies break down" (Nelson and Olin, jr, 1979:16). Both strands of the theory obviously proceed from the assumption that the masses of mankind are driven not by considerations of the general welfare, but by ignorance, emotion and selfishness. Both tend to view war as a natural, almost inevitable, and certainly frequent social occurrence. In any case, the two strands of the theory put great emphasis upon the indispensable role which power plays in the maintenance of peace (Nelson and Olin, jr. 1979:16-17). It is the conviction of the status quo school that only a clear and decisive balance of power could keep man's animalistic and anarchic tendencies in check. In national affairs this force, they posited, should be in the hands of established authorities, and in international affairs in the hands of the leading nations (Nelson and Olin, jr 1979). Thus the status quo or conservative theory of war exposes it's class bias in favour of the ruling classes and at the international level, the international relations of hegemony as balance of power.

One finds the solutions to war as recommended by the status quo theorists in the dominance of power either in the nation states and the international system as quite inappropriate and inadequate to guarantee peace. In its modern form, the balance of power has led to arms race and therefore increased insecurity in the international system. At the level of the nation states the preponderance of power on the side of dominant national groups have been leading to marginalisations and negative reactions by marginalised groups leading to national security crises in many countries, especially, in contemporary Africa. The civil wars in Sudan, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and so on are cases in point. The status quo or conservative theory of war is therefore inchoate and incoherent in its explanations of the causes of war. In the process the adherents vacillate from the animalistic nature of man based on Darwinism to psycho-religious causes, structural breakdown of authority, the so-called Hobbesian state of nature and so on. All these make the status quo theory of war to be highly eclectic and indeed very unscientific in its explanations of the causes war.

2.1.3 The Behavioural Theory of War

The second liberal school of thought of the causes of war is the behavioural theories of war Kant (1914:17) cited in Nelson and Olin, Jr.(1979) rejected the pessimism of man, of his idealist contemporaries who believed that war could never be completely eliminated. Kant was of the opinion that national strength is dependent on the amount of liberty enjoyed by the national citizens of any given nation-state. The behaviouralists see authoritarian regimes as necessarily more war like, than those of limited governments that respect the rights of the citizens. A common explanation of war by this liberal variant stresses the existence of despotic or totalitarian nation-states hostile to the political and economic interests of liberal democracies. This view point was strongly held by Woodrow Wilson (cited by Nelson and Olin Jr. 1979:41) who believed that national self-determination and self-government under law were essential pre-conditions for international peace. In the final analysis, therefore, if the behaviouralist is not attributing war to an outside force, he tends to see it as resulting from either psychological factors or from temporary imbalances that serve to create instability within the domestic or international systems (Nelson and Olin Jr. 1979:41). In more specific theoretical terms, the behaviouralists have relied more on one (or more) of their three basic conflict “models” (Nelson and Olin Jr. 1979:42).

The Psychological and social-psychological strands of the behaviouralist theory focus exclusively on the elements of experience that cause extreme discontent among individuals which lead eventually to “irrational” behaviour. They tend to disregard the influence of economic and social factors in causing war, stressing instead the importance of such “state-of-mind” concepts as tension, anxieties, frustrated expectations and relative deprivation (Nelson and Olin Jr., 1979:44). Gurr (1970) is one of the leading scholarships of the behaviouralist model. Relative deprivation is defined as the discrepancy between what individuals expect and what they infact obtain. Gurr is of the opinion that if such individual disaffection arising from discrepancy becomes wide-spread the greater will the probability and intensity of mass action, violence or revolution. He begins by locating the source of discontent in the individual and then generalised this process to the group level. Hofstandler (1955:135) said that “Men often

respond to frustration with acts of aggression, and allay their anxieties by threatening acts against others" According to Lasswell (1935:25 cited in Nelson and Olin Jr. 1979): "Wars and revolutions are avenues of discharge for collective insecurity and stand in competition with every alternative means of dissipating mass tension".

The psychological and socio-psychological schools concentrated attention on a variety of motivational and perceptual factors which they believed lead nations towards wars. This school relies for much of its explanatory power on the emotional and cognitive stress experienced by individual decision-makers during a crisis. It also provides a way hostility originating in the individual frustrations and misperceptions can be translated into conflicts among nation-states. It however plays down long-range structural factors, such as the imperatives of a particular economic system (Nelson and Olin Jr. 1979:50). The main focus of the psychological and socio-psychological school of thought is the frustration-aggression thesis. Gurr says it is a product of relative deprivation. Hofstandler said it comes as a result of upheaval in social status, which makes men respond to frustration with acts of aggression. Boulding, Festinger (cited by Nelson and Olin Jr. 1979) and their contemporaries anchored their analysis of the causation of war on images, stereotypes and cognitive factors of decision-makers. The adherents of this school in the late 1960s and early 1970s placed emphasis on cold cognitive factors which produce inaccurate world-views as opposed to disturbed individual psyche. The frustration-aggression thesis with its cold cognitive modification notwithstanding, could not give us a clue to the primary variables in the causes of war and crisis to aid our study in the political economy.

Another perspective or model is the *Structural Functionalist* theory of war and/or conflict. Like the socio-psychological theory, *Structural Functionalism* begins from the tension-need theory of behaviour (Hield 1964:1-11 cited in Nelson and Olin Jr, 1979:51-2). Parsons (1951:261) in his work advanced his theory from the individual motivations to that of the whole society as a self- sustaining homeostatic system. Central to the understanding of his theory is the concept of system and systems analysis. Thus Parsons viewed the social system as being made up of interdependent and mutually

accommodating structures (Parsons 1951). This points to the essential elements of Parsons' sociological theory as consensus, stability and equilibrium theory. The critics of *structural functionalism* see it as being biased in favour of order and stability. It failed equally to point out what determines the functions, which must be performed in order for a system to maintain equilibrium and avoid conflicts and whether these requisite functions will always be performed (Nelson and Olin Jr, 1979:54). The school whose adherents includes amongst others Wilbert More, Robert Merton did not focus on the economic determinants of the disequilibrium in the social system not to talk of the structures in terms of classes and indeed inter and intra- classes struggles.

Another school of thought in the liberal perspective is the *Group Conflict Theory.* The pioneers in this area are Geog Simmel and Max Weber who insisted that "…conflicts cannot be excluded from social life" (Weber 1949:26 Simmel 1955; Coser 1956; Spykman, 1966). Coser (1956) and Dahrendorf (1959:231-5) amongst others objected to the functionalists neglect of conflict and cohesion and argued in the contrary that conflict is a fundamental element of social cohesion and social change. Dahrendorf (1959) argues strongly that the extent of structural change in any system is the function of the relevant "conflict intensity". He thus rejects *structural – functionalism* on the ground that it viewed conflict as abnormal, deviant and pathological when in fact, it is a fundamental ingredience of change in social systems. The group conflict theorists view conflicts as products of struggles among self – serving groups in a social system. Thus the concept of conflict is fundamental to the analysis of Dahrendorf and other group conflict theorists as having important consequences in terms of structural transformation.

The logical extension of this approach to international relations involves the recognition of the important role being played by powerful interest groups and powerful nation states. In identifying such groups and nation states Schumpeter (1955:65) zeroed on particular elite groups whose continued authority and dominance at home depended upon warfare. He narrowed down on the aristocratic elite and its carry-over from the feudal age as the cause of war and indeed imperialism. He thus located the major

pressures for imperialism and war in the aristocratic, military and bureaucratic leaders. Schumpeter was of the conviction "…that it is a basic fallacy to describe imperialism as a necessary phase of capitalism or to speak of the development of capitalism into imperialism". Among those of more current version of this approach are Rosecrance (1963:304–5; 1973:23-4), Hass and Whiting (1956:356–9) who said that traditional elite may seek to preserve their status by stirring up foreign conflicts. In this regard, Rosecrance is of the opinion that if decision–makers locate internal threat, they are more likely to favour taking aggressive action against other nation–states in order to bolster their position. However, when they are secured at home, the international system remains relatively stable at which time problems are solved without recourse to war.

Melman (1965;1971 cited in Nelson and Olin Jr, 1979;62-3), Galbraith (1969 cited in Nelson and Olin, Jr, 1979:145) all of left liberal persuasion called attention to the war – making pre-occupation of specific interest groups. Melman *(*1965) and (1971) augued that the military in the United States was ascendant over the defence industry. He sees the Department of Defence and the military as a state within a state, an *outgrowth* of the military – industrial complex and having been created for purposes of national defence, simply thirsted for more and more power. Melman like Schumpeter rejected the view that the causes of war could be located in the actions of the ruling classes. In his opinion, solutions to wars are fundamentally political: dismantle the military – industrial complex and reduce the military and that is it.

There is also the *Group Conflict System Theory of* war which conceives international relations in terms of a struggle for resources within the context of systemic interaction. The adherents of this model are Deutsch, Singer, Waltz and Rosecrance who labeled it as the "stratification approach" see the relationship of power distribution among nation – states as determining the extent of international violence. In particular, Deutsch, Singer and others are of the view that "… as the system moves away from bipolarity towards multipolarity, the frequency of war should be expected to diminish" (Deutsch and Singer 1964; 390–406; Kaplan 1957 cited by Nelson and Olin Jr, 1979:64-5).

However, evidence in the post-Cold War points to the contrary as new patterns of violence in the international system have presented themselves. Deutsch, Singer and Kaplan would have argued that the post-Cold War international system is not sufficiently a multipolar world system but unipolar in nature. That notwithstanding, the pre-First War Europe and that of the inter-war years were sufficiently multipolar and yet the greatest wars in history could not be prevented. This can only be properly comprehended by the political economy perspective.

2.1.4 The Left of the Right Radicals

In a radically opposing view Rousseau (1941:214) would argue that property ownership was the root cause of war and to end wars, the abolition of private property is a necessary pre-condition. Hobson (1902) a radical liberal economist argues in a Marxian fashion that capitalism faces an internal and critical difficulties: the unequal distribution of wealth. He posited that a few capitalists were accumulating large surpluses to the detriment of the impoverished majority who lacked the purchasing power to participate actively as consumers. Hence the internal market is constrained as a result, the search for external markets and investment outlets becomes apparent leading directly to competitions and struggles among nations, and in this manner imperialism was becoming a road to war. Both Hobson and Rousseau had identified private properly, inequality and the accumulation of property or surpluses by a few as inevitable roots to war.

2.1.5 Marxian Theory of Conflict and War

Class and intra-class struggles have been intensified as a result of the problematics of the realisation of surplus-value in the accumulation process of capital. In this respect, Marxian scholars see the organic unity between domestic and foreign policies of imperialist nations. Marxists view the causes of war as resulting from the very existence of class societies. Eternal struggles between the capitalists result from the internal logic of capital leading from competition through elimination to concentration and centralisation of capital. Thus Marx (1986:714) said, "…the further expropriation of proprietors takes a new form. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the

immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist always kills many". Along this line of reasoning, that is, the struggle for accumulation by and amongst capitalists, Marxists like Rudolf, Hilferding, Rosa Luxemburg, V.I. Lenin and others saw the inevitability of crises and wars lacing the capitalist accumulation processes.

Paul Baran, Paul Sweezy and Victor Perlo, very accomplished Marxist scholars have stressed the role of the Military-Indistrial Complex and the importance of military spending to counter economic stagnation inherent in capitalism. For instance, Perlo (1973:169) posited that ".. wars under capitalism create an extra-ordinary demand for basic industrial products and stimulate economic growth by releasing potentials that are otherwise surpressed by the contradictions of the system". This same position was held by Baran and Sweezy (1968). Khumalo (1985) in his article "40 Years: How the Red Army Burried Hitler" said that the growth of the American economy during the Second World War led to a wooping profit of 52 billion dollars for the U. S. from that War which goes to support Perlo, Baran and Sweezy's position. The foregoing huge profits accrued to major United States multinational monopolies. Lenin in (1974:82) said, "Imperialism…is fierce struggle of the great powers for the division of the world. It is therefore bound to lead to further militarisation in all countries".

In its dynamics, monopoly capital produces profits part of which continues its productive functioning in the civil sector of the country's economy, while the rest is ousted into surplus capital. This "surplus" of capital counters the total aggregate capital, and threatens its "normal" self – growth and thus leads to the fall in the rate of profit. This contradiction is resolved temporarily by surplus capital being invested in arms industry or abroad. The export of capital and militarisation of the economy are the main restriants on the fall of the average rate of profit of leading monopolies in an individual imperialist country, simply because they temporarily get rid of the surplus capital in the productive sphere (Buzuev 1985). Ever since the development of monopoly capital, looking for sources of investment for this increasing rising rates of profit has always led to disastrous wars in the late 19th, and throughout the 20th centuries. It has equally

escalated into arms race and spirals in arms production.

2.2 Overview of Civil Wars

The *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (Sill, ed : 1968:449) define Civil War or internal war as"… conflict within a society resulting from an attempt to seize or maintain power and symbols of legitimacy by extra-legal means. It is civil because civilians are engaged in it. It is war because violence is applied by both sides. Civil War is intra – societal and may take place within a group, some parts of which either desire to maintain or wish to initiate separate ethnic and or political identity or wish to change the government". Therefore Civil War is applied to warfare waged between contending parties in a state for the purpose of seizing or retaining the reins of power (Chambers Encyclopaedia Vol. III 1970:602). *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1975:95) defined Civil War as sustained hostilities between the armed forces of two or more factions within a country, or between the government and a rebel group. Unlike mob actions which inform civil disorders, Civil Wars are actually armed conflicts between social groups, be they classes, ethnic, cultural or religious. Kotlobai (1982:10) said that Civil Wars could be seen as armed struggles for state power between different classes and social groups (including ethnic, national and religious groups) of one country. Its out break is due to social crises and it is one of the forms of class struggle.

Wright (1965:9) said there are two types of Civil Wars. They are the spontaneous type and the planned type. The spontaneous type takes the form of a mob action to initiate. The type which is the planned Civil War is said to have two preconditions for its initiation. The first is the absence of effective formal and informal channel for settling political grievances or a sense of futility or fear of reprisals in claiming such grievances. Second is the assumption or conviction that there is no recourse other than violence for securing redress (Sill 1968:499). However, Wright didn't give us the opportunity to get at the root causes of Civil Wars. We cited him earlier in his definition of war which placed him amongst the group conflict theorists. Adedeji (ed.) 1999:10) said that "understanding the origins of conflicts means, therefore, developing a framework for comprehending: (i) how various causes of conflicts fit together and interact; (ii) which

among them are the dominant forces at a particular moment in time; and (iii) what policies and strategies should be crafted to address these causes in the short, medium and long term".

In the African context and indeed for the other neo–colonies, Adedeji (1999:19) would argue that it was part of the colonisation process that a colonial economic structure had to be established and pre-colonial systems and relations tailored to accommodate the colonial regime. Pre-colonial class divisions were exploited, class contradictions deepened and nurturing of antagonisms became an art. "…Toure (in Adedeji 1999) said that "Conflicts arise from human relations in two principal ways: first, individual or groups of individuals have different values, needs and interests and second, most resources are not available in unlimited quantities and so access to them must be controlled and fought for. These two factors intrinsically cause conflicts". Thus Adedeji (ed) (1999:10) was correct when said "competition for resources typically lies at the heart of conflicts". This accounts for the intensity of the struggles for political power in many African countries. In these nations, political power is sought in order, *inter – alia* to acquire control over means of production. Those who win in the intense and brutal political power competition no longer need to exert themselves in furthering their economic well – being. Political victory ensures this automatically. Those who lose are not just immiserated and pauperised but run the risk of losing their lives because African economies are usually state-dominated.

While Intra-class and inter-class struggles for scarce resources is the epitome of neo-colonial states' conflict generators. In the classical capitalist states it was their transformative transition from feudalism to capitalism, in their class struggles, which led to their Civil Wars and Revolutions based on values and interests. The same was true of those states that transited from semi-colonial states or partial dependencies to socialism. The emergence of a new value system in the old social formation and the transcendence of the old by the new, created convulsive tendencies and hence upheavals that resulted in Civil Wars in England in the 17th century prior to the industrial revolution. The same thing was true in France and the United States in the 19th century.

The Socialist Revolutions and Civil Wars that occurred in Soviet Russia and China were based equally on the principles of class struggles that were based on value confrontations between the old and new societies. Toure (1999) did not clearly state this aspect of value confrontation in the transmogrification of societies and how it leads to intra-state, inter and intra-class conflicts. Thus values and interest are very important and this must not be vaguely stated but must be historical materialist in focus to get at the roots of class struggles and the nature of states in such societies. In the dynamics of a dependent capitalist political economy and indeed a comprador bourgeois and a landed class, the values and interests are those of an allocation state and not organisation of production, therefore, it gives rise to very intense struggles over scarce resources (Adedeji 1999; 10; Jega ed. 2003: 29-30; Ibrahim in Jega ed. 2003: 53-4).

2.2.1 Transformative Values, Interests, Contradictions and Civil Wars

Transformative values and interests are products of new societies that are to be given birth to through revolutionary processes. The persistent struggles which trailed the birth of capitalist revolutions in Western Europe from the 17th century in England and its Civil War under Oliver Cromwell. The same was the case of the 18th century great French Revolution, its other revolutions and counter-revolutions in the 19th century culminating in the Civil War in France in 1871 after the failure of the second Empire attempt by Louis Bonaparte. The same was the case of the Civil War in the United States to 1881 to 1885. All the foregoings were all of transformative values and interests. Engels (1883:8) in introduction to Karl Marx *The Class Struggles in France 1848* said "…the materialist method has here quite often to limit itself to tracing political conflicts back to the struggles between the interests of the existing social classes and fractions of classes created by the economic development and to prove the particular parties to be the more or less adequate political expression of these same classes and fractions of classes." This social transformative value based on the interests of a dominant class in each emerging epoch or relations of production is always heralded by conflicts and wars. For the crises of birth of capital, Marx (1978:11) said "But unheroic as bourgeoisie society is, it nevertheless took heroism, sacrifice, terror, Civil War and the battle of nations to bring it into being". In the materialist conception of history, the period

of intersection between the old and new epochs are periods of revolutionary violence or wars and indeed Civil Wars. What Claude Ake calls “revolutionary pressures are the dynamics of society that are in contradictory revolutionary processes. Thus the birth pangs of the new society of capital and indeed industry was not made on a bed of roses but took revolutions and Civil Wars to bring it into being.

2.2.2 Non–Transformative Values, Interests, Contradictions, and Civil War

In the former colonial societies, Popov (1984:116-7) said “…capitalist relations brought in from outside into the colonial and dependent countries were a sort of extension of capitalist economy of Europe. Foreign capital engaged in stripping the colonial and dependent countries of their natural and raw material resources…. it’s interests were concentrated only in some sectors of the national economy: mining, some agricultural raw material….Accordingly the development of capitalism in the colonial countries was mainly in the nature of “enclaves “,since the establishment of industrial enterprises and agricultural plantations did not result in a profound restructuring of the national economy as a whole. Foreign capital was not interested in developing the productive forces of the national economy: it could obtain high profit without ousting pre-capitalist relations and indeed by adapting (them) to the conditions of colonial exploitation”. The disarticulation of the colonial economy was characterised by sectoral disintegration which was clearly stated by Ake (1981:43-6) and the same was the case by Popov (1984:117-8). Marx and Engels (1977:280) in noting the differential impact of contradictions of capital between the core of capital and its periphery said:

> While therefore, the crises first produced revolutions on the continent (mainland Europe was then periphery), the foundation for these is, nevertheless, always laid in England (core). Violent outbreaks must naturally occur rather in the extremities of the bourgeois body than in its heart, since the possibility of adjustment is greater here than there.

The contradictions resulting from the political economy of imperialist’s domination and its primitive accumulation resulting from non-transformative values, interests and its contradictions result in conflict, crises and indeed in most cases Civil Wars. This explains the post-colonial African crises and indeed Civil Wars more so since the

collapse of Communism. In chapter three, we shall see how an integrated national economy, a product of the transformative values and interests resulted in the emergence of the modern day European nations and others, especially Germany, France, England, United States and so on. It was the same thing in the revolutionary socialist states of the Soviet Russia and China where revolutionary proletariat organised their national economies as integrated one and thus the stimulant towards industrialisation and indeed national economic integration. According to Popov (1984:118) in the dependent neo-colonies, "…foreign capital determined the main features of the local bourgeoisie, which was assigned a dependent and ancillary role in the national economy, being virtually kept out of industrial production, the basic and crucial sphere of the economy. The local bourgeoisie, economically weak and dependent on foreign capital… (was) unable to play an important role in national production, it still strove to imitate the European capitalists' way of life and consumption. This tended to further reduce the already inadequate potentialities for solving the accumulation problem. All these factors, primarily the domination of foreign capital, largely explains why the local bourgeoisie was unable to fulfil its "historic mission" in its countries, as the European bourgeoisie had done earlier on. "Hence Cabral (1980:129) had every reason to call it a "pseudo bourgeoisie". The foregoing equally agrees with Fanon's position.

One can comfortably say that the post-colonial African crises have been because of the inabilities and indeed inadequate potentialities of the various national bourgeoisie for solving the "accumulation problem". This is precisely because of the non-transformative values and interests in the accumulation processes and as such the contradictions arising there from are deflected into secondary contradictions such as ethnicity and sectionalism. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1992:541) Vol. 23 stated that "Every contradiction displays a particular character, depending on the nature of things and phenomena. Contradictions have alternating aspects. Sometimes blurred, some of these aspects are primary others secondary." Contradictions are the products of inequalities in societies and they generate conflicts and struggles over values and interests. The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences (1968:232) Vol. 3 and 4 rightly said

that “Social conflict is a struggle over values or claims to status power and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals. Such conflicts may take place between individuals and collectivities. Inter – group as well as intra – group conflicts are perennial features of social life. We have demonstrated sufficiently enough that the Nigerian crises that heralded the Civil War were primarily crises of the political economy of neo –colonial imperialism involving the imperialist dominant class and the very weak Nigerian b*ourgeoisie* on the one hand, the Nigerian people (the proletariat and the peasantry) on the other.

2.2.3 Selected Cases of Civil Wars

Hill (1982; 53) said that there was a great deal of agreement among the men who were to fight on opposing sides in the English Civil War of the 1640s that the old regime (ancient regime-my emphasis) must be dismantled. He added, “…so there was continuous pressure to carry the revolution further, in order to consolidate what had already been attained”. The battle for the soul of England was between the Royalists, a combination of the feudal aristocracy, the landed gentry on the side of King Charles on the one hand and the Parliamentarians (emerging capitalists –my emphasis) under Oliver Cromwell on the other (Hill 1983:64-5). This was a war between the emerging dominant class of capitalists and the old feudal order about to be displaced. The emerging class won the Civil War and hence it was of a transformative value from the old relations of production to a new one. The English Civl War of the 1640s, Stone (1972:71-6), said that although there were no clean cut split of social forces along class lines, but relations changed along operations of the market. Therefore the point of no return was reached when the old relations based on feudalism or feudal nobility could no longer hold sway. Stone (1972:71-2) stresses:

> What can be said, however, is that these economic developments were dissolving old bonds of service and obligation (feudal relations – my emphasis) and creating new relationships founded on the operations of the market, and the domestic and foreign policies of the Stuarts were failing to respond to these changing circumstances. Much of the political friction of the early seventeenth century was generated by resentments, jealousies and tensions arising from the rise of wealth

of new social groups and the decline of others, and by the fumbling and corrupt way in which the administration handled the situation.

Equally the French Civil War which arose from the failed Second Empire under Louis Bonaparte in 1871 was a product of the class struggles between the ruling classes of France and its working people led by the proletariat or working class. Marx (1979) said that it led to the declaration of the Paris Commune, the first socialist experiment in history. From the great *French Revolution of 1789 of Napoleon Bonaparte* there had been revolutions and counter – revolutions in France. These were itemized analytically by Marx's (1983; 1978; 1983:19) noted that "…every more important part of the annals of the revolution from 1848 to 1849 carries the heading; defeat of the revolution! What succumbed in these defeats was not the revolution. It was the pre-revolutionary traditional appendages, results of social relationships, which had not yet come to the point of sharp class antagonisms, persons, illusions, conceptions, projects from which the revolutionary party before the February Revolution was not free from which it could be freed not by the *Victory of February* but only by series of defeats. In a word: the revolution made progress, forged ahead, not by its immediate tragic – comic achievements, but on the contrary by the creation of a powerful, united counter – revolution, by the creation of an opponent in combat with whom alone the party of insurrection ripened into a really revolutionary party".

The foregoing ripening of the party of the revolution through its encounter with the united counter – revolutionary forces matured into a formidable force after the defeat of the second attempt at Empire building by Louis Bonaparte in 1870 – 1871 by the Prussians. It resulted in a Civil War in France, a Civil War that was thoroughly on the basis of inter-class struggles. A commune was decreed into being by the working class of Paris and indeed to be emulated, throughout all of France which could not materialise. The foregoing revolutionary transformations based on inter –class struggles rallied the different factions of the French ruling class against the Commune. Marx (1979:66) said "The first attempt of the slaveholders' conspiracy to put down Paris by getting the Prussians to occupy it was frustrated by Bismarck's refusal. The second

attempt that of 18th March, ended in the rout of the army and the flight to Versailles of the government, which ordered the whole administration to break up and follow in its track. By the semblance of peace negotiation with Paris, Theirs, found time to prepare for war against it. ”The battle against the Paris Commune despite the initial refusal of Bismarck to allow Prussian troops to occupy Paris had the blessings of the entire bourgeoisie Europe. Marx (1979; 77) said,” … after the most tremendous war of modern times, the conquering and the conquered host should fraternise for the common massacre of the proletariat… The unity of forces against the Paris Commune in the Civil War in France across Europe was well pronounced. Even Bismarck Prussia had to fraternise with its aggressor, the defeated bourgeois France in order to put down, the mortal enemy of emergent bourgeois society. One thing was sure, it was the transformative value and interests of the continuous struggles against the vestiges of feudalism and the birth of the new values and interests of capitalism.

In Griess (ed.) (1987:4) , the point was made that, “…populating the vast country (the Unionist) were vigorous and industrious people who had somehow decided that only war could solve their fundamental problems”. This reasoning of the Unionist North against the Confederalist South could be termed as a point of no return or of no compromise. The fundamental problem was that of the Northern real capitalist industrial development, an open economy that was demanding the opening up of the Southern Confederalist states; semi feudal slave economy. Although the Union States put the philosophical issue of freedom or emancipation of slavery to the fore, they did not stress this in the context of the expanding economy of the North and the need for labour. According to Ransom (1989:15)

> At the crux of this analysis are the economic aspects of capitalist slavery in the United States that made compromise increasingly difficult and eventually impossible. Understanding how economic forces operated in the context of a slave system that was uniquely capitalist provides one of the essential keys to understanding why the conflict over slavery in the United States was so bitter and compromise so difficult.

The second strand of the transformative values and interest in revolutionary violence

and indeed Civil Wars were products of Socialist Revolutions in the 20th century in revolutionary Russia and China. These were products of struggles against the vestiges of the old society and also against imperialism and their collaborators. The Great October Revolution in Russia in 1917 was a product of economic hardship that resulted from World War I and this gave Bolsheviks a sense of direction in the Soviets and indeed legitimacy as a better alternative to Czarism and its nascent capitalism. The Civil War that followed was therefore a battle between the Bolsheviks, a representative of the toiling people and the counter – revolutionaries, bourgeois, nationalists, the Kulaks all backed by the imperialist interventionist forces of the French, British, U. S. and Japanese who made all attempts to crush the Revolutionary Red Army of the young Soviet State (Zhukov, Vol. I 1985:85-9). In his autobiography *Zhukov,* said:

> In the spring of 1918, the Entente forces landed in the North and Far East. The Japanese, and then also U. S. and British troops, seized hold of Vladivostock. In May, the organisers of the intervention provoked the Czechoslovak corps to rise against the Soviets; it mounted armed actions against the Red Army in the Urals, Siberia, and the Volga Region. Seats of the intervention appeared in other parts of the country. Encouraged by foreign aid, the Russian White Guards went on the offensive (Zhukov Vol. I 1985).

On the Chinese Civil War, Mao (1972: 2) said, "…we are now engaged in a war, our war is a revolutionary war and our revolutionary war is being waged in this semi-colonial and semi-feudal country of China". Thus Mao Tsetung situated Chinese Civil War in the political economy of semi – colonialism and semi – feudalism. He thus stressed, "…therefore, we must study not only the laws of war in general, but the specific laws of revolutionary war, and even more specific laws of revolutionary war in China." Mao (1972) advised "…that when you do anything, unless you understand its actual circumstances, its nature and its relations to other things, you will not know the laws governing it, or know how to do it, or be able to do it well." Mao (1972:24) said, of all the social strata and political groups in semi – colonial China, the proletariat and their party are the most far – sighted and the best organised with an open mind from the experience of the vanguard class to make use of this experience in their own cause. Hence only the proletariat and their party can lead the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeois, the anarchic unemployed masses, the vacillating and lack of

thoroughness of the bourgeoisie and can lead the revolution and the war on to the road of victory. Mao (1972:24 –5) further stressed that though the revolutionary war of 1924 – 27 was much influenced by both the external and internal proletariat influence but this revolutionary war failed at the critical juncture, first of all, because the big bourgeois turned traitor and at the same time became the opportunists within the revolutionary ranks. The Civil War in China was a post-Second World War issue in which the Chinese national war against Japanese imperialist invasion turned into a Civil War between the Kuomintang army of General Chiang Kai – sheik on the one hand and the Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party after Japanese defeat on the other. The Kuomintang backed by the United States went over for the offensive in 1946. According to Mao (1972:380 – 1) within the first year of the war the people's Liberation Army went over from the defensive to offensive and were able to deliver a devastating blow on the Kuomintang and forced them on the defensive and finally lost the war to the Communists in 1949.

2.2.4 The Nigerian Civil War- Relevance of Political Economy

Neglecting the political economy approach would make analysts of Civil Wars to have jumbled approaches lacking direction in their studies. For example some authors would say that the Nigeria situation of 1966/1967 accorded with "… the absence of effective formal and informal channels for settling the grievances and … the assumption or conviction that there was no recourse other than violence." They would see as self evident the counter coup of July 29, 1966 and what would be considered as the massacre of the Ibos that followed. This status quo theory with a mix – grill of the group conflict theory informed the analysis of Ademoyega's (1981:131) work He said:

> …it was the report of a fresh outbreak of violence and atrocities against the Easterners in the North, especially against the Ibos, that brought an abrupt end to the constitutional conference. This time the violence was so intense and was such a cataclysm that the term "pogrom" seemed to be an understatement. If any single event could be so termed, it was that September – October (1966) pogrom, staged throughout the Northern Region against the Ibos that made the civil war inevitable. It made housing, hospital, economic and resettlement problem absolutely intractable in the Eastern Region. Also it completely put a

> seal on the grim determination of Ojukwu to pull Easterners out of the Nigerian fold.

We have accepted Marx and Engels' position that "…if events and series of events are judged by current history it will never be possible to go back to the ultimate economic causes". This would reduce the authenticity of such analysts that based their analyses on situation outside economic causes. For example most analysts of the Nigerian Civil War see ethnicity as primary in the causal variables that brought about the war. In the process, this exercise in obscurantism and agnosticis disregards the underlying historical forces which are both economic and class forces. Obasanjo (1980:144) believes in the primacy of ethnicity, thus he said:

> In political conflict in Nigeria, ethnicity retains primacy over class-because of the nature of the Nigerian social structure; this will remain so for some – time to come. In time I see an evolution of new economic, political and social conditions and a new crop of political elite …who have an interest in running and belonging to something larger than a tribe (sic). But for the present, Nigerian intellectuals and elite are the worst peddlers of tribalism (sic) and destructive conflicts and politics for their personal aggrandisement. In order to gain power and prosperity, the Nigerian elite and politicians played politics of division and patronage and ultimately destruction.

On very close examination of Obasanjo's position of the primacy of ethnicity or what he calls tribalism (sic), one is surprised to see him inadvertently pushing also the primacy of class. He has clearly posited that, "… the Nigerian intellectuals and elite are the worst peddlers of tribalism (sic) …for their personal aggrandisement. In order to gain power and prosperity, the Nigerian elite and politicians played politics of division and patronage and ultimately destruction". This confusion, fuzziness and vacillation in analysis is not restricted to Olusegun Obasanjo, but encapsulates his class and their philosophers who distort national consciousness with wrong tools or at best secondary tools of analysis. As a result, the primacy of class based on the materialist interpretation of history is vehemently denied in their analysis of the crises that led to and gave birth to the Civil War which lasted from 1967 to 1970.

What Oyovbaire (1983;239) would call the "Tyranny of Borrowed Paradigms" must have been responsible for the lack of identification of the primary causal variables

which stimulated other intervening variables which led to the Civil War. The nature of political studies in the colonial territories which are derived from the methodological tools of social anthropology "based on the study of primitive societies stagnating in primitive isolation" must have greatly influenced many scholars of the conservative tradition in the Nigerian Civil War studies. Post and Vickers (1973:1) posited along the conservative model the causes of the constitutional breakdown prior to the January, 1966 coup that:

> Foremost among the proffered explanations have been the destructive twins of 'tribalism' (sic) and 'regionalism'. Indeed, the whole problem has sometimes been simplified to the assertion that bitter North – South controversy – reflected little more than the degree to which the progressive Southern Ibo mistrusted his reactionary Muslim, Hausa-Fulani, fellow countryman in the North.

The foregoing position that dominated the pre-Civil War and post-Civil War studies of the Nigerian political crises has gone some length to distort the historical facts and forces, which were responsible for and propelled the Nigerian Civil War. The flaw in such analysis which focuses on geo-ethnic factors as the primary causal variables responsible for the constitutional breakdown that consequently midwifed the Civil War is a result of the exclusion of class as one of the instruments of analysis. Post and Vickers like other bourgeois intellectual writers on the crises prior to the Civil War though recognised the idea of class (or what they generally call elite) but ethnicity, ethnic politics and politics of regionalism appealed to them better as tools of analysis. In their use of secondary or intervening variables, all shades of bourgeois opinion moulders have forced down our throats the geo-ethnic variables as the primary causal variables of the constitutional crises of the First Republic which gave birth to the traumatic Civil War. Post and Vickers (1973:6) like their Nigeria counterparts in intellectual endeavour, despite their antipathy to class as a tool of analysis and despite the fact that they only decided to adopt the line of convenience and of least resistance, had exposed their biases thus:

> …the mass of the population were regarded by the elite as objects of manipulation rather than real participants, we feel this emphasis to be justified

> …we have not made the dimension of class central to our analysis. This is not because we would argue that in terms of objective conditions classes did not exist. The problem here is that insufficient work has been done by scholars to make a full class analysis possible. Moreover, political action at this juncture of Nigeria's history was determined by the ideology of tribalism (sic) rather than class consciousness, …we have treated Nigeria virtually as an isolated unit, ignoring its external linkages, economic and otherwise. In view of the importance of these in shaping Nigeria as a whole and in the Biafran secession and civil war which flowed from the events we describe, this is a very serious omission. Nevertheless, while recognising the importance of these linkages as ultimately determining factors at the level of analysis upon which we are operating they are not immediately active (Post and Vickers 1973:6).

The dismissal with the stroke of the pen of such very vital instruments of political economy based on the dynamics of class and imperialism and indeed the materialist paradigm would blur the geo-ethnic perspectives of the liberal scholars in explaining the crises that led to and precipitated the Nigerian Civil War. Consciously or unconsciously, there is some degree of intellectual dishonesty. Such intellectual acrobatics firm the ideological earth upon which the Nigerian ruling class stands and imperialism operates. Implicit in Post and Vickers position and those who use the geo-ethnic perspectives is the isolationist view treating Nigeria as given. In our view we see the geo-ethnic perspective as secondary or intervening variables to such primary variables of imperialism and class, based on the political economy analysis or the materialist paradigm.

Excluding the dynamics of imperialism which Post and Vickers confessed, "…we have treated Nigeria virtually as an isolated unit, ignoring its external linkages, economic and accepting that … we have not made the dimension of class central to our analysis", made the geo-ethnic perspective or model inappropriate at a more fundamental level in explaining the Nigerian crises and Civil War. In making the geo-ethnic factors strategic in their explanations of the Nigerian crises, this tradition has given vent to obscurantism and agnosticism. It has made us not to get at the root causes of the historical forces foisted on us that are crises prone. Against the foregoing Nnoli (1978:13) said:

> By diverting attention away from imperialist exploitation and the resultant distortion of African economic and social structures, ethnicity performs the

> function of mystification and obscurantism. Consequently, it helps to perpetuate imperialism, and militates against the "imperative of revolutionary struggle" by hampering the development of a high level of political consciousness by its victims.

The internal dimensions of policy in situation of war was not properly addressed by Clausewitz in his theory of war. This focus must have influenced greatly most scholars. Indeed Byely et al. (1972:70) said:

> … Clausewitz understood by politics only foreign policy, and ignored the fact that war is first and foremost a continuation of domestic policy, which expresses the class structure of society directly. Clausewitz had in mind only politics of the state, which is the class dominant in the state in question. He did not believe that when the oppressed classes were fighting against their exploiters, they were thereby pursuing a policy of their own, and he therefore did not extend the concept of war to civil wars of the popular masses against the exploiter classes and their state. Clausewitz completely ignored the fact that politics is conditioned by deep causes rooted in the economic system of society.

The non-inclusion of economic dimensions of wars in general and Civil Wars in particular would bring out a very fuzzy analysis of such wars. The fact that combatants use ideological cover to express their position would not exclude the class and economic dimensions or the materialist interpretations of wars and indeed Civil Wars. According to Okoye (1979:129) manipulation through propaganda is the in thing in war. He said:

> When war is declared, truth is the first casualty. Facts are twisted, lies fabricated and news slanted to suit the demands of political expediency; the masses are generally and tragically deceived and in their blind concern with daily living they become woefully ignorant of what is going on in the world.

In the analysis of the Nigerian Civil War, the materialist dimension as we have already noted was side-tracked. Nafziger (1983:2) said:

> That economic factors, including the international economic context, need to be considered implies that several prevailing approaches are not adequate. In the most frequently used approaches (the "ethnic model of internal political violence), language, race, tribe, religion, national origin or some other cultural sense of identity is considered the primary factor contributing to the conflict.

Bowen (1996:3) in his work “The Myth of Global Ethnic Conflict” said “This notion misrepresents the genesis of conflicts and ignores the ability of diverse people to coexist. The very phrase “ethnic conflict” misguides us. It has become a shorthand way to speak about any and all violent confrontations between groups of people living in the same country. Some of these conflicts involve ethnic or cultural identity but most are about getting more power, land, or other resources. They do not result from ethnic diversity; thinking that they do send us off in pursuit of the wrong policies, tolerating rulers who incite riots and repress ethnic differences.” Ethnic conflicts in Africa are said to be products of colonialism and also that of struggles by African dominant classes over power and resources. Bowen (1996:5-6) said that:

> Our (Euro –American) understanding of African violence have been clouded by vision, not of boiling cauldrons, but of ancient tribal warfare. I recall a National Public Radio reporter interviewing an African U. N. official about Rwanda. Throughout the discussion the reporter pressed the official to discuss the “ancient tribal hatred” that were fuelling the slaughter. The official ever so politely demurred, repeatedly reminding the reporter that mass conflicts began when Belgian colonial rulers gave Tutsis a monopoly of state power. But as happens so often, the image of ancient tribalism was too deeply ingrained in the reporter’s mind for him to hear the UN official’s message. What the African official had to say was right: ethnic thinking in political life is a product of modern conflicts over power and resources, and not an ancient impediment to political modernity.

In most, if not in all cases, the analysts of the Nigerian Civil War more often than not look at ethnic irredentism instead of the economic and class dimensions of the Civil War. Randall and Theobald (1985:50) saw the foregoing distortion as detrimental to the understanding of the causes of the Nigerian Civil War in two ways. They (Randall and Theobald 1985) noted that in the first place this distortion occurs because they would:

> …not discuss the strong relationship between regionalisation of Nigeria and the exigencies of the colonial economy. A brief acquaintance with the historical emergence of the state of Nigeria readily indicates that the nature of colonial penetration in that part of West African was such as to create series of economic enclaves linked not to each other but to Europe through the export of primary commodities such as tin, palm produce, cocoa, peanuts and rubber. In this way, a low level of economic integration worked to compartmentalise the ethnic groups who came to compose the independent state of Nigeria. Accordingly, the unequal modernisation…(seen) as the cause of subsequent communal conflict

was rather a symptom of the structure of the colonial economy.

The second way in which the economic dimension is neglected can be seen in the tendency to view the Biafran debacle almost entirely through the ethnic lens. Randall and Teobald (1985) stressed that:

> This leads to a silence on the question of classes, especially the role of the Hausa – Fulani aristocracy and the emerging bourgeoisie of the East and West in manipulating ethnic sentiments for their own ends.

What Adamoyega (1981) saw as point of no return that precipitated the Nigerian Civil War was actually reached long before the massacre of the Ibos. It was the discovery by the fledging Eastern bourgeoisie that their place lie with those of their Western Regional counterparts hence, the creation of the political alliance called the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) in opposition to the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The UPGA was made up principally of the comprador bourgeois elements, the local commercial bourgeoisie and the two key parties involved were the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) and the Action Group (AG). The NNA was made up of the key ruling party, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and a splinter group from the AG, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Like the case of the United States, it was based on pseudo-ideological ferment between a backward order (in Nigeria feudal relations or as in U.S. semi-feudalism) and the rising order (capitalism in U. S. and comprador capitalism in Nigeria).

What is also important to view critically is the influence and the import of the collapse of world commodity prices on conflict or revolutionary pressures. Engels in to Marx (1983:9) said:

> …What he (Marx) had hitherto deduced, half a priori from gappy material, became absolutely clear to him from the fact themselves, namely that the world trade crisis of 1847 had been the mother of February and March revolutions and that the industrial prosperity, which had been returning gradually since the middle of 1848 and attained full bloom in 1849 and 1850, was the revitalising force of the newly strengthened European reaction. This was decisive…

In the Nigerian experience, the enclave economy based on world market demands was partly responsible for the Nigerian crises that led to the Civil War. The collapse of the prices of Nigerian world primary export commodities from 1956 laid the foundation for vitalised inter and intra-class struggles which were expressed through the regionalised ruling classes in ethnic, religious and cultural sentiments or manipulations. Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu in Mahammed and Edoh (ed.) (1986:75) said:

> The first such crises occurred in 1955/56 following the Korean War boom (after) which prices of key Nigerian commodities experienced a slump leading to a reduction in revenue which was not enough to meet expanding cost of government expenditure, the high cost of import bill and the foreign exchange requirements of local and foreign companies.

The devastating impact of wars on economy and the economic crises that followed the slump in world commodity prices and its consequences and indeed the structure of a dependent political economy have resulted to wars in history, especially Civil Wars. The dependent economic or what is called economic enclaves that allows for little or no economic integration and independence have created the basis of economic and political crises and consequently Civil War. The United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF) has identified a "*new crisis in human security".* And the most obvious manifestations are increasing internal conflicts, mass migration to marginal lands and urban slums, frustrated aspirations, rising social tensions and the disaffection of large numbers of people from their societies, their value systems, their government, and their institutions. This has increased the numbers of failed states... (UNICEF1995:3). Thus the UNICEF documen*t The State of the World Children 1995* concluded like Bowen (1996:5-6) that it would be a mistake to conclude that the crimes committed in Bosnia or Rwanda have their roots in ethnic or tribal hatred. Such ethnic thinking in political life is a product of modern conflicts over power and resources, and not an ancient impediments to political modernity. Hence the materialist interpretation of the events that led to the Nigerian Civil War and the war itself shall, we hope, give us a better understanding of the war and the alignment of forces during its prosecution.

2.2.5 Reviews on Nigerian Civil war

There are two major categories of discourse of the Nigeria Civil War. These are those of serious academic orientations on the one hand and partisan participants on the other. Equally on the ideological level there are those who saw the war as a product of geo-ethnic or primordial rivalries and a few others who saw it as a product of economic dynamics resulting from the structures of the colonial political economy. As a result of the lack of the political economy approach to understanding the Nigerian Civil War, there have emerged the simple war straight forward narrative accounts of what was perceived to have happened and the fictionalised accounts of the war. The margin between the two genres is very narrow indeed and as such the two just complemented each other (Osuntokun 1989:86). The symbiosis between the war narratives and the fictionalised accounts are products of the geo-ethnic models or a preponderance of the nationality question in the interpretations of the crises that resulted in the Civil War. Despite the narrow margin between the two genres many of their accounts provided the raw materials with which we have taken up the historical duty to fill the vacuum. While many of their accounts of the war and indeed the pre-Civil War crises were of quite high literary value and are objective, others remain jaundiced in their presentation of the facts of the pre-Civil War and the civil crises as they resulted. Thus we have those writers who were biased either towards Biafra or Nigeria, seeing them as antagonists on the one hand and those who had a near objective account of the Civil War. Those who had a jaundiced approach in their analyses of the crises that led to the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted were either influenced by their partisanship in the crises and war resulting in their emotional reactions or equally they lacked better tools of analysis. Hence this group of analysts resorted to name-calling and stereotypes and indeed geo-ethnic models in their presentation of facts.

One of those writers who had a biased approach in the presentation of facts was Fredrick Forsyth (1969) who was pro-secessionists and whose primary interest was to draw international sympathy for Biafra. He was convinced that the Ibos had been wronged beyond remediation that the only option for them was to secure their survival by justly struggling to be free. The author saw the ethnic violence against the Ibos and

pogrom that followed as the breaking point prior to and after the counter coup of July 29,1966. Forsyth was the personal friend of the secessionist leader and as such his rational presentation of facts became beclouded to the point of seeing Nigeria and Biafra as antagonistically irreconcilables. One might excuse Forsyth for the fact that he was overwhelmed by the physical human tragedy which he saw unfolding in many of his journalistic forays in and out of Biafra. The human tragedy theory notwithstanding, the fact remains that Forsyth was supplementing the Markpress propaganda outfit that was hired by Biafra to draw the sympathetic Western public opinion towards the course of secession. The author was also writing on contemporary history and as an eye witness in the heat of the war and indeed battles and the tragedy that followed, he lost his bearings in objectivity in his presentations of the facts of the Civil War.

Muffett(1982) saw the January 1966 coup as an Ibo coup against the North and the skewness of the killings as the irrefutable evidence. He made the allegation of Ironsi's complicity in the murder of the Nigerian Prime Minister which veracity lies according to him in the *New York Times'* report that Ironsi's emergence was a result of a coup (Muffett 1982:59 cited *New York Times* 20 January 1966). He also cited the same magazine as saying "… that a pattern of tribal (sic) conflict may evolve that could lead to the country's fragmentation . . . the most pessimistic onlookers expect a civil war between the Ibos and Hausa tribes " (cited by Muffett 1982:64). Thus the author belongs to the group of those who are of the view that geo-ethnic considerations were fundamental in the Nigerian crises resulting in the coup and counter coup of 1966. Muffett had much sympathy for the North and the Sardauna and did not hide his dislike for the coup plotters. He was thus engaged in a battle of the pen, it seems against anyone perceived to be against the North led NPC government hence he fingered Kwame Nkrumah as the external financier of the coup. He alleged that Nkrumah gave support and political encouragement to the dissident elements in Nigeria before the coup (Muffett 1982: 67). The author pointed out the wide acceptance of the coup in both the North and South which acceptance was more among the broad section of the Northern elite who were expecting a fundamental change and its resultant benefits (Muffett 1982: 68). He observed that what turned the tide were the infamous Decrees

33 and 34 which unified the civil service and abolished the federal structure respectively (Muffett 1982:72). These restructuring drew the anger of the North being the most backward educationally and the worse off in the event of a unitary government hence the May 1966 crisis and the July counter coup that followed (Muffett 1982:83).

Suzanne Cronje (1972) traced the causes of the Nigerian Civil War to colonialism which saw the Fulanis as the 'master race' with supper intelligence, born rulers and incomparably above the negroid races in ability and as such were extra-ordinarily favoured by the British. Thus British interest to keep the North preponderant under the control of the Fulani aristocracy was the underpinning of the colonial denial of the Kotangora and Bida's requests to be freed from Fulani hegemony (Cronje 1972:3). The author saw the imbalances in the Nigerian Federation in the immediate post-colonial Nigeria as product of a deliberate colonial policy of divided-and-rule and as the major basis of the crisis that rocked the First Republic which resulted in coup and counter coup and consequently the Civil War. The writer said that the preponderant size of the North, unaffected by change and protected under the walls of colonialism simply transformed the traditional aristocracy into the regional government, ruling as before under British guidance. She, therefore, saw the British concern for Nigerian unity based on the three regional structures which could only be explained in the rejection of the minorities' requests for their separate regions thus maintaining the imbalances in the federation as a deliberate policy to keep Nigeria in the grip of Britain. Hence the bye-product was the regionalisation of politics and political parties based on the dominant ethnic groups of each region which became the death–kneel of the Nigerian state and politics in the First Republic. As such politics of Nigeria's immediate post independence became dangerously an ethno-regional affair and encouraged parochialism (Cronje 1972:11).

Suzanne Cronje was quite realistic in the causation of the Nigerian Civil War. She placed the remote causes and indeed the primary casual variable in the economic interests of the British which were protected by keeping the North backward and at the same time maintaining its preponderant size politically to make Nigeria weak for British

continuous economic dominance and exploitation. Nigeria as an oil province was driven home in British consciousness which Cronje said was a product of the aftermath of the 1956 British invasion of Suez Canal resulting in the Arab oil boycott which seriously hit Britain as such Nigeria was considered as an alternative source of oil supply. Thus the search for substitute for Middle East oil had proved Nigeria's potential which had most of its oil at first in the Eastern Region. By giving Lagos greater control over oil revenues and by securing Northern Nigeria's leadership at the Federal centre, Britain had no cause to fear the "radical" political tendencies expressed by leading Eastern Nigerian politicians. The fear that "the Ibos might get away with the oil" was openly expressed in British circles (Cronje 1972:10). This fear was not restricted to the British, the Sardauna was quoted as saying that, "Since the discovery of oil in the East, the NCNC has been getting steadily colder in its relations with other parts of Nigeria" (Diamond 1988:218 cited West Africa 2 January 1965:3). One can therefore, deduce a logical linkage between crude oil in Nigeria, a strong North and British imperialism on the one hand and weaker Nigeria and the sustenance of British economic interest on the other. This linkage between oil and British imperialism equally brought out the rivalries between British and French imperialism in the Nigerian Civil War. Hence the continued Anglo–French rivalry in Africa as Charles de Gaulle in his historical judgment felt that the French were cheated by the British in the scramble for Africa (Cronje 1972:198). In France as well as in Britain, big business was aware of Nigeria's potential and the place of crude oil in this imperialist consciousness was not in doubt. Thus the Ojukwu-Rotschild deal though suspect had meaning in the intra-imperialist struggle (Cronje 1972: 201-2).

John de St. Jorre (1977) said that most of the junior officers that took part in the January 1966 coup were swayed by the persuasive and passionate presentation of facts by the coup leaders that Nigeria had been betrayed by its corrupt politicians. The coup he said succeeded in Kaduna and Ibadan with partial success in Lagos as a result of the operators' failure to secure the Police Headquarters from where Major General Aguiyi- Ironsi mobilised to stage a successful counter against the coup (St Jorre 1977:32). Having crushed the coup, Ironsi took power according to the author on a

crest wave of unprecedented popular support in the South with a more muted but cautiously optimistic acceptance in the North. Less than seven months, later a counter coup with more vengeance had ripped the army and country apart and Ironsi was dead. The crises that greeted Ironsi regime in May 1966 and the counter coup became the litmus test of an army that was once the most proudly Nigerian of all national institutions but became the biggest force of disunity and ethnicity (St. Jorre 1977:51). The author saw the Unification Decree 34 and the abolition of political parties and the banning of politics under Decree 33 which was meant to unify the civil service as the tinder box of the May 1966 riots in the North and the July Northern counter coup. An irrefutable fact which the author stated was that a unitary government by fiat does not necessary unite the people (St Jorre 1977:56). The counter coup of July 29, 1966 proved the foregoing point beyond doubt. We have brought out in clear relief in chapter 3 of this thesis the factors or economic development as the primary variable in any nation's unity project. This was demonstrated without doubt in the unification of Germany, France, Britain, the United States, Russia and Japan. The Unification Decrees triggered off the forces of secession when the North after the July counter coup nursed its secessionist bid which was however, watered down by their fears of possible loss of many economic advantages such as a share in the booming oil revenue and, perhaps access to the sea. The British High Commissioner and the American Ambassador close to the epicenter equally pressed for a pro-federal position which saved the situation (St. Jorre 1977: 84). The author felt that the combined affect of the May 19,1966 riots, the Counter Coup of July 29,1966 and the September massacre of the Ibos were not enough to instigate secession but for the well packaged pervasive propaganda reinforcing fears of mass killing led to the point of no return (St. Jorre 19977:114).

The author like Suzanne Cronje saw the connection between the Nigerian Civil War and oil. The North had to shelve its secessionist bid because of economic reasons one of which was oil. As such the politics of oil between the Northern controlled government in Lagos/oil companies on the one hand and the Biafran government /oil companies on the other fuelled the crisis. John de St. Jorre said that the British government came into

the picture because rightly or wrongly with both sides seeing her as the power behind Shell and British Petroleum (Shell/B.P) with its 49 % share holding in B.P, the British Government could hardly not be involved. Thus Britain had strategic interest in Nigeria's excellent, almost sulphur-free crude oil which met ten percent of her needs. With the Suez Canal abruptly closed at the height of the Six-Day War in the Middle East, increased the importance of the Nigerian source. Like Suzanne Cronje, the author saw the royalty issue which affected Shell/BP and the secessionist Biafra as having equally affected SAFRAP, the French State owned oil company operating in Nigerian with fields at both sides of the Nigerian Civil War. Like Shell /B.P, it was equally under pressure in the early stages of the Civil War to pay royalties to Enugu but had managed to employ delaying tactics until its main producing fields were over-run by Federal Forces. Once again like Suzanne Cronje, de St. Jorre mentioned the Rotschild story and the purported sale of Biafra's oil and other minerals to the Rotschild bank of Paris for six million pounds. At the time, it was generally accepted that the accusation but not the evidence, was well founded (St. Jorre 1977:214).

Wayne Nafziger took the economic approach to situate the political instability in Nigeria that heralded the Coup and Counter Coup and the Civil War. The author traced the Nigerian Civil War to the colonial interference in the internal political and economic dynamics which affected intra-national boundaries, the social structure and the resource allocation within them which contributed to Nigeria's post-colonial instability. This was reflected in the uneven-penetration of Nigerian by British colonialism which worked favourably for British imperialism's divide-and-rule strategy (Nafziger 1983:30). This agrees with Mahmood Mamdani (1983) who said that colonial economic and political reforms were done in the 1940s and 1950s by the British to push the national question, i.e. issues of national integration into the background while raising the banner of the nationality question or issues that divided the people into the foreground. In raising the issues of the nationality question or ethnicity into the front burner, the aspiring comprador in the post-colonial state set the people against each other and hid the actual enemy from them. Unlike militant nationalists, they did not even point out the agents of colonialism. Instead of pointing at the repressive colonial army, they talked of

Northerners' as the enemy; instead of indicating colonial chiefs as the problem, they pointed at the Baganda as the enemy; instead of singling out compradors, they defined 'Asians' as the enemy. They divided the people and set them against one another, and the colonialists came in and played referee again (Mamdani:1983:20-1). Thus Nafziger observed that from 1957 to 1960, each of the major political parties in Nigeria played leading roles in regional unification, mobilising the socio-economic elite and each achieving security and hegemony in their respective regions only (Nafziger 1983: 35). In the foregoing respect, therefore, the nationality question or ethnicity assumed a deadly dimension as against the national question. In other words, the issues of national unity gave way to selectionalism and this was transformed into a prominent or important contradiction.

The crisis further intensified when the sectionalist struggles assume more political dimension with the census crisis of 1962/3 which shifted population concentration to the South which alarmed the Northern dominant class and its ruling political party. This was quickly followed by the 1964 Federal Election crisis, the 1965 West Regional Election crisis all rigged by the dominant NPC leading to precipitate crises that resulted in the January 15,1966 coup. Thus Nigeria became polarised (Nafziger1983:39-42). He said that the fear of Ibo hegemony after the January 1966 coup though suppressed, came more into the open because of Decree 33 and 34 which abolished the Federal structure and imposed a unified civil service. Thus the demonstrations held by the students of Ahmadu Bello University who were those who stood to gain from virtually guaranteed high-level positions in the regional government, and the civil servants in the North who were actually the most affected in the stress from the economic competition demonstrated against Decrees 33 and 34. These struggles were transmitted into the army and had politicised its officers' corps. The impetus of these protests gave vent to the unrest of the marginal urban groups who were symbiotically tied to the Native Authorities and NPC politicians dislodged from power by the January 15 coup who spearheaded the 29-30 May riots in which hundreds of Ibos were killed and much of their property destroyed (Nafziger 1983: 42-3).

Nafziger also saw the linkages between the Nigerian crises and the decline of commerce in the 1950s as a product of Nigeria's economic dependence. He saw the Nigerian economy as based on foreign interests, piloted by foreign companies and hence the emergent comprador classes who profited from the linkages were just mere intermediaries to foreign interests (Nafziger 1983:52-58). Thus Nigeria's unity as encouraged by imperialism of Britain and the United States was merely to enhance her trading post status and not for structural, scientific and industrial transformation which are the bedrock for national unity. In this respect, therefore, Nafziger said, "British foreign policy consistently supported an economically integrated Nigerian federation open to international trade and investment (Nafziger1983:65). The author stressed that the immediate post-July 29, 1966 events in which the British High Commissioner to Nigeria and the American Ambassador played key roles in stressing Nigerian unity perhaps of their choice was a case in point. He cited Yakubu Gowon's remark about the duo who said, "They told me that not another dime in foreign assistance would come to Nigeria if the regions separated" (Stremlau 1977:35 cited by Nafziger 1983:65). Implicit in the authors presentation are the difference in Nigeria's unity as expressed by agents of imperialism and Nigerians themselves. One was for exploitation and the other for the resolution of the *national question*. Nafziger saw the oil connection as of much importance to Britain in the wake of the Nigerian Civil War especially in the aftermath of the disruption of supplies from West Asia resulting from the oil embargo placed on the West after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Thus the naval invasion of Bonny by Nigeria in July 1967 which he said was aided by the British. This victory convinced the British government and Shell-B.P that their interest lay with the Federal Government (Nafziger 1983:66-7). As such Nafziger (1983:3) was right when he said: that the economic factors including the international economic context need to be considered in the dynamics resulting in the Nigerian Civil War.

The non-inclusion of economic dimensions of wars in general and Civil Wars in particular would bring out a very fuzzy analysis of such wars. The fact that combatants use ideological cover to express their positions would not exclude the class and economic dimensions or the materialist interpretations of wars and indeed Civil Wars.

According to Okoye (1979:129) manipulation through propaganda is the in-thing in war. Volkogonov (1987.8) said that "…those armed conflicts that erupt in developing countries or between them as a result of tribal (sic) divisions or border disputes are caused by after-effects of colonialism, imperialist instigation and the influence of Western multinational corporations which seek to preserve their markets etc. Therefore as Marxism has long since revealed, the exploiter system which, for economic reasons, has never hesitated to use force for attaining its political goals, is the sole source of war." Volkogonov (1987:17) further emphasised:

> The exploiter classes which strove for unlimited enrichment "legitimised" the war profession'- that is, made organised armed violence an integral part of their policy –as one of the means of attaining this goal. Thus the appearance of the antagonistic class society gave rise to its permanent companion. All war without exception has been caused by socio-economic reasons, deeply rooted in exploiter society.

Randall and Theobald (1985:50) saw the economy and class dimensions as the fundamental to the explanation and understanding of the causes of the Nigerian Civil War. In their view, limiting explanations of the Civil War to ethnic irredentism is distortive and detrimental to the explanations of the causes of the Civil War. In their opinion such distortions and obscurantism can be viewed from two ways. The authors noted that in the first place the distortion or obscurantism occur because those who propel the ethnic thesis "…would not discuss the strong relationship between the regionalisation of Nigeria and the exigencies of the colonial economy. A brief acquaintance with the historical emergence of the state of Nigeria readily indicates that the nature of colonial penetration in that part of West Africa was such as to create series of economic enclaves linked not to each other but to Europe... In this way a low level of economic integration worked to compartmentalise the ethnic groups who came to compose the independent state of Nigeria. Accordingly the unequal modernisation …(seen) as the cause of subsequent communal conflicts was rather a symptom of the structure of the colonial economy. The second way in which the economic dimension is neglected can be seen in the tendency to view the Biafran debacle almost entirely through the ethnic lens.

Randall and Theobald though only mentioned the political economy and Nigerian class structure as the primary causal variables in the passing, they hit the nail at the head. They rejected the primacy of ethnicity, primordial or geo-ethnic variables as the primary causal variables but situated their analysis on the nature of the colonial political economy and the class character as the issues to be focused on in the Nigerian Civil War. Wayne Nafziger equally picked on the economic causation of the Nigerian Civil War. His only weakness is that he did not evolve a rigorous class analysis but he touched on the economic disparity between the regions and the role of the interplay between the local economy and the international dimension, the inter-regional elite struggles as they generate crisis and political instability are however informative and very useful in our analysis. Suzanne Cronje's pseudo-political economy approach, which also informed the position of John de St. Jorre touching on the economic interests of imperialist Britain and France gave us some inkling on the dynamics of the economy in the Nigeria crisis and indeed the Civil War. All the local Nigerian authors on the Civil War were not focused at all on political economy. The much they had done is on the economics of the prosecution of the Civil War. Momoh (ed.) (2000: 194:5) only touched on the contribution to the war and its financial costs which was estimated at $230.8m in local currency and $70.8m in foreign exchange. The issue of crude oil, the Western World interest on oil and Shell –B.P agreement with Odumegwu Ojukwu on royalties which was not honoured was mentioned in the passing without any analysis. This Army publication one expects should capture the indepth analysis of the primary causes of the Nigerian crises that resulted in the Civil War but like most, if not all Nigerian authors of the Civil War, it hammered only on secondary causes which have been brought up or transformed into prominent causes.

Momoh ed (2000:7) said that the trend towards conflict, prior to war, was not only a Nigerian phenomenon, it was continental, a problem prevalent in most of independent Africa. However, the Army publication did not tell us the real origin of the crisis in Nigeria that resulted in the Civil War and indeed that of Africa that has created political instabilities in the continent since decolonisation in the 1960s. The fact that a

key military publication edited by Major General H.B Momoh should paper over the primary causal variables of the economic structure and class structure and for a period of thirty years after the war, the focus of analysis still remains at the level of geo-ethnic model is indeed a tragedy for national consciousness. It proves Nwankwo (1987:23) right when he said that "… in most cases, the military … demonstrated a poor understanding of the African condition… ignoring the structural contradictions and the crisis of hegemony which promote upheavals …thereby prompting military coups." The Nigerian Army publication saw a number of problems as having dented the Nigerian unity project from the period of colonial rule. It saw the imbalances in the Nigerian federation and the Nigerian military and the incursion of politics into the military as some of the key seeds of discord. This Army publication edited by Momoh (2000:20-1) saw the Nigerian crises as having its historical origin in the colonial past as the colonial masters rather, accentuated the simmering centripetal forces … in line with its policy of divide-and-rule in order to render the nascent state incapable of challenging its exploitation. Thus before independence the seeds of regional and ethnic rivalries had been sown bringing to bear on the nascent Nigerian immediate post-independence state much bitterness, communal inter-party, inter-ethnic and electoral struggles which were key features of immediate post-colonial Nigeria's First Republic. Momoh (ed.) (2000:14) presented a spurious class analysis stating that mostly the Igbos in the North were seen as upper class based on status and ethnicity and the lower class mainly Northerners. The publication noted, "This presented a situation of not only potential ethnic conflict but also class conflict". One finds to his chagrin dismay any concrete analysis anywhere in this book of almost a thousand pages a confirmation of the Igbos as the higher class in the North and Northerners as the lower class. This tells about the weaknesses of citizenship education in the military in particular and the nation in general.

Ben Gbulie (1981) said that their coup was a product of the political situation of the country in the immediate post-independence Nigeria. He observed that as a result of the decadence, political turbulence and economic brigandage that held the nation to ransom, he and his colleagues had to step in to save the nation from imminent

collapse (Gbulie 1981:13). The author did not hide his dislike for some military officers one of which he considered inept, another he said carried himself with unwarranted import and yet another he considered indolent and a tribalist (Gbulie 1981:53). He did not equally hide his careerist disposition and complained about how some officers recorded very quick promotions, particularly officers from Northern Nigeria. Thus he complained about the meteoric rise of a certain officer from the North. The politicisation of the military was not, however, peculiar to the North, the East then equally benefited as the first Nigerian Commander of the Army rose rapidly from Lieutenant Colonel to the rank of a Major General from 1961 to 1964 when he took over command from the British Commander of the Nigerian Army. Ben Gbullie's careerism led him and his co-plotters to resort to anarchism hence the killings of prominent military officers and politicians in the North and Western Region which undermined their so-called revolution. Despite the weakness of the book in the author's aclaimed revolution, it is a material that can aid the understanding of the mind set of the January 15, 1966 coup plotters which was principally a careerist coup with the tinge of revolutionary romanticism.

Major Adewale Ademoyega, was one of the key actors of the January 15 1966 coup. On the reason for the coup Ademoyega (1981:21) argues that they struck because the national leadership under Abubakar Tafawa Balewa government was on the verge of collapse. As such, he was of the view that the Nigerian Army was in a better position to salvage the situation since it was the only institution still with some traces of national focus in the country. As to when the idea of salvaging the country from the precipice did come to their mind, he said that 1961, the year Nzeogwu, Ifeajuna and himself met was the year of their decision to salvage Nigeria from the decadence (Ademoyega 1981:55). The author said they had intended to put in place a socialist government and form a broad based administration after their release of Obafemi Awolowo who was jailed by the ruling Balewa Government at the time (Ademoyega 1981:33) . He did not hesitate to point out some of his colleagues who did not carry out the task assigned to them during the coup because of ethnic sentiments leading to the failure of the coup in Lagos and its non-execution in the East (Ademoyega

1981:100-1). One of the reasons Ademoyega (1981:103) adduced to have aided the collapse of their revolution was the thick mat of reaction in the Nigerian Army at the time.

Alexander Madiebo recorded in details the prosecution of the Nigerian Civil War from the beginning to its end. The much details in his account were because the author was the Commander of Biafra's 51 Brigade that was marked for the defence of the Biafra's Northern front from Nsukka to Ogoja. Later, he became the Commander of the Biafran Army from 1967-1970 after Brigadier Hillary Njoku was removed in September 1967 as Biafra Army Commander. On the issue leading to the January 15,1966 Coup, the author stressed some historical view that the circumstances that brought about modern Nigeria laced by diverse ethnic groups indicates that it was hardly a united nation and the various ethnic groups were yet to find basis for true unity. The British, however, decided to keep her together for the colonial master's economic interests concentrated mostly in the South which was politically unreliable by British imperialist judgment (Madiebo 1980:3). Deducing from the foregoing the author said that at independence in 1960, Nigeria became a country with questionable characters. Soon afterwards he said, the battle for the consolidation of both political and military control by a section of Nigeria over the rest of the federation began with increased vigour. It was this struggle for the control of the polity based on sectional interests and those of the former colonial masters that resulted in the coup, counter coup and the Civil War ((Madiebo 1980:4).

The author showed how he and other military officers helped to crush the January 15, coup and then helped to install Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi to power (Madiebo 1980:26). In perusing this section, one wonders why Madiebo should call the coup a revolution considering his part in aborting it. Madiebo said that Ironsi government was one formed in a compromise between Ironsi and Nzeogwu on the one hand and the politicians on the other. As a result he argues, the regime "… tried to placate those who sought to destroy it and took no action on various substantiated reports available to it concerning plans to overthrow it. The author stressed that this lack of political

foresight by Ironsi gave the Northern civil servants and politicians the leeway on a slow, deliberate and systematic plot to overthrow the regime (Madiebo 1980:29) In this respect, therefore, Nigerians were not taken by surprise when the counter coup took place on the 29th of July, 1966 terminating the tenure of that regime.

The most interesting aspect of Alexander Madiebo's publication is the section on strategy and tactics adopted by the Biafra Army during the Civil War. The author showed quite clearly how the Biafran Army that was poorly equipped was able to contain the Federal Armed Forces that had more sophisticated weapons. He gave a very vivid and detailed account of each stage of the war from the first shots that were fired at the Ogoja border, the Nsukka area, the counter attack by Biafra and so on. Madiebo in terms of the details of the war and in terms of what Mao Tsetung calls a general, he was truly one and was indeed more equal than others. Mao (1972:8-9) said "Any war situation which acquires a comprehensive consideration of its various aspects and stages forms a war situation as a whole. The task of strategy is to study those laws for directing a war that govern a war situation as a whole. The task of the science of campaigns and the science of tactics is to study those laws for directing a war that govern a partial war situation and war situation as whole." The author however states that " … the most important reason (Biafra) lost the war apart from the question of foreign support for Nigeria, was the existence of crisis of confidence in Biafra throughout the war. This crisis existed within the Army, between the Army and the civilians, between the Army and the government and, indeed between the Biafra Government and some of the foreign supporters" (Madiebo1980:379). Above all the foregoing combined was the greatest weapon that brought about the collapse of Biafra much more than the much talked about Federal might. Like most Nigerian writers and also participants in the war, the author was highly partisan but this did not demean the import of his publication which however did not apply the political economy approach.

Olusegun Obasanjo authored two books on the war and events leading to the war. While the first book he published in 1980, was meant to give account of his stewardship as a Divisional Commander, his second book published in 1987 was to give account of his friend who is so often vilified as a villain but who Obasanjo had to put things about him in the right perspective. In his first publication, Obasanjo gave account of his stewardship after the reorganisation of the 3 Marine Commando Division in 1969 during the lull in the war to January 1970 when the Civil War came to an end. It was not an understatement that the Division played a very important role in bringing the secession to an end and thus wining the war after the capture of the famous Uli-Ihiala airfield on January 10,1970. Obasanjo, however, began with a brief background on the political situation which heralded the Civil War. He went further to discuss other issues such as the military operations undertaken by the Federal Forces against the Secessionist Forces, the change of command and reorganisation of the various Divisions, the defeat and surrender of the Biafra Army and foreign attitudes and involvements in the Civil War.

In terms of his stewardship, Olusegun Obasanjo gave a good account of himself and his command of 3 Marine Commando Division. The book has shortcomings in its methodological approach seeing the primacy of ethnicity as the causal variable of the Nigerian political conflict of that time. We have accepted Marx and Engels position that "… if events and series of events are judged by current history it will never be possible to go back to the ultimate economic causes". This would reduce the authenticity of such analysts that base their analysis on situations outside economic causes. In the process this exercise in obscurantism and agnosticism disregarding the underlying historical forces which are both economic and class forces place Obasanjo's contributions at the secondary levels of analysis. The author came in clear focus of the genre he belongs to in his first publication (1980:144) in which he believes in the primacy of ethnicity.

On a very close examination of Obasanjo's position on the primacy of ethnicity or what he calls tribalism (sic), one is surprised to see him inadvertently pushing also the

primacy of class. He has clearly posited that, "… the Nigerian intellectuals and elite are the worst peddlers of tribalism (sic) …for their personal aggrandisement. In order to gain power and prosperity, the Nigerian elite and politicians played politics of division and patronage and ultimately destruction". This confusion, fuzziness and vacillation in analysis is not restricted to Obasanjo alone, but his comprador/landed class and their philosophers who distort national consciousness with wrong tools or at best secondary tools of analysis. As a result the primacy of class analysis based on historical materialism is vehemently denied in their analysis of the crises that led to the Nigerian Civil War and sustained it while it lasted. What Oyovbaire (1983:239) would call the "Tyranny of Borrowed Paradigms" must have been responsible for the lack of identification of the primary causal variables which stimulated other intervening variables which led to the Civil War. This must have been the result of the nature of political studies in the former colonial territories which are derived from the methodological tools of social anthropology "based on the study of primitive societies stagnating in primitive isolation" which have greatly influenced most scholars of the conservative tradition in the Nigerian Civil War studies.

In his second book , Obasanjo detailed his account of what he knew of his friend right from the primary school to the time he joined the Nigerian Regiment of West African Frontier Force (Obasanjo 1987:27).He related his experiences with Nzeogwu when they were both in the Congo-Leopoldville that later became Zaire and now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on peace-keeping operation after law and order had broken down in that country immediately after her independence. In the Congo the young idealists focused on African problems which hindered continental progress with emphasis on Nigeria, their country of origin. They were both dissatisfied with the place of the Blackman in the global power relations. The young officers, thus, came to the conclusion that the Blackman must "… struggle and indeed fight to break the shackles of oppression and exploitation, and lift himself above the sub-human level he had been placed for so long." The author thus presented himself and his friend Nzeogwu as having developed a sense of nationalism in their return from the Congo. In essence, this sense of nationalism was put into play, in the January, 15

1966 coup. Thus the author is strongly of the view that Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu was above ethnic chauvinism and that the coup he led was carried out purely to sanitise the Nigerian polity that was rotten and needed some level-headed persons to rescue it (Obasanjo 1987:79). This publication by Olusegun Obasanjo generated a lot of criticisms from some eminent persons in the North, who though benefited indirectly from Nzeogwu's coup still look at late Nzeogwu as a villain rather than a hero. However, the author because of his bent on non-class approach could not get at the root of the forces that raised Nzeogwu, put him in bad light in order to hang him.

Skyne R. Uku in her publication (1978) cited W.E.B. Dubois that, "The idea of one Africa … belongs to the twentieth century and stems naturally from the West Indies and the United States… Here various groups of Africans, quite separate in origin, became so united in experience and so exposed to the impact of a new culture that they began to think of Africa as one idea and one land (Dubois 1922:7cited by Uku 1978:1). The author saw this ideal of one idea and one land hitting the rock with the emergence at independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s of the splinter groups of Casablanca, the Brazzaville and the Monrovia groups which began the process of splintering the African post-independence states (Uku 1978:5-6). The author noted that the Nigerian situation widened the fissures within the African unity movement with the result that three distinct groups emerged. These three groups she identified as follows: 1) Those African States that believed in the sanctity of the territorial integrity of states and therefore believed in the non-violability of African States' territorial integrity; 2) those who were sympathetic towards the secessionist cause; and 3) finally those that were neutral (Uku 1987:27-8). The fissures that occurred in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was seen as a product of British and French imperialist pressures in the eyes of Julius Nyerere who said over the OAU failure in the Nigerian crises that "… France and Britain have more power in OAU than the whole of Africa put together." He added that it was really "… up to Africa to decide whether to become truly independent or remain colonies of France and Britain" (Davidson 1967:184 cited by Uku 1978:37).

On the causes of the Civil War, Uku (1978:13) said the primary causal variable is linguistic and cultural division which she said are generally referred to by Africans as 'tribalism" (sic) which concept she said is not quite precise. She also said that one of the causes of the Civil War though not the basic cause was British colonial rule which accentuated group differences between the conservative North and a non-conservative South. As such political issues were not polarised around economic issues hence economic conflicts tended to be simply those of geo-ethnic rivalry (Uku 1978:15-17). Thus the political parties in pre-Civil War Nigeria were representative of the dominant ethnic groups in each of the regions. The non-ideological character of Nigerian political parties contributed to the growth of corruption. The author said that it was not reaction against corruption that caused the Civil War but disenchantment with political nepotism which she saw as the primary cause of the January 15, 1966 coup de etat. She also saw the 1962 Western Regional crises leading to Awolowo's detention, the census crisis of 1962/63, the 1964 Federal electoral crisis and the 1965 Western Regional electoral crises as the causes of the Civil War (Uku 1978:18-20).

The author said the British interest may have dictated putting her cards on the side of Lagos as the surer bet. She put total British investment in Nigeria and Biafra as estimated to be about $720 million. The author said that a greater part of this investment was in Biafra, it appeared that to maintain British interest, Britain made sure that Nigerians win with British help. The British equally had to move behind Lagos because of the Soviet, Egyptians and Czechs help for Nigerian war efforts (Uku 1978:28). She highlighted the French major economic interest in the Eastern Region or Biafra as mainly in oil. The interest of France in the region began in 1962 when the French company entered oil explorations in the area with six exploration permits. The French company found oil on dry land which was much cheaper to exploit. Nigerian oil had a peculiar value to the French apart from all Western countries who shared a desire to have sources of crude oil outside the Arab world. It had been noted that Algerian crude oil tended to be light, while Nigeria's was both heavier and comparatively sulphur-free (Uku 1978:31-32). It was therefore clear that crude oil was at the bottom of both the British and French support for either sides of the Nigerian-

Biafran War.

Another writer on the Nigerian Civil War whose work will be of relevance is James Oluleye who authored, his publication in 1985. The author said that though the nationalist leaders could be regarded as the custodians of the First Republic that no sooner was independence contemplated that the leadership turned politics into tribal (sic) politics (Oluleye 1985:26). He said that it was the rivalries ocassioned by the inter-ethnic struggles for power by these sectional leaders, as it were, that paved the way for the January 15, 1966 coup led by Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. The author said that these crises of ethnicity and ethnic politics which he called tribal politics cleared the stage for the coup and counter coup of 1966. He said like rehearsals in the military range, everything having been cleared as per declaration on a range "all clear", the plotters on 15 January, 1966 sprang by pulling the trigger in Lagos, Ibadan and Kaduna but Enugu was spared through fickleness and conspiracy (Oluleye1985: 27). James J. Oluleye thus falls within those who view the coup and indeed the crises that preceded it as product of ethnic or tribal chauvinism. The author said that the post-July counter coup plans by a section of the Northern elements was to eliminate the Yoruba in the North which conspiracy was averted by a report made to the then military governor of the North, Hassan Usman Katsina on the said secret plan on the Yorubas (Oluleye 1985:45). On the Civil War, the author highlighted the problems as indiscipline by field commanders, dubious ways of purchasing weapons and indecisions of Yakubu Gowon on war issues.

Two publications with the *Journal of Events* were made in 1968 by the Biafra War time leader Odumegwu Ojukwu. He also authored *Because I am Involved* in 1989 after his return to Nigeria from exile. The first two books were published during the critical period of the Civil War appealing to the emotions of the Biafran people and to win the sympathy of the outside world. Specifically the two books dealt with various issues including the cause of the Nigerian Civil War, the search for peace, the importance of the Biafra struggles to the Blackman, relief and starvation, fear of

genocide and so on. On the importance of the Biafran struggle, Ojukwu succinctly discussed its meaning and import, paying attention to the wider issues at stake and the character and structure of the new society Biafrans were determined and committed to build (Ojukwu 1986: 5-20;1969:1-5). He accused Nigeria and her foreign sponsors of falsification of facts through propaganda thus beclouding the real issues which caused and determined the cause and character of their struggle. He went on to stress that the Biafran struggle has far reaching significance for the Blackman the world over (Ojukwu 1965:15). The issues of genocide dominated the two books with a gory revelation of over 50,000 Biafrans slaughtered in 1966 alone like cattles. In the war he opined that a lot more were killed in addition to those rendered ineffective by the war. Thus Ojukwu presented the war as a genocide war.

In his post civil war publication Ojukwu affirmed his long-held view of a peaceful and united Nigeria. He emphasised that Nigeria as a political entity has suffered pervasive disunity that has characterised all government actions since independence in 1960. As such he urged Nigerians to shun deceit and work hard towards the unity and progress of Nigeria. The author did not hesitate to blame the post-independence Nigerian leader for failing to anchor Nigeria's safely ashore despite their achievements of winning political independence for Nigerians (Ojukwu 1989:1-5). The author at the end of this book examined various issues including the Civil War and the leadership question and suggested the type of leaders that Nigeria needs. For solution to Nigerian problems, the author recommended the "Ahiara Declaration" to the prevailing Nigerian socio-economic predicaments (Ojukwu 1989:166).

In his publication, Joe Achuzia said that when Yakubu Gowon stated that the "basis of unity in Nigerian was not there" after the counter coup of July 29, 1966, there seems to be veracity in that statement. Though he felt that the statement was premature with the collapse of the Ad hoc Committee and their Aburi Conference in Ghana, no doubt was left in the mind that the regions as they were then had come to the end of the road. From then on he said rapid political and administrative changes started taking

place in the form of ethnic political pressure groups which were tagged leaders of thought. This led to the events of May 1967, being one of the Ika Ibo delegations resulting in the emergence of Biafra (Achuzia 1986:1). The author said at the time of the declaration of Biafra the secessionist state was ill prepared for war to ward off or repulse any military aggression. He said that all the secessionist republic could boast of was the military headquarters which was only a battalion strength and that two-third of officers were not prepared psychologically for infantry combat duties (Achuzia 1986:4). The author revealed how his company based at Port Harcourt had to produce anti-personnel mines of various sizes and shapes, anti-tank mines, grenades etc and mortar barrels for the Biafran military (Achuzia 1986: 7-8). The Biafran Mid-West invasion drew Achuzia almost into commission in the Biafran Army which was not realised a night before. However, he was to get involved in the Mid-West operations with his militia after events started turning soured for the Biafran 11 Division when he was first sent as intelligence officer although not yet commissioned (Achuzia 1986:13-16). The author in the cause of the rout of Biafra from Mid-West said he blow up the Onitsha end of the Niger Bridge. He told of his successes against the Nigerian Second Diviosn in its operations to take Onitsha and how he destroyed that Division with the Biafran forces under his command (Achuzia 1986:40&60).

Another author on the Civil War was Joe N. Garba who wrote a counter view to debunk some of the opinions expressed by Alexander Madiebo in his publication. Garba covers the role played by ethnic minorities in keeping Nigeria together. Particularly, he emphasised the numerical superiority of the ethnic minorities' qualities. The author does not spare Madiebo on his assertion that promotion rules in the Nigerian Army were bent by Northern political elements to suit and accommodate educationally inferior officers from the North. He actually has presented another view of issues leading to the January 15, 1966 Coup and the Coup d'etat.

Mohammed Chris Alli in his book began his narrative with his transition from the young Nigerian Air Force to the Nigerian Army and his commission into the latter

in 1967 after attending a Short Service Commission Course 2 as a Second Lieutenant (Alli 2001: 36-8). The author had noted and rejected the patterns of parochialism that highlighted the rivalries between the regions over the centre in which the regions and indeed the dominant ethnic groups were seeking to create their respective hegemonies and supremacy over the nation's superstructure. Alli asserted that his generation born after the Second World War perfected the ethnic manipulations, distrust, disorder and insecurity by which the elite are able to whip up tribal cleavages to cover up monumental corruption and dismal incompetence. The author said this was to extend from the military to the larger society (Alli 2001:39). We rather see the extension of ethnicity from the larger society to the military after the coup and counter coup of 1966 which brought these cleavages to the foreground and tore the military down the middle. The factionalisation of society the author saw as having plagued the military hence he opined that the January 15, 1966 Coup was a coup conceived with a Southern mentality and as a product of Southern fears of domination by the North. He thus saw the July 29,1966 Counter Coup as strictly regional and a Northern martial intervention designed to restore Northern spirit, meet Northern interests and to redress the killings of the January 1966 Coup. He opined that the North had no apologies to make for the coup and the subsequent genocide that followed (Alli 2001:213).

However, the young Alli now an officer, said he had some sympathies for Biafra because of the pogrom against the Ibos which went against his moral and religious tenets. During his cadet training, Mid-West was invaded and occupied by the secessionist forces. At the end of his officer cadet training, the Biafran Forces had pulled out of the area because of the relentless and lightening Federal Forces offensives that tailed out into the disastrous Asaba-Onitsha crossing. The young Mohammed Chris Alli was ushered into the Second Division and the war at this stage. He was to be discouraged about the philosophy behind the Federal side after the massacre of the Ibos by 2 Division at Asaba which he said seemed to confirm the genocide against the Ibos by the Nigerian Federal Government. He said "it seemed like a time of passage of passion when ordinary humans descended to the level of

savages, yet they proffered and proposed honourable intentions. In agony, I contemplated desertion even as a second lieutenant with all its unsavoury imponderables. Just about this time, the talk of foreign observers to monitor the conduct of Federal operations rent the nation's conscience apart. It was the arrival of these observers, followed by the issuance of a code of conduct to Federal Forces, that helped to restore my faith in the Federal cause" (Alli 2001:40-1).

Without a deep foray into the national question, the author raised the issue saying that the problem of the nation is the problem of the hegemonic predominance of the larger regional ethnic groups over each region and indeed over the national polity. He said that their easy access to wealth of the minority areas by the conspiracies of the three major ethnic groups has inhibited the natural vibrant enterprise and industry of the people (Alli 2001:158-9). Thus the author traced the derivation principles, which was up to 1963 on the basis of 50 percent to the areas of derivation and 50 percent to the distributive pool. The author picking on internal oppressive relations or internal colonialism without saying so, pointed out how Aboyode Technical Committee of 1977 and Okigbo's Commission of 1979 headed by both economists from the two of the three major ethnic groups recommended the abolition of the derivation principle to fleece the minority oil producing areas (Alli 2001:63). He stressed that the truth of the matter is that the entity called Nigeria was conceived, constructed, cemented and held together by force, threat of force, deceit and subterfuge for the ultimate benefit of the Hausa /Fulani, the Yoruba and Ndigbo, in that arithmetical progression.

Mohammed Chris Alli cited former Inspector General of Police, Alhaji Mohammadu Gambo, and a Northern front-liner who warned that should the status quo be restructured, it will be war. He said the status quo has been maintained so far because the successive big three government have perpetuated this greed and deceit since the end of the Civil War. The war he said, afforded Gowon /Awolowo to appropriate all resources in Nigeria to the centre to have means to prosecute the war. Since then, the fortune of oil states and the derivation principle have been replaced by a revenue structure that has schemed out the oil producing states from the decision

making processes and fora on matters relating to oil revenue dispensation. While the legislature is filled with overwhelming number of the respective big three legislators, the minorities who are custodians of national wealth are crowded out from having a say and a hearing (Alli 2001:165-6). Thus Mohammed Chris Alli although in a somewhat changed form was able to identify the forms and continuity of the material politics of ethnic domination, a carry over from the First Republic in the form of the hegemonic dominance of the three major ethnic groups against interests of the minority oil producing areas.

Isaac Adaaka Boro's book edited by Tony Tebekoemi captures the dynamics of the political decay and elite decomposition in which Nigeria found itself immediately after flag independence. The elite oppressive relations which was a fall out from the majority ethnic dominance of regional politics captures the Eastern regional setting in the brazen oppression of his Ijaw people by the Ibo dominated Eastern Region (Tebekeomi 1982:2). The fear of Ibo material oppressive relations after the emergence of government made Boro to embark on his secessionist bid when he declared a breakaway Republic of Yenagoa with his Niger Delta Volunteer Service (NDVS) on February 23, 1966. The author said that they were going to demonstrate to the World how they feel about oppression which had manifested in abject poverty of his people despite the fact that their petroleum resource was daily being pumped from their veins and he then urged his people to fight for their freedom (Tebekoemi 1982:6-7). Isaac Boro thus stressed the issue of the *Minority Question* in the N*ational Question*. The author thus demonstrated that the issue of national unity project can only be resolved with a resolution of the issues of the minorities in the asymmetrical power relations in Nigerian preponderant majority ethnic politics based on regional ethnic hegemony.

The Nigerian Army publication edited by H.B Momoh, began by saying that the political circumstances which engendered crises and conflicts had not been lacking in pre-and post-independence Nigeria. The fact remained that only few people

envisaged that Nigeria would so easily drift into Civil War. The author noted that by January 1966, politics in Nigeria whether by design or default had been taken into a dead end. He said that the Coup and Counter Coup of 1966 combined to cause a drift of the nation particularly from 1963 into a state of war and ultimately, the Civil War (Momoh 2000: 3-4). The author remarked that the trend towards crises prior to war was not limited to Nigeria but was an African feature since the end of colonial rule which were exemplified in ethnic, civil strife and military interventions. However, the Nigerian Civil War led to a lot of issues and interests involved such as ethnic, regional, geography and mineral resources, particularly oil (Momoh 2000:7-8).

The Army publication stressed one paramount factor of the 1954 constitution and its resultant impact on imbalances of the emerging Nigeria Federation. Apart from structural imbalances, three other complimentary factors combined to institutionalise crises and division in Nigerian prior to independence and after. These were: conflict of values between the North and South; the colonial policy of separate development and disunity among the regional politicians. This presented a situation of not only of potential ethic conflict but also class conflict (Momoh 2000:13-14). Such important publication as this only mentioned class if not only in this page but just in the passing. This is a pointer to a crisis of received intellectual paradigm that has laced almost all Nigerian analysts of the Civil War. We shall come to this when we will summarise and pigeon-hole the main stream analysts of the Nigerian Civil War.

The edited Army Education work traces the Nigerian crises from ethnic, sectional and regional crises to the Action Group crisis of 1962 resulting in the siding of the faction of Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola by the Tafawa Balewa Government and its coming down heavily on Chief Obafemi Awolowo's faction. This resulted in the arrest, trial and detention of Chief Awolowo on treasonable felony. The census crisis of 1963, the Federal Elections of 1964 and political realignments, the crisis in Western Regional Elections of 1965 and the January Coup of 1966 and July 29, counter coup of 1966 resulted in the intensification of the Nigerian crises (Momoh 2000:16-17). The Political meddling in the Nigerian Army by the various regionalised and indeed sectionalised

politicians was also a case in point. The Nigerian crisis was aggravated by the problem of imbalances in the Nigerian Federal system which equally affected imbalances in the military. The Army publication rightly pointed out that the Nigerian crises had its origin in its colonial antecedent as the British made little or no conscious efforts to weld the disparate, heterogeneous pre-colonial entities into a truly united state. Rather, the colonialist accentuated the simmering centrifugal forces in the emergent new state in line with its policy of divide-and-rule in order to render the nascent state incapable of challenging its exploitation in Nigerian. The publication smarted into this pseudo political economy but would not address it concretely as a historical process foisted on Nigerians by colonial and neo-colonial imperialism. It equally identified the leadership crises resulting from regional and ethnic rivalries which were prevalent in the immediate pre-independence and post-independence Nigeria (Momoh 2000:2 1).

The Army publication saw as the economic dimensions of the war the way the Nigerian Civil War was financed. In Biafra the war was said to have been financed by every body, that is, a pervasive contribution of finance and material needs for the prosecution of the war. However, on the Nigerian side, the war was seen to have been funded largely by the Federal Government. At the beginning of the shoot out, the war was perceived to be between the North and the East as such some rich individuals and the Native Authorities contributed by way of recruitment and some measure of provisions. The Northern Regional Government was initially involved in clandestinely procuring arms but by and large, the emerging scenario changed and the onus fell squarely on the Federal Government. The cost of the war was said to have been $230.8m in local currency and $70.8m in foreign exchange on the side of the Nigerian Government. This figure is difficult to accept given the quantum of weapons and ammunition expended by the Federal Government which suggested a higher expenditure said the Army publication (Momoh 2000:174). An aspect of the war that has been rarely mentioned is corruption by the field commanders on both sides of the war. As characteristic of the war at the initial stage, the West was said by the author to be confused based on the moral issue of the war and the place of crude

oil. However, the West gradually woke up from its indecision and placed its tacit support on the side of the Nigerian Federal Government (Momoh 2000:174-5).

Another author on the Civil War was Mainasara who wrote in a critique or response to Alexander Madiebo, Ben Gbulie and Adewale Ademoyega's works on the Civil War. In his book he said that the aim of the coup of January 15,1966 was not to redeem the country *per se*, but to stop a section of the country, particularly the North from the governance of the country (Mainasara 1982:9). He accused Madiebo of false assertion that the North had staffed a military hospital with half baked doctors locally trained in preference for well trained doctors from the South. He said that there were only three or four doctors from the North who were trained in Kano for six and not three years who proved to be better materials (Mainasara:1982:11). He moved to attack Ben Gbulie and Adewale Ademoyega for their deep-seated and pathological dislike and contempt for the Northerners particularly their colleagues in the Nigerian Army. It was Alexander Madiebo whom the author threw most of his punches on. He said that his aim of writing the small book was to counter the insinuations and misrepresentations evident in the publications by the three authors he singled out as targets (Mainasara: 1982: 59).

Another writer on the Nigerian Civil War in his work, examined the effects of the Nigerian Civil War on the people and leaders of Biafra. He emphatically said that the causes of the Nigerian Civil War-nepotism, tribalism (sic) and corruption still exist untainted. He cautioned that if Nigerians will forget the pains of the Civil War, they must not forget the facts of such pains and the circumstances that gave birth to them. The author accused most Nigerian authors on the Civil War as working against national unity as their accounts only seek to justify their roles in the war. Nwankwo said his account was the most comprehensive of all and indeed a true reflection of events during the Civil War (Nwankwo 1972: 11). The author said at the initial stages of the war that there was much enthusiasm by the general public in Biafra in support of the war. However, this enthusiasm gave way to despair as the war dragged on and

as much hardship became pronounced. Under such hardship, decay began to creep into the Biafran society and the Biafran promise began to fade. Corruption crept in as things meant for the public became monopolised by public officials and the well to do or well connected in Biafra. This gloomy situation coupled with the paucity of arms and ammunitions adversely affected the Biafran Army. Thus by 1969, the concept of Biafra and its realisation had lost it focus. He said that despite fundamental innovations in areas of war improvisation, Biafra had lost its content and hence the resultant collapse.

Another writer whose work was not really on the causes of the Nigerian Civil War but on the causes of ethnicity is Okwudiba Nnoli. His work on is a classic and it tells the depth of the material origin of ethnicity in Nigerian. Nnoli (1981:12) said that "…as an element of the superstructure of society, ethnic consciousness can only be of major significance in the social process to the extent that it is congruent with the production relations that form the infrastructure (substructure). Consciousness and productive existence are indeed distinct but they also form a unity. When the two diverge there is false consciousness which, in the long run at least cannot survive any serious confrontation with objective consciousness based on productive existence. Therefore, the task is to confront ethnic conscious with class consciousness." The only major work on *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* is the one we are reviewing. It links its origin to colonialism and its material interest and Nnoli saw ethnicity as an ideological cover for material interest of colonialism and those classes of the enclave economies of the erstwhile regions. He said that ethnicity arose as a result of the urban colonial setting and also as a product of the colonial enclave economies of the various regions of Nigeria (Nnoli 1978:21).

Nnoli (1978:12-13) saw ethnicity as not too critical a variable because it lacks explanatory potency. As such, its potential as a force for transforming the objective material realities of African life is very negligible and indeed this negligible role is unsalutary. He thus stressed in support of the foregoing that, "By diverting attention away from imperialist exploitation and the resultant distortion of African economic and

social structures, ethnicity performs the function of mystification and obscurantism. Consequently it helps to perpetuate imperialism and militate against the imperative of revolutionary struggle by hampering the development of a high level of political consciousness by its victims." Nnoli (1978:22-3) brought out the imbalances in colonial socio-economic development favouring certain socio-linguistic homelands which deepened antipathies between ethic groups. This colonial creation, a product of divide-and-rule and of an exploitative material relations was taken on as useful tool by the emergent African parasitic classes. Nnoli (1978:26-7) said that "… ethnicity served the objective interest of the African petty bourgeoisie and the comprador bourgeoisie reared by colonialism. In their search for crumbs from the colonial production, contending regional factions of these parasitic classes emphasized the exclusion of their counterparts from other regions. Unable historically to increase production because of their parasitic role in the production process, these classes depend on this device of exclusion to increase their benefits from society." In order to cover up these dynamics of imperialism and class formation in the dependent capitalist social formations, those who emphasize ethnicity as the primary causal variable of the Nigerian Civil War are therefore doing a serious damage to our collective social consciousness. This is where the classical contribution of Okwudiba Nnoli is of paramount importance to this project.

Specifically on the Nigerian situation Nnoli (1978:35) saw the colonial urban setting as the dynamics that set in motion the ethnic dilemma. He said the colonial urban setting in Nigeria constituted the cradle of contemporary ethnicity; it was there that what we refer to today as ethnic groups first acquired a common consciousness. He further stressed that it was colonialism that forced the conscious use of concepts such as Yorubaland and the same with Igboland. Thus the colonial and urban origin of ethnicity, a phenomenon which cannot exist unless individuals from different ethic groups are in contact. It is a social and not a biological phenomenon (Nnoli 1978:36). The role which economic complimentarity plays in cross-cutting economic relations in peaceful social interaction and economic transaction is of much importance in inter-group harmonious relations. However, economic exclusiveness leads to strained

relations and intense competition for scarce resources deepens this strained relations (Nnoli 1978:70-1). Thus a disarticulated national economy and economic competition between communal homelands leads to national disunity (Nnoli 1978: 124 -5) which informed the dynamics of the Nigerian First Republic. Nnoli (1978:127) stressed that, "… the unintegrated nature of the colonial economy, meant that the labour force, and even other classes were fragmented along regional lines. Intra–class solidarity was thus made more difficult, the social distance among individuals increased and this social distance became salient along communal lines". The decreasing revenues consequent upon falling commodity prices, with increasing responsibilities generated by regionalisation resulting in the depletion of regional surpluses and the acute problem of deficits on current account led to acute intra-class struggle by the regional dominant comprador bourgeoisie for Federal power (Nnoli 1978:197 -8). Thus Okwudiba Nnoli gave the class background to the Nigerian Civil War which was seen as ethnic by other writers on the war that had not the right tools of analysis.

Another writer of importance to this work is Larry Diamond who began by stating the fact that, "To some extent, the Second Republic failed because the underlying causes of the First Republic's failure were never fully and clearly discerned. These causes were the dimensions of socio-economic structure that were less amenable to revision than the federal structure or the party system". Thus Larry Diamond stated that "…to understand why democratic government repeatedly failed in Nigeria, despite a broad and deeply felt aspiration for it in the country, we must go back to its origins in the waning period of British colonial rule, and its, ill-fated experience in the 1960s. In so doing, we will not only develop a further understanding of the nature of ethnic conflict and the process of conflict polarisation, we will also see that the development of stable democracy in developing nations such as Nigeria depends on much more than the effective management of sub-cultural cleavage. It may also require basic changes in the economy and society and the way these articulate with a rapidly growing state. In directing attention to these structural issues, the failure of the First Republic represents a crucial and profoundly suggestive case for the future of liberal democracy not only in Nigerian, but in many other developing nations as well"

(Diamond 1988:3).

Larry Diamond thus stated that his concern with the study of Nigeria was not simply with liberal democracy but with democratic stability, the persistence and durability of liberal democracy, the likelihood of its enduring over time, particularly through periods of unusual conflict, crisis and strain. He thus hypothesised that, "…the more challenges a system has survived and successfully managed , the more stables it will be, while the more crises and conflicts cumulate over time without successful resolution, the more unstable the system will be. A long record of effective performance, of economic growth and political order, builds a reservoir of legitimacy which enables a regime to endure challenges and crises that might otherwise overwhelm it. Regimes lacking such deep legitimacy depend more precariously on current performance, and are vulnerable to collapse in periods of economic and social distress" (Diamond 1988:4-5). The author had a critical look at the structural functionalist theories which "…see cultural cleavages as a primordial phenomenon which recedes with social, economic modernisation. Industrialisation generates cross cutting economic and class cleavages that diffuse and displace ethnic conflict." He said that "This assumption has been proven unstable by a wealth of recent theory and evidence which demonstrate that socio-economic development and state expansion widens and intensify ethnic identifications and stimulate pervasive competition on the basis of these enlarged cultural identities (Diamond 1988:7-8). The author thus buttressed his position with other authorities that, "Since ethnic conflict is rooted in competition for resources and power rather than conflict over cultural value, ethnicity … is basically a political and not a cultural phenomenon. It has also been interpreted as a class phenomenon, in that dominant social classes may deliberately stimulate and manipulate ethnic consciousness and conflict to mask their class action and advance their class interest (Diamond 1988:8).

The author posited that both Marxist and non-Marxist theorists have seen the development of an autonomous bourgeoisie as a factor of particular importance (Diamond 1988: 9) in the development of a stable economy, polity and democracy.

The foregoing develops a unifying dominant class which with time creates a national bond or cross–cultural cleavages that give birth to national consciousness. The author said that the "… core deficiency is seen in the social and economic structure, the absence of a 'secure economic base' that could 'deliver the goods' (Diamond 1988: 4 cited Akintunde 1967:6-9). Thus the proponents of the theory of ethnic competition have traced Nigerian tragedy not to the mere fact of ethnic pluralism, nor to primordial cultural tension or historical legacies of conflict, but to the ethnic competition that was generated by socio-economic and political modernisation (Diamond 1988: 15). Thus Diamond (1988:16) agrees with Sklar who exposed the relationship of the twin curses of Nigerian politics, tribalism and regionalism, to the process of class formation. Thus ethnic conflict and even ethnic socio-economic competition are seen as only proximate causes, underlying which is the phenomenon of class action and political repression necessary to protect it. Diamond (1988:17) building on Sklar class analytical perspective was able to see that Nigeria's political development in the First Republic will suggest something more, however, something that was socially manifest at the time but that has been relatively neglected in historical and theoretical explanation. This is the analytic weight of class and state and of the interaction between them. The author noted that the process of class formation should be properly understood in its context of economic dependence, extreme poverty and underdevelopment, and incipient revolution of expectations.

Diamond (1988:29) traced the Nigerian crises to colonial economic policy which resulted in failure of national integration resulting in a superficial ways of economic penetration which principally served British economic needs. Thus creating enclave economies in the three regions giving rise to emergent regional comprador classes thus splitting the Nigerian polity and classes tightly along regional lines. The emerging comprador bourgeoisie in specialising in regional economic activities; their horizon, therefore became limited to their regional economies, which they came to view as their own preserve or empire, their sphere of influence. With the development of a national consciousness thus obstructed even among the emergent comprador bourgeoisie, class could not become an effective cross-cutting cleavage in Nigerian

politics. As a result politics became sectionalised or regionalised. This was why the politics of the First Republic and the political parties that emerged were both regional and sectional. Diamond said that it was a product of the nature of the political economy of colonialism and of its successor of neo-colonial imperialism and the nature of class character of this dependent social formation. This fuelled the crises of the First Republic that resulted in the Coup and Counter Coup and the Civil War.

Another author of importance to us is Billy J. Dudley who says that in political culture which he likens to game, there are constructive rules and regulative rules. He says that when there is consistency among the rules stability is maintained. However, when there is inconsistency, instability or disequilibrium arises which can only be eliminated when consistency is restored (Dudley 1978:14). The author argued that the crises that beset Nigeria before the Civil War was as a result of structural defects in the Nigerian state, struggle for power at the centre and absence of political behaviour and culture. He said what corresponds to the constitutive rules of politics, in any given society would be the rules governing and underlying the social structure of the particular society, or put differently, the rules through which the social structure is explained or validated. The constitutive rules define the administrative or political units, electoral constituencies, the number of representative assemblies and so on. The equivalent of the regulative rules would be the rule governing the exercise of authority, the recruitment of political roles and the various procedural and conventional rules which delimit processes in institutional complexes. In most of the “developed’ societies these rules, constitutive and regulative, have been historically evolved and are therefore ‘autochthonous’ to these societies. However, contrary is the case of the ‘new societies’ where the constitutive and regulative rules are imposed by the metropolitan powers which mask or distort the social realities of the societies they had colonised. In attempts to remove the incongruities after independence, it led to further incongruities which have had to be resolved in ways not prescribed by rules of the system, often through civil violence, military intervention or social revolution (Dudley 1978:14-15).

The author noted that the orientation of the elite was neither in anyway accidental nor self generative. He said that it was a product of the hereteronomous direction provided by colonialism for their own continence. Hence the coalescence of forces around regional dominant cultural group making for what Billy J. Dudley calls the first order coalitions leading to political crises and the symbolic expression to the rejection of, and a desire to change the constitutive rule by the second-order coalition to allow redistribution of the means of value allocation (Dudley 1978:23) constituted the basis of crises of the First Republic. Dudley said that there was a congruence of interests between the colonialists and the first–order coalition. With little change in colonial setting making the firsts order coalition the recipient of colonial heritage in decolonisation making sure that the second–order coalition was subordinated to those of the first-order coalition (Dudley 1978:35). Thus change became impossible and hence the acceptance of inconsistencies as the rule of the game.

Dudley said that on a broader setting the dwindling economic fortune of the nation demanded a change. The collapse of the economy from 1955 which however, grew from 1950 to 1955 GDP growth rate at an average of 6.0 percent fell for about half of that of 1950 -54 with a population growth rate of 2.5 percent per annum which meant a net growth rate of about half of one percent. To this must be added a rise in the level of prices, a rise which outstripped the rate of growth of the economy (Dudley 1978:72). The impact of the economic down-turn, exclusions from value allocations resulted in deepening crises and in the military coup of January 15, 1966. Hence Dudley said that, ”the motive for intervening is a function of the degree of relative deprivation, or alternatively of the extent of alienation which must be inversely related to the opportunities open to the groups within the collectivity. In other words, the more the opportunities open to any group, the lesser the sense of alienation and conversely, the smaller the opportunities, the greater the relative deprivation and hence alienation” (Dudley 1978 100-1). The idea or strong sense of relative deprivation resulted in the coup and counter coup of January and July 1966 respectively which was a product of the Nigerian ruling class as conflict generators (Dudley 1978:35). It is because the ruling class at independence made politics the

principal avenue to wealth (Dudley 1978:53) and thus politics became a do–or-die affair hence the crises of the First Republic. It resulted in the coup and counter coup of 1966 and consequently the Civil War.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Theory is the law of knowledge that helps to order or reorder facts and thus stimulates the expansion of consciousness about the material world. A theory is only a law when it refers to the relationships between empirically observable facts which through such a theory have to be or could be ordered or reordered in a meaningful way. According to Goode and Hatt (1952:8) "Without some system, some ordering principles, in short, without theory, science could yield no predictions. Without prediction there would be no control over the material world. It can therefore be said that the facts of science are the product of observation that are not random but meaningful, i.e., theoretically relevant. Thus we cannot think of facts and theory as being opposed. Rather they are interrelated in complex ways. The development of science can be considered as constant inter-play between theory and fact".

This interplay between theory and fact is not stagnant; it changes with the interplay of forces of nature and society. The idealist logicians of the liberal school of thought are of the view that "… the general laws of economic life are one and the same, no matter whether they are applied to the present or the past". Marx Vol. I (1986:28) denies this thus:

> ….such abstract laws do not exist. On the contrary, every historical period has laws of its own. As soon as society has outlived a given period of development, and is passing over from one given stage to another, it begins to be subject also to other laws. In a word, economic life offers us a phenomenon analogous to the history of the evolution in other branches of biology.

As there are no abstract laws that are eternal the special value of scientific enquiry cannot be underplayed. According to Marx Capital Vol. I (1986) "The scientific value of such an inquiry lies in the disclosing of the special laws that regulate the origin, existence, development, death of a given social organism and its replacement by

another and higher one. This law of change known as the law of dialectical and historical materialism is central to our theoretical framework. The Marxian political economy which is a study of the dialectical relationship between classes determined by production relations also will be of benefit to this study.

We have noted in very clear terms that most writers on the Nigerian Civil War situated as their theoretical background ethnic or primordial irredentism. The whole of this work is a critique of the geo-ethnic model which is the dominant paradigm in the Nigerian Civil War studies. These writers of this tradition span almost the entire Civil War studies thus fanning the ember of the forces of centrifugation instead of centripetal forces. Obasanjo (1980), Post and Vicker (1971) are the arrow heads of this model of analysis and also the Nigerian Army publication, Momoh ed. (2000) is another. Almost all the military writers alluded to ethnic irredentism as the cause or the primary causal variable of the Nigerian Civil War. The little deviation from the norm but still within the general framework of ethnic irredentism are few authors like Akpata (2000) and a few others using ethnicity and sectionalism as the tools to get to power Thus power theory is equally a summation of the entire Nigerian writers on the Civil War. However power is not something in a vacuum but it is materially based and as such struggle for power is a struggle for material interest. We have stated severally that all other explanatory models are adequate in their own rights but are not primary explanatory variables. Their inadequacies, therefore, led us to adopting the political economy model and indeed the dialectical logic to explain the events leading to the Nigerian Civil War and the class character of the war.

2.3.1 Dialectical/Materialist Interpretation of History

Dialectical materialism or logic is a product of scientific historical investigation into the past which informs the present and helps to project into the future through scientific prediction. Babu (1972:316) summarised it thus “If by looking into the past we know the present to know the future we must look into the past and the present”. Dialectical analysis focuses on interconnections and interrelations among different elements of social life, especially economic structure, political structure and the belief system. The

method of analysis one would want to associate with is that which assumes some relationship between all the social structures and of all aspects of social life (Ake 1981:4). This methodology assumes that every organic being is every moment the same and not the same… that every organic being is always itself and yet something other than itself. Thus dialectics grasps things and their conceptual images essentially in their interconnection, in their concatenation, in their motion, their coming into and passing out of existence (Engels 1975: 66 – 7). This approach made Carr (1964) to say that history is a dialogue between the past and the present. It was in the foregoing perspective that makes Marwick (1983:24) opined that each age must interpret its own history. Marwick (1983:16) emphasized:

> History is functional in the sense of meeting the need (for) which society has to know itself and to understand its relationship with the past and with other societies and cultures…. It is also alongside the humanities and social sciences and the natural sciences a part of man's broad attack upon what is not yet known, a participant in man's struggle to understand his environment, physical, temporal and social.

However, current scholarship in the world is dominated by dialectical logic and formal or bourgeois logic. Formal logic sees nature, mental images and ideas in isolation, to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, fixed, rigid objects of investigation given once and for all. For this school of thought a thing either exists or does not exist, a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis one to the other (Engels 1975:65). This reductionism of formal logic would make Euro – American conventional or official Social Science see the problems of the Third World as of their own making. It would also make their Nigerian adherents resort to isolationism in their analysis of the Nigerian situation, thereby putting the blames of Nigerian historical distortions on Nigerians only forgetting their colonial and neo-colonial connections based on imperialist relations.

Formal logic as the domain of Western social and historical thought rejects the possibility of the discovery of universal laws or theories from which predictions can be

derived and which can serve as a guide to action. It rather believes in the particularity of events that are in themselves unique and unrepeatable (Sills ed. 1968:430). This informs the position of the modernisation school that sees the problem of Africa as that of traditionalism and hence underdevelopment. As such they see underdevelopment as a natural stage, thus absorbing imperialism from blame but rather blaming the victims of imperialism. The impact of capitalism and indeed imperialism's dialectical confrontation with the pre-colonial society and transforming it to serve metropolitan capitalism which is the basis of underdevelopment is never mentioned. The dialectical contradiction between international capital and the dependent landed/comprador class is never mentioned. Also the internal contradictions between the feudal aristocracy and the truly emergent comprador bourgeois classes is equally not a concern to the conventional Social Science.

In the view of Ake (1981:3) one of the main weakness of mainstream Western Social Science is its discouragement of dialectical thinking, a weakness that has also spilled over into African Studies. This discouragement of dialectical thinking is related to the ideological commitment of Western Social Science to the justification of the existing social order. Thus the mainstream Western Social Science has an inbuilt bias in favour of certain categories connoting good associated with Western societies being justified; the need to justify by designating preferred certain social categories as good traps Western Social Science into drawing a very sharp distinction between the preferred category and others. The penchance for justification further traps Western Social Science into fixing the categories rigidly and minimising the possibilities of change for if the possibility of the preferred category changing for the better is allowed, it is admitted that the preferred category was imperfect in the first place. So we have come to have a Social Science of discrete, sharply contrasting and rigidly fixed categories and entities, a science which is inadequate for understanding a complex social world of subtle shade in which change is the only permanent order. The inadequacies of this Social Science became sufficiently crystallised in the study of the non – Western societies, especially the less economically developed ones now designed as underdeveloped societies.

In the Nigerian situation, it is the logic of dialectical change that can make us to understand or comprehend the confrontation between the pre–colonial social formation that was imposed by the forces of capitalist imperialism and the pre-colonial social formation and the nature of changes it wrought in Nigeria and indeed African societies. The emergence of the colonial social formation in Nigeria and indeed all the colonial countries was to impose a metropolitan commercial bourgeoisie that created a state apparatus through which it had to exercise dominion over all the indigenous social classes in the colony (Alavi 1979:40-1). The exercise of dominion over the indigenous social classes of the pre-colonial setting has created a problem which has made it impossible for nation building to progress in a way to bring about centripetal forces but instead through the policy of divide-and-rule, it has created factionalisation of the Nigerian state and as a consequence that of the ruling class along ethnic and regional divide. This has created the basis for the emergence and entrenchment of centrifugal forces, to be precise a factionalised landed/comprador bourgeoisie that profits from the intensification of ethnic, regional, cultural and religious differences as ideological tools.

There is also the dialectical contradiction between the dependent Nigerian bourgeoisie and international capital. We have noted earlier Marx and Engels'(1977) position that the crises in the heart and the extremities of the bourgeoisie first produce revolutions or crises in the extremities because the possibility of adjustment is greater in the heart (metropoles) than in the extremities (periphery). Marx and Engels used the concept of extremities to describe Mainland Europe (periphery) and England which was the heart they saw as the bourgeois body (core) at that time. The third world and its dependent political economy in today's world can now be likened to the extremities of the bourgeois body and indeed Euro-America and Japan as the heart.

The changes in imperialist demands for our raw materials or primary products as a result of changes in technological development led to the progressive collapse of the Nigerian economy in the late 1950s and early 1960s leading to the crises between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and their local Nigeria collaborators or the comprador bourgeoisie. This crisis of the 1955/56, which spread to the 1960s resulted in the coup

and counter coup of 1966. According to Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu (1986:176) "The first of such crises occurred in 1955/56 following the Korean War boom in which prices of key Nigerian commodities experienced a slump leading to a reduction in revenue which was not enough to meet the expanding cost of government expenditure, the high cost of import bill and foreign exchange requirements of local and foreign companies". The consequent short falls in regional revenues led to the intensification of intra-class and inter-class struggles of the 1960s resulting in the 1965 workers' strike and the coups of 1966 and consequently the Civil War.

There was equally the dialectical contradiction between the feudal aristocracy of the North and the emerging dependent neo-colonial comprador bourgeoisie. This contradiction was expressed in the alignment and the realignment of forces, the rigging of elections culminating in the declaration of state of emergency in Western Region in 1965, with the appointment of Dr. Majekudunmi as the Administrator of the Region. The contradiction and its impact on the alignment and the realignment of forces split the federal coalition between the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) and the Northern People' Congress (NPC). It gave birth to the emergence of the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) made up of NCNC and Action Group (AG) principally which however included other smaller parties and the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) made up principally of the NPC and Akintola's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which equally included other smaller parties. The intra-class struggles that ensued led to the coup and counter coup of 1966 and consequently the Civil War.

The various dialectical explanations leading to the Nigerian Civil War were not transformative enough to bring about a synthesis. They however intensified the crises that led to the Civil War which was a negative transformation of the forces of production and society. It was retrogressive as it strengthened the conservative forces and brought about the stagnation of our society. It enhanced the strengthening of false consciousness which has turn reality upside down by according secondary contradictions such as ethnicity, regionalism, cultural and religious differences as the

prominent contradictions whereas the economy, economic interests, classes, and imperialism which are primary contradictions are seen to be non-prominent contradictions.

Historical transformations driven by the constant improvements in the culture of society which informs the change from one civilisation to the other is what Marxian worldview see as historical materialism or the materialist interpretation of history. “The development of historical materialism caused a fundamental revolution in social thought. It made it possible, on the one hand, to formulate a consistently materialist view of the world as a whole, also that of society as well as nature, and on the other, to reveal the material basis of social life and the laws governing its development” (Frolov 1984:257). Marx expounded his key idea of the natural historical process of social progress and social development by taking as a point of departure the economic sphere, separating it from the different spheres of social life and the relations of production from all social relations as the key determinants of all other relations.

The materialist interpretation of history demonstrates that the socio-historical process is determined by material production and its production relations. The materialist method states that these relations of production at a certain stage in the material development of a particular epoch become transformatory and revolutionary. According to Marx (1984:21):

> At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms with the property relations within the framework of which they had operated hitherto. From forms of the development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole superstructure.

Such transformations have been responsible for the transition from one epoch to the other, from the primitive communal system through patriarchy to the slave epoch, then followed the feudal epoch and now the capitalist epoch. The property relations which emerged in society and indeed in the societies where private property has been

enthroned split such societies into two major irreconcilable social camps, that is, the classes of the exploiters and the classes of the exploited. The organic unity of the productive forces and the social relations of production, however, constitute the economic system alternatively referred to as the mode of production (Ake 1981:13). The capitalist socio-economic system which emerged after the industrial revolution in Europe in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century like in other epochs of relations of private property split society into two great social camps or classes, that is, the capitalist exploiter class and the exploited proletariat or working class. All these features were transferred to Nigeria and exhibit the same characteristics of capitalist societies.

Back to the materialist method, Marx and Engels (1977:57) posited that, “Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class”. This advance changed the capitalist societies in Europe and gave further impetus to the transformation of their industrial development from national to a global phenomenon. Thus Nigeria and indeed Africa became caught in the web of the metropolitan imperialist globalising capital, classes formation, global dominant capitalist classes and their hegemonic role over Nigeria, Africa and indeed the colonised peoples. Marx and Engels (1977:38) said that with the world market at its grip, the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries that pioneered industrialisation destroyed all old national industries and drew all nations at the pains of extinction to adopt the bourgeois mode of production.

As in Nigeria and many countries of colonial exploits, the penetration of capital brought total destruction through the disarticulation of the economy by colonialism and also stunted the productive forces. According to Fanon cited by Basil Davidson, “There is no new entity born of colonialism”. Davidson (1971:ix) said that everything that has happened when Fanon wrote this back in 1958 seems to have confirmed this. Davidson stressed:

> Many peoples today need a renewal of their civilisation, but none so obviously and urgently as the colonised peoples. Whatever colonialism, imperialism,

> capitalism may or may not have achieved, one thing is certain about them. They have utterly failed to raise those structures – whether social or moral, political or economic-upon which the deprived peoples, the abused peoples, the "underdeveloped' peoples as they are sometimes if odiously called can carry themselves into a new civilisation capable of standing and evolving on its own foundation.

The bane of the Nigeria situation is that colonialism created a caricature and indeed a still-born capitalism. Capitalism that was based only on trading or merchant capital which would not revolutionalise production and the productive forces. The fetters put on the way to stunt economic development in Nigeria and indeed in Africa created the foundations for Nigeria's economic crises which fetters not just only Nigeria's progress but also that of the entire Africa. Imperialism put in place mechanisms that fetter the historical process or the development of the productive forces of Nigeria and African peoples. The destruction of craft production as a result of the penetration of capital in Africa is a case in point. It is the historical materialist method that can explain the ruination of Nigerian political economy and or the stunting of our development process (Tedheke1996:2).

The crises of stunted growth and development was to aid the interest of imperialism, to enhance their deepening exploitation of the Nigerian people. This was because the colonial and later the neo-colonial states in Nigeria were not the creation of the indigenous social forces. Alavi (1979:40-1) observed that while the state in the metropolitan Western societies was a creation of the indigenous bourgeoisie in the wake of their ascendant power, to provide for a framework of law and various institutions which were essential for the development of capitalism, that of the colonial and the neo-colonial state has been to a certain degree slightly different. The difference is that whereas the metropolitan bourgeoisie were the architects of their own states, in the colonies and neo-colonies, however, it created state apparatus through which it could exercise dominion over the indigenous social classes. It went further to create a class after their worldview whose roots were not internally based and whose only tickets to be bourgeois, especially, in Nigeria were their education and privileged positions in society unlike in Europe and North America where their roots were based in

industries, manufacturing and production, to be precise, in science and technology.

The contradictions of imperialism or monopoly capital based on uneven and spasmodic development created the economy of raw materials production in Nigeria for British industries and later those of Europe and North America. It created an enclave economy that was regionalised thus setting the basis for the emergence of the regional comprador bourgeoisie who always saw things from ethnic, regional, cultural and religious differences. The consequent urbanisation in the regional economic enclaves, the rural urban migration to centers of commerce and exploitation and colonial restrictions in opportunities in the economic sphere and welfare created the basis for ethnicity and ethnic politics in the urban centres (Nnoli 1978).

It is only the materialist method that would make us to understand the contradictions between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and their Nigerian creation. This basic contradiction based on the differentials in the development of production and the productive forces created the basis for a weakened economy. The collapse of the world commodity prices of export products from1955 resulted in economic crises in the regions that depended on peasant agricultural productions which led to the increasing struggles for federal power and made it a do-or-die affair. The discovery of crude oil at Oloibiri in 1956 and its export which commenced in 1958 and with more crude finds enhanced the premium placed on federal power and hence the deadly struggles for the control of federal power centre by the unproductive comprador bourgeoisie. Unproductive in the sense of scientific and technological dynamics unlike their mentors in Europe and North America.

Thus the materialist method is the only method that can help us to understand the external and the internal angles to the classes struggles. It will aid us to have a proper grasp of the events which are basically economic but which were coloured in the superstructural ideological hue of primordial ethnic or sectional sentiments. The crises that arose from these struggles were basically inter and intra-class struggles and were both products of national and international which enthroned chronic social instabilities

that heralded the Civil War. The crises were equally basically economic and materially based hence the relevance of historical materialism as the most adequate explanatory model to help us understand the material relations of the Nigerian crises prior to the Civil War and the war itself.

2.4 Summary

It is our opinion that the debate on the causes of the Nigerian Civil War are inconclusive as the Political Economy dimension has not been adequately explored. The prevailing models of explanation which are based on ethnic and cultural irredentism put to the back burner the primary independent variables of economic and class interests. In this respect, we have applied the materialist method to get at the configuration of forces in the crises that led to the Nigerian Civil War and sustained it while it lasted. Arising from the foregoing, we see geo-ethnic approaches in the interpretations of the Civil War as nothing but dependent variables. We see the motivating forces as being that of class formation. Ethnicity is therefore a dependent variable, a form of false consensusness "in which ethnic consciousness is superimposed over the interest of the masses and thus serving to camouflage the more fundamental and "objective" interest of competing factions of the dominant classes.

In time of economic recession, the interests became more crystallised turning politics into a do-or-die affair. This was the origin of the crises of the First Republic, the coup and counter coup of 1966 which heralded the Civil War. What we have found out is how the economic interests and the struggles for it resulted in the crises preceding the Civil War and the war itself. We have equally examined the alignment and the re-alignment of forces in the struggles for power and interest which are linked to class, intra-class struggles and so on. In our literature review, we have seen the inadequacies of the liberal theories of war that they would not allow us to apply the class dimension of wars. However, we have brought out the class perspective or the political economy of the Civil Wars in the United States, Britain, Russia, and Nigeria as we apply the Political Economy model which has all along been relegated by conventional or liberal social scientists in the Nigerian situation.

CHAPTER THREE

BACKGROUND TO THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR-THE COLONIAL AND NEO-COLONIAL ROOTS

3.0 Introduction

Those who hold the opinion that the Nigerian Civil War cannot just be explained contemporaneously belong to the group that wants to get at the root of the crises of the Nigerian state and polity. A contemporaneous explanation smacks of a high degree of ideological deficiency in understanding the prevailing world division of labour since the period of colonial imperialism. How it has affected Africa and indeed Nigeria negatively and how this has created the basis of contemporary African crises. We need to know the law of capital that brought about the logic of imperialism in Nigeria and by implication Africa; colonial politics in Nigeria; colonial economic interests; the social structure and imbalances of Nigerian Federation and First Republic politics as all impacted on the Nigerian Civil War. Without this deep historical exploit one will be short sighted in understanding the facts of our contemporary history. According to Cabral (1980:122).

> The ideological deficiency, not to say: the total lack of ideology, on the part of the national liberation movements-which is basically explained by ignorance of the historical reality which these movements aspire to transform – constitutes one of the greatest weaknesses if not the greatest weakness of our struggle against imperialism.

3.1 The Historical Setting

The origin and nature of the Nigerian crises that led to the Civil War in 1967 through to January 1970 cannot be properly understood without recourse to the history and political economy of Nigeria's colonial and neo-colonial state. Randal and Theobald (1985) posited that the roots of the conflicts that led to the Civil War lie deep in Nigeria's colonial past and consequently the class character of the neo-colonial state. Nnoli (1978) is also of the view that the colonial policy of divide-and-rule embedded in colonial politics, the processes of deliberate segregations of the different ethnic groups,

the enclave economic policy of the colonial state in Nigeria, the inequalities in regional land areas and population, in education, employment at Federal Civil Service and so on created the basis for the post-colonial crises. These were expressed in inter-ethnic, sectional and regional hue but were primarily products of economic interests of the emerging comprador classes.

In the first place, the emergence of colonialism and the colonial states were products of the crises of capitalism. The colonial enterprise was a product of the concentration and centralisation of capital, a product of the degeneration of capitalism from free competition to oligopoly or monopoly capital or imperialism. Imperialism was a product of the problem of the realisation of surplus value resulting from the crises of internal or inner logic of capital. It was the crises of the contradictions of capital which are eternal between capital and labour, between necessary labour and surplus labour turned into surplus value. It is a crisis between the increasing organic composition of capital, that is, concentration and centralisation of capital and necessary labour. It was also a crisis between the ever-increasing surplus value in contrast to increasing restrictions of the internal markets of metropolitan capitalist states with the progressive immiserisation of labour and so on. The end product of the internal logic or contradictions of capital were the occasional booms and bursts resulting in the rise and fall of monopoly financial capital that always strives for the realisation of surplus value (profit, rents, dividends). It resulted in the scramble for Africa in the fourth quarter of the 19th century. Imperialism, therefore, used all the necessary mechanisms which were crises prone to bring into the colonial social formations in order to maintain its home based power centred on industries for the exploitation of the working class and for the sake of the realisation of surplus value. It was able to do this through the instrument of the repression of the indigenous colonial social classes.

In order to understand the roots of the Nigerian Civil War and indeed the conflicts that preceded it, one is of the conviction that an analysis of the colonial, neo-colonial background to the conflicts that heralded the Civil War is very necessary and crucial. This will lead us in grasping the enduring colonial legacies in the social formation in

Nigeria that enhanced the conflict generating capacity of the post-colonial state. Babu (1972) said that if by looking into the past we know the present, by looking into the past and the present we know the future. Marx according to Engels (in Marx 1983:8) had to trace:

> …the inner causal connection in the course of a development which (had) extended over some years, a development as critical (and) typical… (in order) to trace political events back to effects of what were, in final analysis, economic causes. (as) A clear survey of the economic history of a given period can never be obtained contemporaneously, but only subsequently, after collecting and sifting of the material has taken place.

3.1.1 The Colonial Roots

In order to understand properly the colonial connection, we have to understand the inner logic or contradictions of capital that pushed it on, resulting in the partition of Africa in the last quarter of the 19th century. People take the colonial enterprise according to the propaganda of the colonising powers which they tagged a "civilising mission." It is this that bourgeois scholars see as the benefits to Africa though some of them would agree that colonialism was exploitative. According to Rodney (1972:223):

> The reasoning has some sentimental persuasiveness. It appeals to the common sentiment that, 'after all there must be two sides to a thing.' The argument suggests that, on the one hand, there was exploitation and oppression, but on the other hand, colonial government did much for the benefit of Africans and they developed Africa. It is our contention that this is completely false. Colonialism had only one hand-it was a one armed bandit.

Unlike Rodney's fundamental reasoning, those who believe in the "civilising mission" do not see colonialism as a do-or-die affair for the colonising power, seeing in colonialism a bid to stem the collapse of their industries as a result of the periodic economic crises of nascent capitalism, in Western Europe. Brown (1978:47) said "…since expand or die is the requirement of each individual capitalist, and since competition forces all capitalist to proceed likewise, this is reflected in the expansionary drive of the capitalist nations." Brown (1978:52-3) identified "… the rate of accumulation as the one independent variable in Marx's long-run economic model. Marx is generally misunderstood as if his accumulation model of capitalist is about personal motivation of

the capitalist." Nevertheless, Marx (1977:295) is clear on the foregoing thus "…we shall see first how the capitalist, by means of capital, exercises his power to command labour, but we shall then go on to see how capital, in its turn is able to rule the capitalist himself." This governing power of capital drives the capitalist to accumulate, expand or perish which equally forces capitalist nations on imperialist drive. The battle for accumulation was unleashed on Africa by imperialist exploitation in the last quarter of the 19th century. Therefore, the partition of Africa by Europeans during the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 was a product of the crises of accumulation or the problem of the realisation of surplus value without which the survival of capital would have been jeopardised.

It is in the foregoing context that we can examine British occupation of Nigeria from 1851 when they invaded Lagos under the pretext of stamping out slave trade and the occupation of Calabar with the Mary Slessor pretext of stamping out the killing of twins. These were part of the ideological propaganda of the "civilising mission." The wars of conquest and pacification of the territory today known as Nigeria are pointers to the fact that the colonial enterprise was a very serious business and had a motive beyond the ideological hue of a "civilising mission." That Britain and other West European powers had to sacrifice their men in the battles for the taking of Nigeria and indeed Africa is an indication that the conquering European powers were not insane after all. Even with the horrifying "soldier mosquito" and its malaria parasites that were wiping off a many British and Europeans in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general (Ukpabi 1992) the British and other European colonising powers pressed on. Capital must indeed survive in the face of all odds.

The importance of the colonial enterprise to the British and other European powers was epitomised in their policies of divide-and-rule. For the bitter lesions of the 13 original colonies of the United States' War of Independence in the 4th quarter of 18th century were too fresh to be allowed to repeat themselves in any colonial enterprise in the age of imperialism. Baran (1978) also observed that the shortage of manpower to man the colonial enterprise in the 19th century led the British and other colonial powers to

adopted the divide-and-rule strategy. In Nigeria, it led to the various strategies adopt by the British such as piece-meal integration, indirect rule, stunted political and constitutional development, encouraging the fertile environment for ethnic and sectional politics, the segregation of the North from the South, deliberate encouragement of stranger enclaves in the North, deliberate institutionalisation of inequalities and so on. The British equally suppressed the dynamics of economic development and only created the basis for the emergence of extractive industries principally in mining and agriculture, therefore, a comprador bourgeois political economy was put in place.

3.1.2 Politics of Colonialism in Nigeria

The politics of colonialism in Nigeria was a product of British and indeed Europeans' relative over-development, a product of maturing capitalism. Marxist scholars have sufficiently brought out the nature of the periodic crises of capital resulting from the problematics of surplus value. Lenin (1983:75) cited a British arch-imperialist Cecil Rhodes who was scared of the potentialities of rebellion or revolt mounting in East of London as a result of deprivations of the oppressed as such he became convinced of the importance of imperialism. Lenin (1983) quoted him as saying: "The empire, as I have always said is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid Civil War, you must become imperialists".

The penetration of Africa and indeed Nigeria and the imposition of colonial imperialism was a product of the crises of capitalism. In Nigeria, as in all of Africa, it gave birth to politics according to the stage reached in the penetration by the colonising powers. There was the politics of colonial penetration, consolidation and hegemony. At the economic level, it resulted in the disarticulation of the pre-capitalist or pre-colonial political economy, with the so-called law of *comparative advantage* based on *laissez-faire* philosophy and it brought about the increasing integration of Nigeria into the world capitalist system under the grip of British imperialism (Tedheke 1998), leading to the emergence of a dependent economy.

The politics of British penetration of Nigeria for colonial occupation took initially to wars of conquest. Those pre-colonial authorities that resisted British invasion were ruthlessly

crushed. According to Rodney (1972:151) “The British took a self-righteous delight in putting an end to Arab slave trading, and in deposing rulers on the grounds that they were slave traders. However in those very years, the British were crushing political leaders in Nigeria, like Jaja (of Opobo) and Nana (of Itsekiri) who had by then ceased the exports of slaves, and were concentrating instead on products like palm oil and rubber.” Ojiako (1981:7- 9) said “punitive expeditions were carried out against King Kosoko of Lagos in 1851, King Jaja of Opobo in 1887, Chief Nana of Itekiri in 1894, against Brass in 1885, and in 1897 against Oba Overamen of Benin.” While earlier British colonial experiences in North America and Australia where the aboriginal population were sacrificed for capital, the ‘soldier mosquito spared Nigeria and indeed most of Africa the sad experiences of North America and Australia. But the brutality that accompanied British and European penetration of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular was equally significant (Martins 2005).

The violence that went with colonial penetration and subjugation of the pre-colonial African societies was to project as it were what would befall any group should they challenge the lethal power of capitalist imperialism rooting doggedly for colonialism. The seriousness with which this was carried out was portrayed with the numbers of colonial wars of penetration against Africans and between the various European colonial adventurers themselves. It took the British between 1851 to 1904, that is between their invasion of Lagos under the pretext of stamping out “slave trade” and their murder of Sultan Attahiru in1904 to pacify the territory that was to be known as Nigeria.

The bitter struggles by the Americans for their independence from Britain must have informed British penetration of Nigeria after the so-called pacification of Nigeria by 1900. It took the “piece-meal” approach towards the integration of Nigeria by a very carefully calculated and snail-speed manner through which the various sections of Nigeria were brought together. The North American experience by the British where the original 13 colonies that later became the United States, ganged up against British imperialism in its primitive stage and fought for their independence from the British

must have informed the hardline approach to later day British colonial policy. This process of “piece-meal integration” was one of the aspects of British divide-and-rule strategy in Nigeria. It was to work against national integration and it was one of the remote causes of the Nigerian Civil War because it worked for the series of dichotomies that the British bequeathed to Nigeria as a colonial legacy. The importance of the Niger-Benue trough was too much for the British economically to be left to chances and with the American experience too fresh in their memory; a caricature of integration was put in place.

The whole framework of the constitutional development in Nigeria was the embodiment, it seems, of a special carefulness to avoid the mistakes of North America. If people of the same extraction with the British could put to an end the most priced British outpost in North America, then the fear over Nigeria and indeed over Africa is not unfounded. According to Nore and Turner (1980:1) the south of the Niger-Benue trough was famous for its exports to Europe and North America for its palm oil that was for the lubrication of the entire fabric of the industrial revolution and equally served as a key product for the production of detergent to clean the dirty cities of the industrial revolution in Europe. The importance of Nigeria thus called for the very careful approaches to constitutional development by Britain to consolidate its colonial gains for her imperialist monopoly financial capital. It took British colonial administration in Nigeria from 1900 to 1906 for the colony of Lagos and the protectorate of Southern Nigeria to be brought together. Despite their being brought together on paper, the colony of Lagos and the protectorate of Southern Nigeria were administered separately.

By the 1914 Lugardian Amalgamation, the colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were brought together with the protectorate of Northern Nigeria to make up what is today called Nigeria. However, the North was exclusively administered by the British colonialists outside the rest of Nigeria that assembled in Lagos through some form of crude constitutional representation. According to Olawoyin (1995: 204), the 1922 Constitution provided for the inauguration of the first legislative council. Voting for membership of the Nigeria Legislative Council was allowed but restricted to only

Calabar and Lagos. The rest of the North and South were represented by Residents on provincial basis all of whom were British expatriate officers representing something they called special interests. It was the same music in the executive appointments. In 1939, the South was split into two regions, the East and West creating a situation of imbalance between the North and the other regions. It was in this atmosphere that Richard's Constitution was introduced in 1946 and the regions became quasi autonomous and thus a foundation of an imbalanced federation was laid.

Within the foregoing period of consolidation, the British engaged in her hegemonic process of divide-and-rule in Nigeria. This divide-and-rule policy took various forms such as the snail-speed constitutional development, the serious restrictions on elective representations, indirect rule system, the deliberate separate administration of the country to prevent a united front against British colonial imperialism, the deliberate side-tracking of the educated elements and so on. It also involved the manipulations in favour of official and ex-officio majority representation from 1861 Lagos Crown Colony Administration to the 1946 Richard's Constitution. Equally, it involved the exclusion of the entire North from the central government from the 1914 Amalgamation to 1946 Constitution (Ezera 1964). The extension of the divide-and-rule strategy was taken in the North to the segregation of the cities into Sabon Garis and Tundun Wadas by the British (Nnoli 1978). The process of British political consolidation and the strengthening of her hegemonic rule in Nigeria created the foundation for endemic crises in Nigeria which first erupted in 1953 in Kano over the Lagos debate on a motion by Anthony Enahoro for independence in 1956 which was rejected by Northern delegates headed by Sir Ahmadu Bello and as a result they were booed in Lagos. This resulted in the attack on Southerners in Kano just after the Lagos incidence in 1953.

In both the consolidation and the hegemonic drive as expressed in the British colonial administration in Nigeria, one thing was paramount, to keep Nigeria apart in order to prevent the mistake of North America and to allow British economic interests to thrive. For example, in both the legislative and executive councils, from the periods of the Lagos colony through the Amalgamation, the 1922 Clifford's Constitution to 1946

Richard's Constitution, British business interests were fully represented while the entire North was legislated for at the prerogative of the Governor through *proclamation* , whatever that means. It showed that British business interests were more important than a whole Northern Nigeria that was judged to be about two-third of Nigeria in land mass and about half of the population of the territory of Nigeria. It shows that the "civilising mission" of the British and indeed other European powers in Africa is subject to question; that there was ulterior motive to the colonial enterprise than meets the eye which was meant to obscure the mental and conscious glare of the colonised. The many traps put on the route to decolonisation were the designs of the British colonialists to sabotage national unity, however, that our nationalists helmsmen fell for them is the tragedy of Nigeria's unity project. Such tragic acceptance of colonial politics of divide-and-rule strengthened the foundation of crises of the First Republic which ushered in the Civil War in 1967.

3.1.3 British Economic Interests and Segmentation

The main purpose of British colonialism and other colonising European powers in Africa was economic interest. The greed of the capitalist would drive advance capitalist nations mad in the process of aiding the capitalist class in its foreign policy or imperialism to aid the accumulation process. At home, this greed of the capitalist would make the class to waste the national resources of the metropolitan capitalist states and with the expansion and revolution in technology the capitalist states would aid their capitalist classes to seek for raw materials from far and wide. According to Marx and Engels (1977:39)

> The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to the production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw materials, but raw materials drawn from the remotest zones, industries whose products are consumed not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe.

It is to maintain the civilisation of capitalism that advance capital has been pressing through various forms to control the global market and sources of raw materials or world resources. It is to maintain advance capitalism that the comprador political economies are created in the dependent capitalist social formations like Nigeria. According to Dean (1979:146) in 1952, the US Senate Material Committee discovered that the United States had no material means to sustain her civilisation, having discovered that her mineral wealth was in acute shortage of supply from internal sources. This situation has been more acute in Western European capitalism in such countries as Britain, France, Germany and so on. Therefore the nationalistic tendencies that led to cut-throat competitions amongst the West European capitalist nations was a product of lack of markets and the depletions of raw materials. Here lies the explanation of their scramble for Africa and making of Africa a dependent/comprador political economy. We have noted earlier that the zone bellow the Niger-Benue trough was highly priced economically and this clearly defined the interests of the British in Nigeria.

3.1.4 The Role of Trading and Mining Interests

As the endemic crises of capital intensified in the 19th century Europe, revolutions and counter-revolutions occurred and continental wars trailed these crises. Cecil Rhodes was, therefore, correct in his stated purpose of imperialism as the avoidance of Civil Wars in metropolitan Western Europe. This also informs the correct assessment of .K J. Holsti of the high stake placed on the colonies by the colonisers. It is in this respect that one has to examine the place of British economic interests in laying the foundation of the post-colonial national crises in Nigeria, especially, as it concerns the Civil War. It is our conviction that the economic development in colonial Nigeria created bottlenecks in economics of national integration which negatively impacted on the First Republic resulting in the Civil War of 1967-970.

Since economic crises resulting from the contradictions of capital led to the rise of imperialism and indeed colonial imperialism, the following observation could be drawn

from the emerging capitalist social formation nursed by the British in Nigeria. In order to survive in its colonial enterprise, the British deliberately instituted structures of economic dependence in the nature of comprador political economy. The institution of dependence has been the basic strand that ran through all colonial bids whether in the old prior to the 19th century, or the new period of the 19th and the 20th centuries. According to Williams (1975:75);

> It may well be asked why the refining of the raw sugar was not done at the source, on the plantations. The division of labour, between agricultural operations in the tropical climate and the industrial operations in the temperate climate, had survived to this day. The original reason had nothing to do with the skill of labour or the presence of natural resources. It was the result of the deliberate policy of the mother country. The ban on sugar refining in the islands (Carribeans) corresponded to the ban on iron and textile manufacture on the mainland (U.S. original 13 colonies).

It is wishful thinking to expect the leopard to change its paws. In Nigeria, from the inception of colonial rule the administration consciously perpetuated the foreign trading oligopolies in Nigeria export trade (Coleman 1963:82 cited Bauer 1954:246-259). In the views of Coleman (1963) "Two groups were especially affected by and resentful of the power and competitive advantage of the expatriate firms: (1) the emergent entrepreneurial class, and (2) consumers who had developed tastes for imported goods." The exclusion of Nigerians from the externally motivated trade was suggested to have been encouraged by the European enterprises consciously and systematically which malevolently endeavoured to prevent the emergence of a strong African business community since the end of the 19th century (Coleman 1963:82 cited Mars and Geary 1927:191). Another view simply suggested that the large expariate firms were obliged to assume a dominant position and to acquire vested interests simply because a strong local capitalist class did not develop (Coleman 1963:82 cited Bauer 1954:22-24, 104-111).

Coleman (1963:82) was of the view that there is not enough evidence to support a definitive historical judgment. He stressed that, "An objective economic history of Nigeria has yet to be written" when he produced his work. However, Coleman stated

that:

> During the century of trading activity before World War II, several Nigerian business groups were displaced or suffered frustration in their entrepreneurial pursuits, as a result of the operations of the expatriate firms; or they disappeared for other reasons. One group comprised those African middlemen in the Niger Delta area who during the first half of the nineteenth century had become the recognised intermediaries between European traders on the coast and the peoples of the hinterland. They bought the products of the interior (largely palm oil and kernels)and sold them at their price on the coast. In return they received European trade goods which they later sold in the interior. In the main, this emergent (commercial) capitalist class was made up of coastal chiefs or enterprising commoners from the maritime or riverien tribes (sic). During the last few decades of the nineteenth century, however, this group was effectively eliminated by European trading firms. Subtle measures-the exaction of heavy trade licenses or the enforcement of stringent regulations regarding the marketing of African produce-were frequently the techniques used, when these failed more punitive expeditions against resisting groups and the deportation of their leaders, among whom King Jaja was perhaps the most famous (Coleman 1963:82-3 cited Mcphee 1926:85 and Dike 1956).

Coleman (1963:83) also confirmed that even those middlemen that acted as vanguard of the European commercial houses in penetrating the interior and had amassed sizeable fortunes and became substantial traders and exporters on their own account were affected adversely by two developments which tended to weaken and eliminate this group. In this respect Coleman (1963:83 citing Mars and Bauer 1954:118-9) thus:

> One was the progressive extension of the operations of European firms into the bush including the establishment of retail outlets through which they traded directly with African producer- consumers. This was possible largely because of (1) their overwhelming financial power and consequent competitive advantage, (2) the climate of security created by the British presence, and (3) the development and expansion of communications and transportation facilities in the interior. The second development which virtually liquidated these African traders who survived the superior competitive power of the firms, was the sudden depression of the 1920-1921, in which most African entrepreneurs were caught with large inventories and exhausted credit. The result was that their businesses passed to the European firms.

This concentration of trading or commercial capital in Nigeria under the grip of mercantile imperialist capitalism was reinforced during the great depression of the

1920s to the 1930s which exacerbated the contradictions of metropolitan capital which resulted in the intra-European war called World War II. Merchant capital makes its profits not by revolutionising production and technology but by controlling markets, and the greater the control they have the higher the rate of profit. For this reason, merchant capital tends to centralise and concentrate itself into monopolies even faster than productive capital. It eschewed the principles of *laisser-faire* and sought state support for monopolistic privileges (Tedheke 1998:95 cited Kay 1981:96). These monopolistic privileges would give the merchant capitalist in the peripheral capitalist social formations, whether in colonial or neo-colonial situations much advantages in the face of all odds. It gave impetus to the emergence and development of comprador political economy and indeed dependent comprador classes. A good example was that during the Great Depression of the 1920s to early 1930s while UAC cut down arbitrarily the price of palm oil by over 1000% per tin thereby forcing Nigerian producers into increasing penury, the trading monopoly company made a whooping profit of six million pounds (Tedheke 1998:95 cited Rodney 1972).

In furtherance of the economic restrictions against Nigerian emerging trading merchants, the colonial banks never helped matters. According to Bauer (1954:106-7 cited by Coleman 1963;85) certain features of the Nigerian situation favoured firms with large capital resources. The capital requirements for mere entry into the race and for survival have been competitively large in Nigeria than elsewhere. In the view of Coleman (1963:85);

> …the successive displacement of emergent Nigerian (merchant) capitalists in potentially profitable enterprises, and the extremely high capital requirements peculiar to Nigeria …it is understandable that issue of bank credit and the allegedly discriminatory practices of European banks were sources of grievance and a stimulus to nationalist sentiment. There can be little doubt that credit, though readily available to Europeans and to the ubiquitous Levantines, was extremely difficult for most Africans to obtain from European banks. In the view of many Africans, such differential treatment was positive evidence that the banks were pursuing a policy of conscious discrimination

In the mining sector, the situation was not different in terms of discrimination against

Nigerians in particular and Africans in general. Coleman (1963:88) further observed:

> …there was the same insensitivity to the aspirations of the Nigerians. Before the European incursion, Africans had mined tin, galena, salt, and the surface minerals, although on a comparatively small scale. Once Europeans began to exploit Nigerian mineral deposits, Africans had little opportunity to enter mining enterprise except as unskilled labour. Until 1927, legislation specifically discriminated against Nigerians by requiring that the agent in charge of a mining lease be a European. Even after that provision was removed, Africans were effectively disqualified because they lacked the capital necessary to secure leases. Theoretically, of course, the new licencing procedure was in no way discriminatory; it was intended to secure the most efficient operations of the mines. Under these recircumstances, however, it had the effect of excluding Africans. The situation was further aggravated because neither the mining firms nor the government made any effort to train Nigerians for responsible posts or technical positions in the mining industry.

In both the commercial and mining interests, the British through their colonial hegemony had to lay the foundation for the stability of their control of trade and mining to the neglect of the Nigerians and their state. The deprivation of Nigerians to effectively participate in the colonial economy created the basis for transfer regimes that were detrimental to the survival of Nigeria economically after independence. It would distort the economy and politics in many ways in which the intensification of the economic crises is always deflected into ethnic and sectional politics. In this way, the *structural functionalist* school aiding imperialist mystification of African crises finds an obnoxious relief. The increasing deepening of the fangs of British imperialism and later those of Europe and North America would create the basis for intense factional politics. This was because the basis for a productive economy was not laid and would never be laid by imperialism in its colony or neo–colony and even the dependent economic model that was foisted on us, the emergence of a dynamic Nigerian ruling class across geo – ethnic, or regional divide was thus foreclosed by the greed of colonial imperialism. The emergent Nigeria dominant classes were thus restricted and became mere dependent comprador classes.

3.1.5 The Place of Enclave Economy

The general deprivations and discriminations against Nigerians in entrepreneurial development created the basis for the emergence of a very weak dependent comprador bourgeoisie. It created the basis for a very weak Nigerian economy. With the enclave regionlised economy, the basis for the emergence of a vibrant national bourgeoisie was foreclosed. The disarticulation of the Nigerian economy and the encouragement of exotic species as the foundation of the colonial agriculture would turn the economy exclusively to serve the interests of colonial imperialism–that of the British. There was no way the economy could have been integrative, since it was founded on three enclaves tied more to Britain and Europe in the realisation of their primary commodity production in the prevailing world division of labour. In the foregoing respect Chinweizu (1978:171) said:

> Communications and telecommunications were developed to increase export of primary products to Europe. As a result of such development, the African economies became structurally more tightly integrated into the European economies than before World War II. It thus became more difficult to cut their linkages with Europe, more difficult to turn them round to serve Africa, more difficult to make the fruits of African labour flow to the stomachs of Africans instead of the pockets of Europe.

In the view of Nnoli (1978:124) and Diamond (1988:29) the nature of the colonial economy provided no avenues for national unity or integration. The failures of colonialism in national integration according to Larry Diamond was reflected in the pattern of economic penetration, which connected the nation in relatively superficial ways and only insofar as it served Britain's needs to extract the colony's raw materials and to market its own manufactured goods in exchange. It did not result in the forward and backward linkages necessary for an integrated national economic autonomy. It did not create the basis for the resolution of the *national question* but rather strengthened the foundation for nationality or ethnic social differentiation and widening of the ethnic gulf. Nnoli (1978:124) captured it better thus:

> In the colonial economy there was virtually no unity across the communal

> homelands of the Nigerians. Its dominant sector was import- export and, therefore, externally oriented rather than being internally oriented towards the integration of the various communal homelands. In reality there was no such a thing as a national economy. Instead, there existed in the country foreign owned economic activities which were directed at external needs or run in the interest of external financiers for whom national economic integration was not part of the economic calculus.

The three major economic enclaves that developed during the period of colonialism were according to Nnoli (1978) the Kano-Kaduna-Zaria–Jos complex, the Lagos metropolitan area and the Port Harcourt–Aba–Enugu–Onistsha axis and their surrounding rural environments. Nnoli (1978:124) emphasized:

> Investment in marketing, transport and export services associated with the dominant colonial economic activities of cash crop production and mining gravitated overwhelmingly to these three core areas. Similarly, investment in manufacturing industries was attracted to the same areas for marketing, transport, employment and political reasons. But these areas remained isolated one from the other with hardly any salient economic exchanges between them. Instead, salient economic exchange existed between each area and the advanced capitalist countries of Europe and (North) America.

Nnoli concluded that:

> Thus the colonial economy was made up of core areas which were relatively juxtaposed. The density of flow of their exchanges with the outside world was much greater than of exchange among them. Each was on its own, strongly linked with economic entities whose centres of gravity lay in the centres of the capitalist world. A consequence of this false, disarticulated and non–structured economy is that it could be broken up into micro-economies without serious danger to the various economic activities, a situation which under normal conditions, would create an intolerable economic retrogression. The weakness of national cohesion is a reflection of this disarticulated economy. Such an unstructured economy is also a source of micro-nationalism.

According to Amin (1974:288–9) such areas interested in this disarticulated export economy would not have the need of the rest of the country, which they may look upon as a burden. It might, therefore, contemplate having a micro–independence. This summarises the Nigerian situation prior to independence and indeed after and as a matter of fact most of the post-colonial Africa crises or Civil Wars. Indeed, it was the

pre–occupation of British colonialism to encourage the enclave economy which would enhance its divide-and-rule political philosophy to prevent the coagulation of forces against its colonial oppression and dominance. With her fingers burnt in the very lucrative North American colonial establishment of the original thirteen colonies of the United States that declared independence on the 4th of July 1776, such a mistake would not repeat itself if the survival of British imperialism was to be assured.

The implication of the enclave economy was the birth of the regionalisation of economic activities and political power in the 1950s, splitting the entrepreneurial class along regional lines. The specialised regional products and their production became jealously guided by the emerging comprador bourgeoisie. The transportation and marketing of their region's cash crops and local sales of British manufactured goods under the monopoly of British and other West European imperial merchant companies such as UAC, Liver Brothers, John Holt, G.B. Ollivant, SCOA, CFAO, Kingsway Stores, Leventis, UTC etc became regionalised. The horizon, therefore, of the emerging comprador or commercial bourgeoisie became seriously limited and indeed restricted to their regional economy which they came to view as their own preserve or empire, their sphere of influence' (Nnoli, 1978: 149; Diamond 1988:29). The situation gave birth to the deepened segmentation of the emerging state of Nigeria along ethnic and regional lines. It worked against the emergence of national consciousness. According to Diamond (1988:29):

> With the development of a national consciousness thus obstructed even among the emergent bourgeoisie, class could not become an effective cross-cutting cleavage in Nigerian politics.

The inability of the British to encourage national economic activities we have noted regionalised the emergent comprador ruling elements and therefore a national entrepreneurial class could not emerge. This posed a very grave danger and problem to national unity. According to Sklar (1965a) the deepening regionalism and the inherent contradictions that attended the regional system constitute the most damaging legacy of British colonial rule in Nigeria. We cannot but help in agreeing with Randall

and Theobald (1985:44) that :… the roots of the conflict (Civil War) lie deep in Nigeria's colonial past …" thus the British and indeed imperialism could not be excused as laying the mines and indeed the foundation for the Nigerian Civil War. The lack of economic integration in Nigeria under British colonial rule created fetters against the necessary communications beyond the market realm that would have emerged to strengthen the necessary integrative mechanism for the Nigerian community as a whole. Nnoli (1978:125) observed:

> An extensive development of equitable and mutually rewarding economic exchanges tends to create a good basis for the establishment of friendly neighbourly relations among peoples. It also foster peace and an atmosphere of mutual understanding among peoples by promoting living standards, increased employment, and more rapid economic progress. It is like a barometer which indicates the direction of good will; it is a messenger of peace and unity

Okwudiba Nnoli cited Deutsch (1957:53) who said that a wide range of transactions is essential to the growth of "security communities" characterised by cooperation, peace, and political integration. In an enclave economy, one separate from the other, these benefits were not to be found internally and since each could feel of going it alone and thus developing micro-nationalism such as ethnic and regional irredentism could do very great injury to such an inchoate national consciousness. Deutsch (1957:157) further hit the nail at the head when he said; "The helpfulness of economic ties may be largely in the extent to which they function as a form of communication and a visible source of reward".

Forward and backward integration in an economy eliminates enclaves, strengthens communications and work for an integrative economic community. It would strengthen relations between one part of the community and the other and indeed it would integrate the dynamics that would have long-binding economic and political processes. For example, the "percellised feudal sovereignties" i.e. pockets of feudalism in Britain, Germany and France and in most of Western Europe became fused together nationally because of the emerging integrative mechanisms at the heel of and during the industrial revolutions. In Britain, new centres emerged in the Midlands around

Birmingham and Wolverhampton, the textile districts from York and Leeds southward to Liverpool on the Irish sea and Newcastle and Stockton in the Northeast displaced older centres of population like Oxford, Norwich, the old market towns of the South, and the home counties, except of course, London itself (Sills (ed.) 1972:258). In the United States, there was roughly the same experience. Such cities as Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Indianapolis such Great Lake ports as Chicago, Cleveland and Toledo and so forth were cities of American industrial revolution, not products of earlier trade and finance which gave birth to the population centres of the East and the Gulf Coasts (Sill (ed.) 1972).

The American and the British experience like those of Germany, France and Japan saw the emergence of industries in areas of coal production. This was not to be in areas around Enugu and Okaba coal mines that would have been centres of Nigeria's industrial revolution if the colonial economy had applied the European and North American model. In the Euro-American model the concentration of industries in the coal regions created the environment for communities of economic activities that enhanced the basis for the development of national economic autonomy through forward and backward linkages or integration. According to Laborde (1968:56)"

> …nearly the whole of Western Europe had become industrialised. The coalfields situated on the edge of the great plain have become areas of dense population with satellite towns and villages so thickly clustered around a focal town as form of conurbations. In such districts land is too valuable to be used for agriculture, and food was to be brought from elsewhere. Sometimes, as in France, the non-industrial areas are capable of feeding the industrial areas by adopting a system of intensive cultivation, at others, as in England, they are incapable of doing so, and food had to be imported from abroad in large quantities.

Laborde (1968:57) further stressed that "… industrialisation of Western Europe has centralised population in a few big towns. Three chief types of these may be distinguished. The industrial conurbations already mentioned, of which Birmingham and the West Midlands seem to be best examples and the Rhur (Valley) with Essen and Wuppertal as twin centres, the great sea ports, of which Hamburg and Marseille are typical, and the great regional centres of politics and high commerce and finance, like

London and Paris. The last two owe their importance fundamentally to their central positions and facilities for radial communications, though they all posses other great advantages as well. Their status is ensured by the network of railways which centre upon them, but whether they will retain their present importance after railways have been superseded by road and air transport remains to be seen. Forming the heart of the country, they are the seats of government and centre of learning, art, literature, fashion and society. London and Paris, the chief of them, are indeed the great foci of Western civilisation."

The emergence of nationality and the nation-state at the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and when it gained momentum at the period of the development of capitalism was correctly located by Marxism. According to Lenin (1977:27):

> Developing capitalism knows two historical tendencies in the national question. The first is the awakening of national life and national movement, the struggle against all national oppression, and the creation of the national states. The second is the development and growing frequency of international intercourse in every form, the breakdown of all national barriers, the creation of international unity of capital.

In the first period, the typical features were the awakening of national movements and the drawing of the peasantry which were the most sluggish and yet the most numerous section of the population into these movements struggling for political liberty in general and for the rights of the nation in particular. In the second period, were the waning of mass bourgeois-democratic movements when developing capitalism has drawn together nations into full commercial intercourse bringing into the fore the antagonism between the internationally united capital and the international working class movements (Lenin 1977:401). Lenin rightly placed nationalism within its historical specific period or epoch. He said:

> Therefore the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of nation state under which …requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied. The most profound economic factors drive towards this goal and therefore, for the whole of Western Europe, nay the entire civilised world, the national state is

typical and normal for the capitalist period (Lenin1977: 396)

With him (Lenin 1977:405) the epoch of bourgeois democratic revolutions in Western continental Europe was somehow definite and could be approximated between 1789 and 1871. This period was the period of the rise of capitalism, the nation state and national economic autonomy as the result of industrial revolution. Therefore, the development of nationality and national consciousness is the principle of bourgeois nationalism. The limitedness of bourgeois nationalism notwithstanding, its democratic content and the fact that it galvanises the most sluggish and numerous part of the population, the peasantry into action with the nationalist movements is a process of creating national awareness or consciousness which is dynamic and progressive (Lenin, 1977:411-2). This was lost in the principle of the Nigerian and indeed African enclave economies that were foisted on us by the British and other European colonising powers in Africa. We stated earlier that it rather created the basis for micronationalism and micro-independence movements, one of which in Nigeria, was the declaration of the Republic of Biafra on May 30, 1967. If the British had not imposed regional economic enclaves national integration or linkages, would have developed the basis for national unity. According to Nnoli (1978:126):

> Significant members of the country's population would thus acquire vested economic interests in other regions than those of their communal homelands. At least for selfish economic reasons they would be compelled to pay attention to activities in other parts of the nation in order to encourage a greater understanding between the people of their area and those of areas with which their economic activities are linked. They would be forced to take an interest in and appreciate the way of life of these other peoples at least in order not to alienate them to the ruin of their business. In general, they would have to cultivate the friendship of others and promote good neighbourliness among the relevant peoples. The livelihood of the people in the various regions of the country would be tied together and made mutually interdependent.

The linkages of inter-regional economic interests, production and development would have created the basis for a unified national bourgeoisie and consequently the emergence of a national leadership. It was in reference to the lack of the foregoing that made Diamond (1988:31-2) to say that "…national dominant class never existed in

Nigeria before or during the First Republic, for those in controlling positions in the economy and society were never able to develop a trans-ethnic consciousness and coherence. Rather, class domination developed as regional and ethnic phenomenon. Within each of Nigeria's three (later four) powerful regions-virtual societies unto themselves-dominant classes emerged, or in the case of the traditional aristocracy in the Muslim North, a dominant class incorporate new social elements to modernise and secure its position."

The advance capitalist countries that developed national economies with the incipient bourgeois revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries, gave birth to national integration as a result of their integrated national economies. In England, the industrial revolution had its foci in the Midland coal fields with good water which were the props for the textile industry which laid the foundation for the industrial revolution. This created the basis for modern England of the English Industrial Revolution. In mainland Western Europe key centres of industrial revolution emerged in the Ruhr Valley coal fields and that of the Rhine Valley (Laborde 1968). They thus became the focus of national population. For the German industrial centres of the Ruhr and Rhine Valleys Laborde (1968:248) stressed:

> …(it) has therefore concentrated a vast amount of industry in a group of towns which now form one huge conurbation. Closely connected with the mining district are Krefeld and Munchen-Gladbach, both of the left bank of the Rhine, Dusseldorf, and a second conurbation in the valley of a nearby feeder of Rhine, the Wupper.

From the foregoing area sprang the industrial revolution in Germany and with their integration with the Junker Berlin agricultural region of the East, German unification under Bismark was complete. In all of Europe, economic autonomy was the issue during the emergence of the classical bourgeois nation-states at the spread of the industrial revolution. This made the various emerging European powers to develop good internal communications as a result of the industrial revolution, thereby paving the way for national economic autonomy through integration. According to Sen (1984:76)…the desire to achieve national economic autonomy among the first

industrialised countries at their initial stages of industrialisation can be interpreted as stemming from the political insecurity which characterised territorial units in the international political system, an insecurity most poignantly crystallised in the compulsion to create and maintain an autonomous defence capability. Thus a general desire for the maximum attainable economic autonomy is really a function of the more specific compulsion towards acquiring and maintaining a national defence capability. For Nigeria, the contrary was the case under British colonial imperialism and under the neo-colonial regime of the First Republic from 1960 to 1966. There were never designs for an economic autonomy in Nigeria. The colonial and the neo-colonial Nigerian economies were seriously fragmented along geo-ethnic lines and on a more serious note tied to the vagaries and dictates of both the British and world imperialism. This situation produced a very serious negative effect in the social structure. According to Nnoli (1978:27);

> This confinement of labour force to colonial activities in the communal homeland, together with the unintegrated nature of the colonial economy, meant that the labour force, and even other classes were fragmented along regional lines. Intra-class solidarity was thus made more difficult, the social distance among individuals increased and this social distance became salient along communal lines.

3.2 The Social Structure in Nigeria

Classes appeared in human history as a result of the emergence of the division of labour the acceleration of it in the production process. The increasing division of labour made it possible for groups to free themselves from productive activities but found themselves placed in privileged positions in society which gave them advantages to appropriate the labour or surpluses of others who actually produced social wealth. With the birth of private property and consequently civilisation, dominant economic classes appeared out of the ruins of the gentile order or primitive communism in its succeeding epochs of slavery, feudalism and capitalism (Engels 1977). According to Novack (1979:20);

> Each of these (epochs) is marked off by the special way in which the ruling propertied class at the head of the social set up manages to extract the surplus

wealth upon which it lives from the labouring mass who directly create it.

3.2.1 Pre-colonial Nigerian Social Structure

There is some agreement to the effect that the pre-colonial African states arose as a result of private property. While some researchers are of the opinion that private property was initially a product of internal economic production others are of the conviction that it was as a result of long – distance trade. This controversy need not detain us here as it is not relevant in this dissertation. Stride and Ifeka (1971:305-7) said: Benin evolved a centralised system of government through both internal and external factors. They, however, emphasised that before the arrival of the Europeans, Benin had developed a complex internal production of casting bronze, different artistic works and also ivory, pepper, dyed cloth, jasper stone, leopard skins, blue coral and the procurement of women slaves which were exchanged in earlier caravan trade and later in the caravel trade.

Stride and Ifeka (1971) equally traced the internal dynamics that led to the emergence of the Hausa states, the Oyo Empire, Nupe state, Kanem Borno Empire and so on. They also alluded to the factor of trade as strengthening these pre-colonial states. Spefically for Zaria, Kazah-Toure (1995:3) said: “The process of external slave raiding can be located in the differences pertaining to the levels of development of socio-economic systems in the contrasting territories. In Zaria, the feudal ruling circles used slaves, as a separate labour force for working on the *gandaye* (estates)”. In reinforcing the primacy of internal production and organisation of labour for surpluses for the pre-colonial ruling class in Nigeria”, Toyo (1982:7) said:

> Whenever the state had emerged, there, a peasantry had come into existence, since the state is based on taxes, fines, tributes, confiscations etc, used to maintain a ruling class. Thus in the 19th century, the rural cultivator in the Benin Empire, Yorubaland, Nupe, Hausa, Borno, Junkun and Igala, pass from the status of a tribal or primitive cultivator or farmer to that of a peasant.

At the period of colonial penetration of the territory that was to be known as Nigeria most of the pre-colonial societies had become class societies as the peasants were

exploited to maintain the pre-colonial Nigerian ruling classes. Even in the much talked about communitarian democracies of the Ibo, Tiv and Ibibio societies, exceptions like Onitsha, Oguta, Atani and Aro people had differentiated themselves into class societies based on the labour of the peasantry. Anikpo (1982:27) observed that in Aro society, there was a large population of peaseants, artisans, craftmen, and slaves who sustained the ruling class with tributes, taxes, and free labour. He also noted that long-distance trade generated the additional surpluses with which the pre-colonial Aro state and its ruling class maintained themselves. In the Niger Delta, Ikime (1977:18) had equally observed that the ecological differences in the area influenced and naturally differentiated products which made for specialisation which resulted in exchange or trade between the emergent pre-colonial states in the area. Obaro Ikime covered the city states of Isokos, Urhobos and that of Itsekiri. Those who benefited mostly from the trade, he noted were the brave warriors of these pre-colonial states. In pre-colonial Urhobland and Isokoland the various chiefdoms (states) were organised on their own, each independent of the other. They were more or less city-states like it obtained in other parts of the Niger Delta, organised along clans in some areas and sub-ethnic division in others. Indeed, what struck the consular officials at the time of the penetration was the complete independence of every little Urhobo settlement (Ikime 1977:239).

The emergence of fragmented feudalism in the forest zone of the Niger Delta and parts of the East and the transition to larger more co-ordinated ones in Benin, Yorubaland, and parts of the North prior to and after the Usman dan Fodio revolution confirms one fact that there was feudalism developing in Nigeria prior to colonial penetration. According to Goody (1971:31) the pre-colonial African society to some extent conformed to feudalism but the feudal relations was not over land. He said of Africa that "… though there were no landlords, there were of course lords of the land, the local chiefs of centralised states, who from the point of food production were in a sense carried by the rest of the population".

3.2.2 Colonial Social Structure

The penetration of the pre-colonial Nigerian economy was through the disarticulation of the prevailing economy and monetisation was the medium. Its acceptance was largely because of the cash/export crops production, which resulted in exchange between the Nigerian and the European and which brought about new developments. The institution of colonialism or colonial imperialism brought into being a dependent class in the colonial Nigerian state as agents of the European mercantile monopoly companies for which the Royal Niger Company later known as the United African Company (UAC), CFAO, SCOA, John Hotls, GBO were the spearheads. While giving vent to this nascent trading mercantile class, the colonial state equally retained the pre-colonial feudal and semi-feudal classes and even created pseudo-feudal classes in the form of warrant chiefs in communitarian pre-colonial societies of the Eastern Region and the Middle Belt, especially among the Ibos and Tiv people. The subjugation of the pre-colonial economy under colonial imperialism brought about the peripheralisation of the political economy and thus the emergence of peripheral dominant classes in the service of imperialism by which African and indeed the Nigerian class struggle have been attenuated.

It has given vent to the development of a rentier state that is dependent on the proceeds from the land hence this class can equally be called a landed/rentier class. According to Graff (1988:219-220), “The essential feature of the rentier state in the world market is that it severs the link between production and distribution. The state revenues accrue from taxes or rents on production rather than from productive activity. This production depends, however, on techniques, expertise, investments-and markets generated outside the territory controlled by the state. For this reason, practically all aspects of exploration, production and marketing are dominated by international capital, typically in the form of transnational corporation. For the transnationalised state, rents derive from local ownership of the areas and/or resources of extraction”, form the economic base.

The institution of colonial imperialism brought into being dependent classes in the colonial societies that depend on proceeds from the land in the form of rents. It has brought into being the contradiction between the dependent classes (local wing of imperialism) *and its* metropolitan bourgeoisie represented by the multinational trading companies and as a result a struggle ensues between them over the distribution of the surpluses from the rentier states. However, this is not a struggle against would capitalism or imperialism as such but it is a product of the dialectical changes within world capitalism, the struggle between the landed property owners, that is, the "lords of the land" (third world bourgeoisie) and the dominant faction of world capital (the metropolitan capitalist classes). The difference between the two factions of imperialism is that while the landed propertied faction depends on land (groundrent-in the form of raw materials for sale, taxes and royalties etc to accumulate capital) its world dominant faction depends on actual use of the modern means of production (capital-objects of labour and means of labour which includes land, tools, machines etc. and living labour or labour power) which is more advanced than that of the landed propertied faction (First 1980:119)

Therefore the colonial social structures in Nigeria as in other third world countries was made up of a dominant class comprising the metropolitan trading capital in Nigeria, the local agents to these trading companies that emerged as the merchant class and the attenuated remnant of the ancient regime made up of the feudal aristocracy of the North, West and the Mid-West areas, the semi feudal elements of the Niger Delta and some parts of the East and the colonialist creation of pseudo feudalism in the form of warrant chiefs on the one hand and the dominated classes such as the proletariat or working class, the lumpen proletariat, the peasantry and the déclassé on the other hand. During the colonial period, the feudal, the semi-feudal elements and the emergent merchant class collaborated with colonial imperialism to oppress the dominated classes such as the peasantry, the working class and the déclassé.

The cash/export crops economy based on primary productions as the basis of the Nigerian colonial economy gave vent to transfer regimes of the peasant surpluses: an

expatriate regime in which his surpluses were alienated to the expatriate trading monopoly companies and through taxation to the Nigerian imperial state on the one hand, and on the other hand, an indigenous regime in which his surpluses maintained not only the feudal and semi-feudal classes but also a new non-farming classes in the process of formation in the Nigerian society (Toyo 1982:7-8). This was exemplified in the colonial cocoa dominated economy of the West, that of the East monoculture in palm produce, the groundnut and cotton colonial economy of the North and the rubber and palm produce economy of the Mid West. Toyo (1982:15) emphasised "…exports have stimulated private ownership, cash crop economy, money lending, middleman-ship, rural wage employment, share cropping, and along with these, differentiation of the peasantry into rich, middle and poor peasant households".

The key elements that profited from peasant labour or production were not the peasantry but the dominant imperialist ruling classes and their Nigerian junior partners, the landed or comprador ruling classes. In the colonial period in Nigerian, as elsewhere, the colonial state and its economic interests predominated in unwavered form for the sake of the survival of metropolitan capitalism. The universal congruence of the foregoing agrees everywhere with all colonial powers. For Holland, Caldwell (1977:71-2) had this to say:

> Van den Bosch architect of the cultural system; quite consciously set to raise the production of Java in order to rescue Holland itself from desperate economic straits. He succeeded at the expense of the people of Java, whose labour he turned into capital so well that the time left at their disposal for food production became insufficient and starvation stacked the land. Apart from that portion of it expended on maintaining the traditional Indonesian aristocracy in some luxury in order to enlist their aid in ruling the colony, the enlarged economic surplus was almost entirely devoted by the Dutch to metropolitan purposes: constructing railways, improving port facilities, and in general building up social capital in Holland relieving the Dutch exchequer and Dutch taxpayer. The tragedy for Java, for Indonesia was that this immense effort on the part of the people to hugely expand the available (and investible) economic surplus was, from their point of view, in vain.

In the case of Nigeria, Williams (1982:45) cited Akeredolu-Ale as saying:

> Neither the colonial government, nor the colonial firms, secure in their dominant commercial position, initiated the transition from trading to manufacturing. The pricing policies of the Marketing Board delayed the development of industry by limiting the expansion of the market, and the development of indigenous capitalism by denying African traders the opportunity to profit from the post-war boom in commodity prices. The surpluses accumulated were sent to Britain rather than invested in Nigeria.

With the disarticulation of the pre-colonial economy by colonialism and turning the Nigerian peasantry to producing what they do not need and forcing them to need what they do not produce stunted the pre-colonial political economy and thus the colonial economic enclaves became centres of attraction to the rural population. However, lacking the necessary industrial absorbing capacity like their European industrial societies would create the basis for the emergence of a lumpen proletariat and the déclassé that were ready tools as thugs in the hands of the regionalised dominant classes during self-government and at independence during political campaigns and elections. They were made up of the migrant workers in both the rural and urban areas, daily paid and seasonal workers, those who did menial jobs to survive the harsh colonial economic environment, the lay-abouts and the sex workers or the déclassé.

According to Onoge (1983:38) colonial capitalism shattered the balance which existed in the pre-colonial society between the traditional African economy and labour thus creating overpopulation where none was supposed to exist. In settler colonies, this overpopulation was created virtually over night. For example, pre-colonial Kikuyu agrarian economy where the demand for ever more hands is projected into a cultural philosophy of a welcoming of “those yet unborn,” was over night pluged into an improverished “surplus population” of illegitimate squatters, through colonial legislation alienating fertile Kikuyu land to European settler populations of capitalist plantation farmers. There was then a surplus population in spite of the fact that the object of labour-land-for satisfying the food needs of Kikuyu society was still physically there in quantitative terms but now alienated to settler plantation capitalist agriculture to the

detriment of the Kikuyu people in particular and the Kenyans in general. In non-settler colonial situations like Nigeria where lands were not directly alienated, African peasants were, nonetheless compelled to devote a substantial portion of their labour power and land to the production of export crops at the expense of the food crops which they needed. The technological innovations brought by the coloniser were restricted to the production of these export crops which were irrelevant to food crop production. Thus in Nigeria, for example, we inherited a gigantic Cocoa Research Institute at independence, while there were none for cassava or yam.

Onoge (1983:38-9) further stressed, "Where the colonial capitalist was interested in extractive industrial activities rather than agriculture, the coloniser broke the resistance of the African peasant either through forced labour or by inducing migration through the imposition of taxes. Colonial Africa is also a tableau of these population movements of peasants caught in the tragic vice of the structural demands and false opportunities of the new capitalist economy. Population migrations, regardless of the variety of their specific immediate causes, had the same singular result of undermining the food production capacities of the rural economies." This had resulted and is always resulting into the rural – urban migration and the rural-rural migration leading to the superfluity of the African population and indeed that of Nigeria. This was the basis in Nigeria of the lumpen proletariat, the lay-abouts and commercial sex workers that were used as thugs prior to and during the First Republic.

3.2.3 The Neo-Colonial Social Structure and Dynamics in Nigeria

At independence, the colonial absolute control of the economy was relatively weakened by its political control hitherto in existence prior to transfer of political power to Nigerians in 1960. Thus the neo-colonial political structures were the commercial triangular relations between the state, international financial capital and the comprador/commercial/landed classes as posited by Terisa Tuner holds water. However, the nature of independence or decolonisation determines the relationships between the two forms of capital. On the relationship between them, Marx (1973:276) said: "By its nature as historically, capital is the creator of modern landed property, of

ground rent; just as its action therefore appears also as the dissolution of the old form of property in the land. The new arises through the action of capital on the old". The penetration of capital in the backward countries did not destroy completely the pre-colonial mode of production but subordinated it under its sway and indeed the very forms capital has taken in these formations are themselves backward. This condition of many third-world countries sprang from their subordinate place in the international capitalist division of labour-whereby they produce raw materials (and increasingly manufactured goods in some cases) whilst developed capitalist societies produce industrial goods-in the historical process of finance capital's search for increasing surplus value (Goulbourme 1979:27). In examining the pre-capitalist social classes in Nigeria, we accept the view that "…they seem to represent a class being decomposed by the pressure of capitalism. Where economic power has been maintained, it has been done by the traditional relations of production being transformed into, or linked with capitalist relations. Chiefs become landlords charging economic rents through fees paid by recruiting agencies. They use as their personal wealth the mineral royalties paid for rights to use what was once communal land. Those who have been able to use these techniques successfully have joined the bourgeoisie" (Cohen 1982:98).

The process of the formation of the landed classes in Nigeria under colonialism and neo-colonialism has marginalised the pre-colonial lords of the land or transformed them, as the case may be, into the new form of the landed classes. The founder of Marxism illustrates that the pervasive commodification by capitalism has increasingly accelerated the value of landed property. Marx (1973:276) said:

> In so far as commodity-production and thus the production of value develops with capitalist production so does the production of surplus-value and surplus product. But in the same proportion as the latter develops, landed property acquires the capacity of capturing an ever increasing production of surplus-value by means of its land monopoly and thereby, of raising the value of its rent and the price of land itself.

In the foregoing regard, Massarrat (1980:45-6) had this to say for the third world thus:

> …the national capitalist classes of the countries of the 'Third World" are, on the one hand, as the land owing classes of their countries in a position to utilise their landed property for the appropriation of ground rent. Therefore they can redistribute surplus-value in favour of their national accumulation fund. But on the other hand, as a component of international bourgeoisie, they are forced, in view of associated dangers for capitalism, to recognise and take into account the limits of their power. Similarly, the developed capitalist states are forced to recognise the sovereignty of the nascent bourgeois classes in the countries of the Third World; which they themselves have brought into being; they are forced to make concessions to them given their mutual interests and structural interdependence.

The foregoing position of the Marxist school captures the main kernel of the changing relationship between the landed/aristocracy bourgeoisie of the Third World and the imperialist bourgeoisie of metropolies or the advance capitalist countries but represented by their branches in the Third World and the dominant imperialist classes of the transnational corporations or monopoly financial capital. In some cases, the dialectical changes transform the pliant dependant landed aristocracy/bourgeoisie into a "radical", progressive and truly reformist bourgeoisie. In the process, they become to a certain degree, a breech on the free and banditry hands of metropolitan imperialism (Tedheke 1993:64-9). Consistently, Nigeria since the 47 years of its independence has by no means produced a 'radical" progressive and indeed reformist bourgeoisie. To further buttress the foregoing, the statement accredited to two prominent Federal Ministers, Zana Buka Diphcharima (Trade) and Waziri Ibrahim (Economic Development) in the 1961 House of Representatives debate on the 1962-8 National Development Plan was a case in point. Osoba (1978:64-9) cited them as saying:

> You know very well that if we want to go very quickly in our economic changes, we cannot easily do it without creating a certain amount of trouble in this country … The imperialist have got various means of defending their monopoly. They have got their newspapers and televisions and they can go to any extent to tell lies. If we want to really set about improving the economy of our country in a particular way, they would say we are communists. They can make our countrymen suspect our every move. If they do not succeed by false propaganda, by calling us all sorts of names, if they fail to make us unpopular in order to win their case, they can arrange assassinations. They can go to any extent without discrimination.

The pronouncements of the two First Republic Ministers firmed the earth upon which Osoba (1978:66) stands thus:

> The process by which under classical colonial rule and in the period of spurious decolonisation the Nigerian domestic economy and its potential bourgeois ruling class were structurally integrated in the global imperialist economy I have discussed elsewhere and they need not detain us here. The critical point is the implication of this structural integration for the performance both of the Nigerian economy and its national bourgeoisie

3.2.4 The Nature of the Dominant Classes and Intra-Class Struggle

We have noted earlier the characteristics of this bourgeoisie, known variously as the rentier/landed/comprador/commercial bourgeoisie which became a mere intermediary between foreign monopolies and the Nigerian state as such forming a "commercial triangle" (Turner 1982:155). As it is not ready to revolutionise the decadent colonial economy, the rising comprador or landed/rentier classes in Nigeria accepted to operate within the crisis structures of the colonial economy. In the process, they contributed to sustaining ignorantly or otherwise the decadence of dependent capitalism and thus working against democracy. Afraid to revolutionise economic production and setting the seal along the unpredictable primary agricultural export produce would make the regionalised landed comprador bourgeoisie to scamper for breath in the events of world market commodity price crises. As a result, the scramble for state power is always intensified in the inter-class and intra-class struggle. According to Dimla (1988:12-13), "As a result of the importance of the state in the Third World, the struggle for state power becomes a life-and-death matter. This relationship has given rise to intense intra-class struggles in the Third World countries; a situation which is responsible for most of the civil crises in these countries. The logic behind the intense struggle among the petty bourgeoisie in the Third World is that they compete for access to state power with the sole aim of using the state power to their own advantage".

Unmindful of the place home grown production and the revolution it plays in easing the intense intra and inter-classes struggles and by depending on the neo-colonial economies of export raw commodity production hinged on the vagaries of world

commodity prices, created the basis for national vulnerabilities and the intensification of underdevelopment which undermined regional economic strength in Nigeria's First Republic. The unchanging structural basis of the landed/rentier economy and with collapse of the world primary export commodity prices after the Korean War of 1953 prior to Nigeria's independence undermined the economic basis of the dominant regional ruling classes. The problem with the landed or comprador bourgeoisie is that they refused because of their complicity with imperialism consciously or unconsciously to unravel their own historical dilemma. It papers over colonialism and the social structure it brought into being in the colonies which:

> … were coextensive with the penetration of the capitalist mode of production, for they were brought about by the invasion of a capitalism struggling to defeat its internal contradictions. Extending primary production and developing new sources of raw materials meant extending the capitalist mode of production. It also meant the extension of agrarian capitalism, the proletarianisation of some of the peasants and the rudimentary development of a local bourgeoisie. In these ways trade promoted the integration of African economies into the world capitalist system (Ake 1981:36).

Ake (1981:36) further said:

> The capitalist penetration of African economies created some fundamental affinities between the African economy and that of the colonising power. They controlled development of the African economy in the interest of the metropole which went along with the expansion of colonial trade, meant structural links and structural inter-dependence, for instance in the division of labour between primary production and manufacture, and in the dependence of economic growth in the colony on the metropole's demand for colonial imports. At the same time the emerging class division of the colony which trade stimulated and nourished was soon to create critical link between the colony and the metropole. This critical link was the common interests of the colonising bourgeoisie and the African bourgeoisie.

The common interests are for the survival of imperialism both metropolitan bourgeoisie and its local wing in Africa and indeed Nigeria, and or their landed/rentier bourgeoisie. The landed bourgeoisie unconscious of the fact that the structures called into being by its mentors are undermining their legitimacy as they have been unable to fulfil their historic duty of the productive organisation of society, would ideologise global economic

down-turns in ethnic, regional and sectional ideological ferment and such were intensified during elections and as such they used all the weapons in their arsenals to their advantage. Every economic misfortune arising from the faulty laws of *comparative advantage,* from the ever degenerating terms of trade and from the crises of economic down-turns, all resulting in the intense battles to control the federal centre by the regionalised landed/rentier bourgeoisie was always ideologised in sectionalist tendencies by the three dominant regional landed/rentier/comprador ethnic bourgeoisie. They saw these as the Ibos against Hausas (Hausa-Fulanis), the Hausa-Fulani against the Ibos, Yorubas against the Hausas-Fulanis, and Ibos against the Yorubas and so on as the case may be. Thus the material base of this inter and intra-ethnic bitterness and its class character was and is being ignored by the ethnic, sectional, cultural and regional chauvinists/intellectuals.

We have noted in one of our propositions that ***the intensifications of the contradictions between the comprador classes and the imperialist bourgeoisie in periods of global economic depressions lead to instabilities and even wars in a dependent capitalist social formation.*** In not situating the crises leading to the Nigerian Civil War in this dynamics is a disservice to the Nigerian people and their efforts in state and nation building. In seeing these only in geo-ethnic dynamics would make our people to play into the hands of imperialism and their internal Nigerian collaborators. It would make us to avoid like a plague the class character of the various crises that laced the First Republic. It will make us to apply the secondary geo-ethnic models as the primary or independent variables thus neglecting the class or economic instrument of analysis which is the primary variable. However, the deteriorating conditions of the working people leading to the workers strike of 1964 should put to rest the geo-ethnic interpretations of the crises that led to the Civil War. Despite the idiosy of the peasantry, the 1964 workers strike, a product of the deteriorating conditions of the working class was more of the heavy burden the peasant carried after the collapse of the World commodity prices of the Korean War induced boom. Thus the crises that led to the coup and counter coup of 1966 were products of class and intra-class struggles resulting from the collapse of the economic bases of the various regions.

3.2.5 Exposing the Class Content of Ethnicity

In the words of Nafziger (1983:32) since the hostilities engendered in the colonial social structure and indeed in the neo-colonial social structure, cannot be directed against the powerful foreign oppressors it is transferred to an indigenous scapegoat. This is aggression transfer which is inimical to inter-ethnic relations. The stereotypical approaches in our description of Nigerians in their shortcomings instead of their achievements is a case in point. The ethnicisation of Nigerian politics and the conflicts it generates is to serve as ideological cover for the material interests of both the colonial bourgeoisie represented by the monopoly foreign trading companies and their Nigerian counterparts or the comprador bourgeoisie. Thus ethnicity performs the function of mystification and obscurantism (Nnoli 1978:13). In the views of Seibel (1967:228) cited by Diamond (1988:241):

> Comparing cooperation in politics with that in daily life (in Nigeria in the First Republic-my emphasis) … inter-ethnic relations are much better where the population works together-e.g. in a factory-than where politicians collaborate. Political tensions between ethnic groups can not be taken as an adequate measure of the relations between all the members of these groups, who usually work harmoniously together.

In the 1964 workers' strike over the nonchalant attitude of the Federal Government and the ruling on the Morgan recommendations, Diamond (1988: 175) said that "the base of support for the strike had continued to grow over the course of the stalemate. Many domestic servants refused to work, and at rallies and meetings in towns, workers were often joined by large members of unemployed." That was not all, Diamond (1988 179) further stressed:

> …ethnicity was notable for its absence - for perhaps the first time in a major Nigerian political conflict. In this sense, the strike and the conflict underlying it represented a truly 'cross-cutting' cleavage. The General strike drew both mass support and leadership from all major ethnic groups. For the labour movement, this was not a new phenomenon but a reflection of the basic irrelevance of ethnicity, even to those disputes that had deeply divided it in the past… There is also evidence to suggest that among the workers themselves there was a good deal less ethnic antagonism and more positive feeling toward other ethnic groups than is commonly imagined. Thus despite the deep troubling issues raised by the conflict, its transcendence of ethnicity was a hopeful sign for those who saw

> ethnic polarisation as the nation's greatest threat. To the extent that the workers class-consciousness and opposition to the political class (sic) persisted, the General Strike might have represented an important step toward diffusing, if not purging, the curse of 'tribalism' in politics.

Those who would not accept the class dynamics of post-colonial Nigeria and indeed that of First Republic could see the class alliance between the workers and the lumpen-proletariate as a struggle to redress the injustices imposed by the colonial political economy in its new form of neo-colonialism. The class character of the 1964 workers' strike was not hinged on wages alone. In the view of Diamond (1988; 178)" … the protest over wages was only one element of the conflict. Another powerful motivation for the strikes-without which they might never have occurred, was the extreme inequality in the official structure of wages and benefits and the glaring level of corruption and extravagant consumption. As part of the struggle for redistribution, union leaders demanded not only pay increases for the workers but pay cuts for the senior officials. This current of discontent challenged the whole structure of domination by the political classes (sic), including their authority to rule. Thus the battle was drawn between the dominant and the dominated classes which was however deflected into ethnic consciousness which is secondary and not primary. It is to cover up the whole structure of domination over the working class, the peasantry and the lumpen proletariat by the comprador classes and their imperialist mentors. What we have cited earlier from Ake (1981: 36) that the critical link was the common interests of the colonising bourgeoisie and the African bourgeoisie manifested clearly in the workers strike over Morgan recommendations. Diamond (1988: 179) said:

> In the opposing side was a narrowly based coalition of the Federal Government and the nation's private employers, organised loosely into the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association. Because most of the private employers were European (mainly British) firms-employing 38 percent of all wage earners and 80 per cent of all those in the private sector–the Government was essentially allied in the conflict with foreign enterprise. This laid it open to charges of 'neo-colonialism', a vulnerability which radical forces did not fail to exploit and which did nothing to enhance the legitimacy of the Government's position.

3.3 The Ruling Class Interests, Regional Disparities and the Ideological Posturing of Geo-Ethnicity in the First Republic

The problem of the realisation of its history as a ruling class, though fractured along regional basis, is the basic crisis of the Nigerian bourgeoisie. In the capitalist metropoles, the ruling class acquired economic power before asserting its political domination through the great revolutions of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. However, contrary was the case in the neo-colonies to which Nigeria belongs. In Nigeria as in any other neo-colonial state, politics and the control of the state became the medium towards the primitive accumulation of capital and hence it became a do-or-die affair. The statement of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana that we should seek first political freedom after which the rest things would be added was taken selfishly by the Nigerian comprador bourgeoisie. According to Nafziger (1983:33-3): "The nationalist movement, spearheaded by new elite was promoted mainly by persons who expected to gain economically and politically. Between the first regional elections of 1951 and the overthrow of parliamentary rule in 1966, the elite consisted primarily of high-ranking politicians, indigenous rulers, senior civil servants, leading businessmen, and professionals. Most of them came to prominence after World War II, when the British handed positions, patronage, perquisites and economic benefits to Nigerians so they were favourably placed to rule after independence".

Ever since 1949 when Britain cornered the rear-guard of the nationalist movement, when she was able to diffuse and deflect the fire-brand nationalism of the Zikist Movement and Labour after the Iva Valley Massacre of 1949, when the emerging new regionalised dominant classes were first consulted by the British in a constitutional review, the "peoples" of Nigeria have been engaged in a continual class and intra-class struggles for a share in the economic benefits of decolonisation and independence which have however been coloured always in regional and ethnic tendencies. The two coups d'etat of 1966 and the Civil War of 1967-70 were the most virulent of the struggles (Nafziger 1983:34). Diamond (1988:240) noted that restricting the causes of the Nigerian crisis prior to the Civil War to "…the arrogance and desire of domination of the Northern leaders" was highly inadequate. But certainly this factor at the intersection

of class and culture played a role. That was not all, the culture of settlement which made the Eastern Regional dominant class under the NCNC to play into the hands of the NPC in an ill-fated wedlock of the1960 had also a class character of associating with the centre to share in the national cake. This is the dominant trait of the comprador landed/rentier Nigerian bourgeoisie wherever it may be found.

3.3.1 Population Disparities

Despite the fact that the North had a predominance and a pre-eminence in Nigerian politics there were indicators that tended to constrain its bid to hold on to power. The issue of population held out favourably for the North but that was principally in theory as the rise in Middle Belt political consciousness tended to breech that population superiority and thus posed a threat to the Northern hegemonic tendency in the First Republic. The threat of losing power informed the anti-democratic repressive tendencies and anti-opposition in the North by the NPC leading to brutal suppressions of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). It led to the marginalisation of the minority ethnic groups in the North in the 1950s which posed a problem in the national question. The other regions were not left out in this problem of the national question

Table 3.1: **Populations of Major Ethnic Communities in Nigeria, 1963 Census**

Ethnic Community	**Population (thousands)**
Hausa	11,653
Yoruba	11,321
Ibo	9,246
Fulani	4,784
Kanuri	2,259
Ibibio	2,006
Tiv	1,394
Ijaw	1,089
Edo	955
Anang	675
Other Nigerians	10,776
Other Africans	55
Non-Africans	47
Unspecified	10
Total	**55,670**

Source: Nigeria, Office of Statistics, Population Census of Nigeria 1963:

111. Combined National Figures (Lagos 1968: 10-11) cited by Nafziger 1983: 33

In the 1950s and in the First Republic, the intensification of the inter-regional and inter-ethnic struggles were products of the class interests of the dominant regionalised ruling classes. Population became the key factor in the struggle for the perquisites of political spoils in the First Republic and till date. According to Ukpabi (1989:109), "… the political conflicts relate to who controls political power either in a region, a state or at the centre. Before the Civil War, certain majority ethnic groups controlled the political

power in each region while they fought one another for the control of the centre. The Northern Region, with its apparent numerical superiority, managed easily to dominate the centre …matters were not improved by the fact that the competing groups exploited their numerical or other advantages to the full in the political struggle in the sure knowledge that whichever group won also took all"

The foregoing fact was why the census of 1963 took a dramatic turn as a conflict generator.

Table 3.2: **Population of Nigeria by Regions, 1952-53 and 1963 Census**

Region	**1952-53 Census**	**1963 Census**
Northern	16.8	29.8
Eastern	7.2	12.4
Western	4.6	10.3
Mid-West	1.5	2.5
Lagos (Federal Capital)	0.3	0.7
Total	**30.4**	**55.7**

Sources: Nigerian Office of Statistics, Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1964

(Lagos, 1964): cited by Nafziger 1983: 40.

As the 1962 census was to commence, the feelings amongst the regional dominant classes was its implications for the balance of power in post-independence Nigeria which thus shaped the meaning of the census. Since the 1952 census, people have come to understand the degree to which recorded human numbers determined the political weight of regions and areas within regions and the proportion of the political spoils attached to the politics of human numbers (Diamond, 1988:131-2). In the political economy of unproductive capital the political advantages of games of numbers is the

underpinning of political power and primitive accumulation of capital. The import of numbers therefore cannot be over-emphasised for the unproductive comprador/rentier primitive accumulators. The 1962 census thus became the focus of politicians and with intense anticipation for the Southern politicians to alter the balance in its favour. They hope to use the census to turn the table against the North that had enjoyed population majority which gave the NPC majority in the House of Representatives. In order for the Southern politicians to reverse the dominance of the North and its political party, the NPC, keen interest was placed on the 1962 census. The North equally was not left out in these expectations. According to Aluko (1965:377) cited by Diamond (1988:132)

> The more literate people became over-zealous about the value of a census and they were prepared to do anything, not only to enumerate all their people, but also, if possible, to engage in double or triple counts. The political leaders also became even more enthusiastic than others about the census returns, because they regarded them as an instrument of political power.

Table 3:3 **Official Population Figures, 1952-53 and 1962 Census**

Regions	**1952-53 Census (in millions)**	**1962 Census (in millions)**	**Percent Increase**
North	16.8	22.5	33.6
East	7.2	12.4	72.2
West	4.6	7.8	69.5
Mid-West	1.5	2.2	46.6
Lagos	0.3	0.7	133.3
Total	30.4	45.6	50.0

Source: Aluko, (1965) cited by Schwarz (1968: 163) cited by Diamond (1988: 133)

We have noted earlier that access to the state or control of the state in a comprador political economy matters much to those who profit from the state and indeed political spoils. In this respect, therefore, the battle for the control of such a state always assumes a life-or-death matter. The comprador bourgeoisie both new and old who

have had little or no stead in economic rationality, but who have depended on the sweat of the poor whose wealth they alienate for their own interest, would do everything or anything in their power to maintain those instruments that would allow them to control and manipulate the state apparatus. One thing was common to all the regions in the 1962-63 census issues, it was for each region seeking to have dominance at the Federal centre, in order to control the vast resources at the disposal of the Federal Government. The controversial 1962 census commenced on 13 May and by July all the figures for the North and East had been received at the Headquarters in Lagos. As table 3.3 has shown, the population of the East had grown by over 70-percentage increase in a decade and the figures of the West equally showed a comparable percentage increase. In contrast, the figures of the North indicated an increase of only about a third over the last ten years. If the figures were accepted the South would have had its historical ambition of a population majority in the nation (Diamond 1988:33).

Table 3.4 **Nigeria Population Figures: Reported and Estimated (in Millions)**

Region	**(1) 1952-53 Census***	**(2) 1962 Census**	**(3) 1962 Revised**	**(4) 1963 Revised**	**(5) 1963 Estimate**	**(6) Upper Estimate**
North	16.84	22.50	31.00	29.80	23.20	25.81
East	7.22	12.40	12.30	12.40	10.17	11.20
West	4.60	7.80	7.80	10.30	6.64	7.39
Mid-West	1.49	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.15	2.39
Lagos	0.27	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.46	0.46
Total	**30.40**	**45.60**	**54.00**	**55.7**	**42.60**	**47.25**

Sources: Adapted by Diamond, (1988:154) from Schwarz, (1968:163) and Aluko, (1965:374)

The Northern and Western census were conducted in 1952 and the Eastern census in 1953. Estimate of increases (columns 5 and 6) are calculated accordingly; 4 percent annual growth rate assumed in both estimates (5 and 6).

In the politicisation of census, it has created a fundamental problem of development. It has made it impossible for Nigerians to know their real human numbers for the purpose of national planning. Impartial analyses are agreed that it was much less than the official figures of 55 million. Almost certainly, it was closer to the 45.6 million originally reported in 1962, and this was probably inflated, although the original Northern figure seemed about right. The final 1963 figure represented a ten-year increase of 83 percent and unheard of annual population growth rate of 5.7 percent (Diamond 1958:153). Such national sabotage in the name of regional interests and perpetuated by the regional comprador landed/rentier classes was a complete disservice to the nation and Nigerians. The dominant classes intended to use the inflated census figures; for the Southern comprador classes to undercut the Northern dominance of Federal parliament; and for the Northern regional dominant classes with the 1962 reversed figures to continue their hegemony over the Federal parliament and therefore, their control of Federal power and political spoils. As we had noted earlier, the bases of revenue for the regions had collapsed because of the dwindling world commodity prices in 1955/56 in cocoa from the West, groundnut and cotton from the North, palm produce from the East and rubber/palm produce from Mid-West. For these products, the principle of derivation prevailed and thus the regions were stronger than the centre. However, the collapse of the fortunes of the regions and the rise in the profile of the centre with the discovery of crude oil in which petroleum profit tax (ppt) and royalties accruing to the Federal Government made the centre very attractive politically. The dwindling agricultural contribution to national wealth and the rise of petroleum are indicated in tables 5 and 6. It should also be noted that the changed revenue formula had equally eroded the revenue base of the regions as it became 50/50 each for both the regions and the centre as against 100% to regions prior to independence.

Table 3.5: **Share of Agriculture in Total Export Value**

Year	Total Export (N Millions)	Agricultural Export (N in Millions)	Agriculture as % of Total
1964	429.4	304.0	70.80
1965	536.6	327.4	61.01
1966	568.2	292.6	51.50
1967	540.0	264,6	49.00
1968	467.0	269.7	57.75
1969	638.0	278.2	40.73
1970	885.0	286.5	32.38

Source: Federal Office of Statistics, Annual Abstracts, Various Issues.

Table 3.6: **Yearly Crude Oil proceed 1958-1970**

Year	Proceeds (N)
1958	1,784,000.00
1959	5,270,000.00
1960	8,414,000.00
1961	22,664,000.00
1962	34,412,000.00
1963	40,352,000.00
1964	64,112,000.00
1965	136,194,000.00
1966	183,884,000.00
1967	142,100,000.00

1968	77,695,000.00
1969	301,365,390.00
1970	514,168,536.00

Source: Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Nigerian Oil Industry Statistical Bulletin 1981: 28.

3.3.2 Disparities in Land Areas

With such cultural diversities, it was quite reasonable that some degree of self-determination be accorded each area in Nigeria hence the idea of a federation was adequate in trying to create the basis for a truly one Nigeria. The discourse on how the Nigerian state should be reorganised has been a long standing one. However, opinions varied significantly as regards the focus or direction of how things should go. Matters were not helped as national integration was not in the agenda of British colonialism. According to Ikime (1987 :23) "In acting as they did, the British were pursuing their own goals, goals which most certainly did not include the promotion of Nigerian unity". Smock and Bentis-Enchil (1975:6) on Africa, noted that:

> Given their limited goals colonial administrators could afford to neglect the promotion of a sense of national identity. Viable modern and independent states, however, require a certain minimum degree of cohesion and consensus.

Lacking the basis of cohesion and national consensus has been a product of British creation in Nigeria and as it has been observed by Smock and Bentsi-Enchill - it is all over colonial Africa. One of the ominous legacies bequeathed to Nigeria was the unbalanced federation in very unequal regional structures. The amalgamation of 1914 seen by a group in the 1950 as a mistake would have been used by Lugard to redress the imbalance in the light of advice offered by his aides. In refusing to take that noble advise Ikime (1987:22) said "… Frederick Lugard gave solidity to Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria as definite political expressions instead of points of the compass. To that extent the colonial situation facilitated the emergence of what we now describe as a North-South dichotomy in our national life. In 1939, the British split the smaller South

into East and West while the bigger North was, for various reasons, left intact. The British not only thereby ensured that the South of 1914 ceased to have true political meaning, as East and West became centres of political activity, but they also created the situation in which the North, as one giant unit within colonial Nigeria, was given a most favoured status."

Table 3.7: **Area and Population of Nigeria by Region**

Region	**Area (in sqm[2)]**	**Population 1952/53 Million**	**Population 1963 Million**
North	282,782	16.8	29.9
West	29,100	4.6	10.3
East	29,484	7.2	12.3
Mid-West	14,922	1.5	2.5
Lagos	1,181	0.3	0.7
Total	**357.469**	**30.4**	**55.6**

Source: Nigeria Year Book, Walter Schwarz: Nigeria, London Pall Mall Press, (1968 : 163)

In population as well as in size, the Northern Region in Federal Nigeria was very much larger than the Eastern and Western Regions combined. It was therefore feared that this form of unbalanced federation would create an ominous threat to the stability of the system (Ezera 1964:247). In the opinion of Mill (1946:299) in respect of federal forms of government:

> There should not be any state so much more powerful than the rest as to be capable of lying 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; if there be two, they will be irresistible when they agree; and whenever they differ,

everything will be decided by a struggle of ascendancy between the rivals.

In all the constitutional developments from 1922 to 1963, the privileged position of the North in land area and population was maintained. Irrespective of the 1914 Luagardian Amalgamation, the Clifford Constitution of 1922 kept the North legislatively separate from the South. It was not until the Richard's Constitution came into effect in 1947 that the North and South came under common laws. But since the legislatures of the Richard's Constitution were, strictly speaking, not law making bodies, as the Nigerian members had no power to initiate bills, it can be argued that it was only with the coming into effect of the Macpherson Constitution of 1951, that leaders of the North, and those of the East and West began to interact meaningfully. By that time, however, fifty years of separate development under British influence had created such differences between the North and the West and East that the Macpherson Constitution could hardly be operated (Olusanya: 1980 in Ikime ed. cited in Ikime 1987:22-3). Each of those regions had a dominant ethnic group; in the North was the Hausa-Fulani, in the East the Ibo and in the West the Yorubas. It is not the presence of these dominant ethnic groups that is at issue but the ethnic politics that has been consolidated that posed the problem but this problem can only be properly understood within the class and material interest that stirs it up. According to Okoye (1979:80):

> …the inter-tribal (inter-ethnic- my emphasis) hatred and distrust that exist in Nigeria today is the artificial creation of the visionless political tin-gods who see in the stirring up of primordial ethnic sentiments their only chance to power and influence.

In table 3.7 it is clear that the North had during the First Republic the power to realise its political interests on almost any issue. The Northern majority in the parliament meant a narrow NPC majority hence the deadly struggle over the 1962/63 census and the revised estimates placing the North securedly on top. That the North had the power– i.e., the numbers in parliament – to prevail underscores once again what cannot be stressed too repeatedly: the inherent tension in the federal structure inherited from the British. The consolidation of the Northern emirates and minorities into a single region

with a majority of the federation's population was probably the most significant and unfortunate legacy of British rule. This bizarre version of federalism biased the political system toward domination by Northern conservatives and so made for a fundamental contradiction between political power, controlled by the North, and social and economic development, which found the South, quite self-consciously, at a much higher level (Sklar 1965a:209 cited by Diamond 1988:155).

3.3.3 Other Disparities

In the view of Nafziger (1983:32) "British rule exacerbated differences of class, region, and community in Nigeria. The colonial government did not need deliberately to divide to rule. Foreign rule itself is sufficient to cause divisions and conflict. Since hostility cannot be directed to the powerful foreign oppressor, it is transferred to an indigenous scapegoat." The approach of the British to the development of Nigeria prior to World War II was to support the development of separate institutions and identities for different ethnic and religious communities, a system of "native administration" to reflect communal loyalty and fragmented elements of clans, and an educational system aimed at cultivating a "love of tribe" (ethnic group – my emphasis). Even in the 1920s, Governor Hugh Clifford clearly emphasised that the idea of a Nigerian nation was both inconceivable and dangerous (Nafziger 1983).

We partially agree with Nafziger that "colonial government did not need deliberately to divide to rule. Foreign rule itself is sufficient to cause divisions and conflict." This somehow agrees with Marx (1978:9) who said, "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under given circumstances directly encountered and inherited from the past. The tradition of all generation of the dead weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living." The nightmare of the British colonial experience in North America we had noted earlier could be said to have influenced or moderated that country's colonial enterprise in Nigeria and therefore Nafziger ascription of independent life to British colonialism in Nigeria might not be totally true. The process of decolonisation was never indifferent to the entrenchment of the status quo or foreign capital dominance in

all of Africa. The colonial rulers made sure they unseated the progressive African leaders and put in their places the so-called moderate Africans of their master's voice. According to Chinweizu (1978:162), the British imperialist power and that of France found ready lackeys through which they bribed to submission and therefore the status quo was willingly accepted. We have noted earlier two Nigerian Federal Ministers who said in 1961 that they were scared of tampering with the colonial economic legacy bequeathed to Nigeria by the British.

In the words of Ikime (1987:24), it is difficult to resist the fact that the British were anxious that the North, which they regarded as less radical (less nationalistic – my emphasis) than the South, should be at the helm of affairs at independence. That way, they hoped that their continuing interests and stakes in Nigeria would be more securedly preserved. It was in the foregoing respect that made Chinweizu (1978:164) to say that:

> The feudal princes would therefore have to get power, to protect themselves as well as to keep the big bourgeois ambition of the Southerners from leading Nigeria out of the control of the British.

The preponderance of royalty and their retinue dominated Northern politics prior to the January 1966 coup. It was the politics of the feudal aristocracy versus the rest of the North-epitomised by the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). The total crushing of NEPU by the Northern People's Congress (NPC) put a lie to the ethnic tone of Nigerian politics and indeed supports the class dimension. We have noted earlier that "… a national dominant class never existed in Nigeria before or during the First Republic rather, class domination developed as a regional and ethnic phenomenon. With each of Nigeria's three (later four) powerful regions – virtual societies unto themselves – dominant classes emerged, or in the case of the traditional aristocracy in the Muslim North, a dominant class incorporated new social elements to modernise and secure its position" (Diamond 1988:31-2).

While the historical roots, cultural orientations and bases of these dominant classes

were sharply different, they were, increasingly, the products of a common process (Diamond 1988:32). According to Sklar (1979:537) "…class relations, at bottom (were) determined by relations of power, not production." In either case the structure of class domination and individual placement in that class came to be determined by the relationship to the expanding state, which controlled not only the means of coercion and extraction but, increasingly the means of production as well. The state thus became the instrument for the formation and consolidation of class domination (Sklar, 1979; Diamond 1988:32). In the two regions of Southern Nigeria, political office became the most reliable and desirable route to membership in emerging dominant class which Sklar (1963:480-94) termed the "new and rising class" – and government power became the primary means for the accumulation of personal wealth (Diamond 1988:32). Since originally the emergent dominant class was not rooted in production but used as a weapon of economic domination, the ideology of sectionalism, that is, regionalism and ethnicity, thus ethnicity became an ideology of economic domination in the regions and regionalism the ideology of domination at the federal level. In the North, Hausa-Fulani hegemony took shape but underneath it was the feudal aristocratic Fulani domination. In the East, the Ibos dominated its politics and the West by the Yorubas. In all original three regions in the First Republic politics of ethnic domination triumphed but was a cover for material economic interests or class power.

We have accepted Sklar's view that the "…class relations, at bottom, (were) determined by relations of power, not production." This will be exacerbated with the contradictions inherent in an unproductive economy that is dependent on the fallouts from the tables of the forces of imperialism. The inherent emphasis on the 'sharing of the national cake' rather than baking it, is a product of the unproductive nature and the incapacity of the landed or comprador bourgeoisie to act out its historic mission as an organiser like its counterparts in Europe, North America and Japan. Its only way of staying relevant is to put its incapacity in ideological forms of primordialism, to accuse others of being the problems of their own people or ethnic groups, to distort history and thus cover-up its class character as one of the oppressors and indeed class oppressors of their own people. Thus the Northern feudal aristocracy covered up its class

domination and oppression of its people by the vague concepts or slogan of "One North One people" and later in veneer of one religion thus painting the North as classless. However, the domination of the Northern House of Assembly by the royalty and its retinue from 1961-65 must put paid to the speculations that the Nigerian Civil War should be approached from the geo-ethnic models rather than the class or political economy model.

Table 3.8: **Northern House of Assembly: Class Composition, 1961-65**

		(r)	(n)	(v)	(c)	(s)	(?)	(S)	(T)	(J)	Total a	Trad. Tittles b	Total c
House of Assembly As a whole	No	47	32	7	6	2	5	99	14	3	116	77	138
	%	40.5	27.6	6.0	5.2	1.7	4.3	85.3	12.1	2.6	100	55.8	
Returned Member	No	29	18	5	3	1		56	7		63	45	63
	%	46.0	28.6	7.9	4.8	1.6		88.9	11.1		100	71.4	
New Members	No	18	14	2	3	1	5	43	7	3	53	32	75
	%	34.0	26.4	3.8	5.7	1.9	9.4	81.1	13.2	5.7	100.1	42.7	
Ministers	No	13	10	2	3	1	1	30	3		33	25	38
	%	39.4	30.0	6.1	9.1	3.0	3.0	90.9	9.1		100	65.9	
Returned Ministers	No	12	9	1	2	1		25	3		28	20	28
	%	42.9	32.1	3.6	7.1	3.6		89.3	10.7		100	71.4	
New Ministers	No	1	1	1	1		1	5			5	5	10
	%	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0		20.0	100			100	50	

Key
(r) royalty
(n) nobility
(v) vassalage
(c) clientage
(s) slave dissent
(?) unknown
(S) total sarakuna
(T) talakawa

a. Total= total members whose class was known
b. Trad. Tittles=members with traditional titles
c. Total=total number of members

Sarakuna the class percentage are based on the total numbers whose class positions were known. The percentage of members holding traditional titles is based on the total number of members

Source: Whitaker, Jr. The Politics of Tradition cited by Kukah, M.H. (1994:12)

The difference in world view between Northern feudal aristocracy and the emergent regional bourgeoisie of both the East and the West existed and this affected their struggles for state power as dominant classes. In other words, the cultural differences have played a role in the dichotomy between the North and South and this hardened and heightened the problems of nation building. It created the situation in which as we have noted earlier, the Northern aristocracy and the emergent Southern bourgeoisie of the East and West manipulated ethnic and indeed regional sentiments for their own ends (Randall and Theobald 1985: 50). These manipulations in whatever form were not in the interest of the dominant regionalised ruling landed aristicracy/rentier/comprador classes. In their views (Nnoli 1978; Mafeje 1971: 258-9; Diamond 1988: 43) said"… in an economy where state power was the essential instrument of class formation and consolidation, in a polity were mass electoral mobilisation was necessary for the acquisition and retention of state power, and in a society where different ethnic groups hotly compete for scarce resources and rewards, with scant cross-cutting solidarities or national ties to moderate that competition, 'tribalism' (sic) became the natural reflex and indispensable vehicle of the rising class. By whipping up communal fears and suspicion, by casting each election as a threat to the sacred value and even the survival of the ethnic community-by establishing 'tribalism' (sic) as the ideology of politics – the politicians and business allies of each regional party were able to entrench themselves in power". Apart from the different cultural backgrounds, the differences in the opening of North and the South to Western education expanded the social gap between them. It seriously slowed the pace of interaction and cross-cutting cleavages during the colonial periods and in the post-colonial era of the First Republic. According to Ikime (1987:21) "…independent Nigeria has had to find some way of accommodating the fact of uneven-educational development in the country. In broad terms, it became accepted that the old North was educationally backward even though there were areas in the North that had school before certain areas in the South".

Table 3.9: **Differences in Modern Education between Northern and Southern Nigeria (1906- 1957)**

	Southern Nigeria Population 13.2 Million (1952-3 census)		Northern Nigeria Population 16.8 Million (1952 census)	
	Student Enrolment		Student Enrolment	
Year	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
1906	11,872	20	Na	Nill
1926	38,249	518	5,210	Nill
1947	538,391	9,657	70,962	251
1957	2,343,317	28,208	185,484	3,643

Source: Hans Carol: "The Making of Nigeria Political Regions" In *Journal of African and Asian Studies Vol lll* Nos 4&5 July & October 1968.

Table 3.10 **Educational Disparities and levels of Manpower Development in the First Republic**

Education : Primary 1964			First Degree Graduate (a) 1964	High level Manpower (b) 1963	
Regions	No of Schools	No of Pupils		Senior category	Intermediate
North	2,684	410,706	37	2,220	11,549
East	5,986	1,173,277	402	2,640	6,341
West	4,375	733,710	255	3,132	8,713
Lagos	124	119,073	Na	5,738	17,560

(a) Statistics for Ahmadu Bello, Ibadan, Nsukka Universities, 1964

(b) Excluding teaching and research staff.

Source: Statistics of Education in Nigeria, 1964, Federal Office of Statistics, Economic Indicators, Lagos, 1966.

As we have noted from Mafeje (1971) the differences in ethnic or language groups especially among the dominant groups in the regions became the basis for ideological

manipulations along ethnic lines. This was extended to regionalism as extension of ethnic politics for national political domination by the regionalised dominant classes. The bitter struggles resulting from the ideological coloration of geo-ethnic factors as a covering for the class and material interests of the rising ruling class in the First Republic polarised the nation's political process. The euphoria of independence had hardly died down than the bitterness and rancour of the past began to rear their ugly heads. According to Diamond (1988:65):

> … if the British and most Nigerians chose to believe that the bitterness and rancour of the past had been overcome with the achievement of nationhood, and if foreign observers knew too little of Nigeria to appreciate the depth of these divisions, there were a few who saw real dangers … the structure of social cleavages, the traditional and emergent structure of class domination, the contradictions of colonial rule, and the evolving pattern and character of political conflict did not augur well for the future of liberal democracy. It will be seen that the cultural, political, and economic conditions in Nigeria at independence were also far from what theories of democracy would consider favourable terrain for an experiment in parliamentary government.

3.4 Material Interests and Politics of the First Republic

The process of decolonisation, the struggle, splits into two camps - the genuine African liberation movements on the one hand and those who supported imperialism on the other. The compromising Nigerian nationalist leaders fell on the camp of the pro-imperialists nationalist movements. Thus the problem of national unity or the resolution of the national question has become an insoluble and indeed irreconcilable contradiction in Nigeria's national life. It was and is a product of a liberation or decolonisation movement that was half hearted. Ikime (1987:24) said that "Our leaders at the time, the bulk of whom were essentially leaders of particular ethnic groups, may have been agreed on wanting the British to leave; but they were hardly agreed on how the affairs of Nigeria were to be ordered after the British left. All that bordered them was how to secure the greatest advantage for their particular region, and within that region, there were particular dominant ethnic group. This is to say that the movement for regaining independence produced no ideology that could be the touchstone of national politics after independence. In this situation politics in independence Nigeria became a

matter of every region and every group for itself and God (if He was ever a consideration) for us all".

Thus politics of decolonisation witnessed a worsening of inter-ethnic or nationality relations. In essence those politics involved little more than negotiations and compromises aimed at reconciling the competing interests of the three regionalised ruling classes, with the British taking full advantage of the situation which they had helped to create in the first instance (Ikime 1987). In the regions the presence of a dominant ethnic group which necessarily controlled the politics of the region in the 'winner-takes-all' politics led to bitterness on the part of those who saw themselves as minorities. The entrenched bitterness arising from politics of regional major ethnic groups as against the minority groups led to the same setting up in November 23, 1957 of the Henry Willinck Commission to allay the fears of the minorities in the regions. According to Ezera (1964:252)*:*

> As a result of this inquiry, hopes were raised and inter-tribal (sic) feelings and animosities exacerbated. The demand for separate state filled the air. Yet in its recommendations, published three months after, the commission did not recommend the creation of a single new state. It did not think the creation of new states in each of the regions would provide a remedy for the fears of minorities. It feared that such recourse would only create fresh problems as each of the existing regions is so heterogeneous that there would be no end to agitation for further fragmentation. It therefore recommended that constitutional safeguards for 'minorities' be written into the constitution.

Meanwhile, in the West, the bulk of the people of today's Edo and Delta (formally Mid-west, and later Bendel) regarded themselves as minorities. While some of these joined the Yoruba dominated Action Group (AG), the majority joined the National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC), the party opposed to the AG in the West. In the North, the Middle Belt people as minority groups joined the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) or else teamed up with the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) which the late Aminu Kano led in opposition to the Northern People's Congress (NPC). In the East, the regional crisis of 1953 had resulted in a split in NCNC paving the way for the emergence of the National Independence Party (NIP) under the leadership of Eyo Ita,

the leader of the Eastern Regional Government. It later became the United National Independence Party (UNIP) that was in alliance with AG against NCNC (Ezera 1964). It championed the course of the Ogoja, Calabar and River State of Eastern minorities. At the national levels, NEPU aligned with NCNC while UMBC tended to align with AG and UNIP also aligned with AG.

At independence, therefore, Nigeria had no national leaders, no national guiding principles and thus no concept of national goals or interests in the sense of a sovereign state. In the circumstance, therefore, each leader of the regions fell back on his primordial connections and applied that as his ideology. In his book, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria,* Nnoli (1978:161) said:

> In fact the regional origin and character of AG arose from the failure of Yoruba nationalists like Awolowo and Bode Thomas to break Azikiwe's political hold on Lagos, and their inability to carve out a national following for themselves. They therefore sought their political fortunes in the politically virgin fields of the Western Region.

Dr, Nnamdi Azikiwe said in one of the conferences of the Ibo State Union chaired by Z.C. Obi that "It seems to me that God has particularly chosen the Ibo race to lead this nation and Africa from the bondage of ages." Justice Onyeama also said at a cocktail party in Island Club Lagos that, "Ibo domination is a question of time "(Ikoro 1987). The unguarded statements of these two Ibo sons left them naked as ethnic chauvinists. In the North, the core of the Northern authority was excluding non-Northerners from job opportunities because of the Northernisation Policy, and apart from expatriates, non-Northerners from South were employed on contract terms. The Sardauna referred to it as a policy which is aimed to have "Northerners gain control of everything in the country" (Dudley 1968:220; Nnoli 1978:191). The foregoing agreed with a political commentator who said that: "The old politicians had accepted, at least in the beginnings, Ziks political philosophy of seeing tribalism (sic) as a pragmatic politic" (Quest 1979:112). We have said well enough that the material interests which are class interests were behind ethnic politics in Nigeria that it need not detain us here.

The mindless over simplification of the crisis of the First Republic in ethnic or geo-ethnic colourations is to shield the culprit imperialism and their local collaborators from blame. It has been scarcely mentioned that the colonial economic structure maintained in the neo-colonial political economy had been the root cause of the crises of the First Republic and indeed the Civil War that followed. The crisis of the First Republic was therefore a collective failure of the Nigerian regionalised ruling classes to direct and mobilise Nigerians in the right economic development philosophy to cushion the crises of imperialist economic penetration of Nigeria. We have stressed the point that the collapse of the world commodity prices in 1955/56 which crashed the economic bases of the regions-East, North and West was the midwife that heralded the post-independence crises. Equally of importance was the new revenue formula that gave the Federal Government 50% and the Regions 50% in the midst of which world commodity prices crashed. The consequent struggles for federal power by the regional comprador/landed classes with the appreciation of the federal centre as a result of the increasing profile of the crude oil gave vent to inter-ethnic and inter-regional bitterness. Those who would take the reverse side of this politics of geo-ethnicity like Aminu Kano were too far in-between. According to Ikime (1987:25):

> Unfortunately for Nigeria, there were too few Aminu Kanos in the country-men who had excellent opportunities of staying with their ethnic groups and acquiring political power and the wealth which went with that power in Nigeria, but who, on principles, stood in opposition to the parties dominated by their particular ethnic group.

The emergence of the Lagos Youth Movement (LYM) later known as the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) in the 1930s was a good omen that would have created the basis for a national focus. However, its good intention notwithstanding, the NYM could not escape the inevitable consequences of the inexorable power of ethnic clannishness generated by the activities of ethnic unions and their fundamental underlying basis, such objectively determined factional competition among the emerging petty bourgeoisie and comprador bourgeoisie. It became the first major political casualty of inter-ethnic hostility and strife. The competition between Ernest Ikoli's Lagos-based

Daily Service and Nnamdi Azikiwe's West African Pilot created the basis for economic competition in the journalistic enterprise from June 1938 when Ikoli established his newspaper. This conflict of economic and professional interest helped to set the stage for events which propelled the country irretrievably into the politicisation of ethnicity. The vacant seat of the presidency of NYM vacated by Dr. K.A. Abayomi in February 1941 which was bitterly contested for between Ernest Ikoli an Ijaw and business competitor of Azikiwe and Samuel Akinsanya an Ijebu whom Zik supported but lost to Ikoli supported by Awolowo tore the organisation down the middle. A press war ensued between the Daily Service and the West African Pilot in which appeals to ethnic sentiments and arguments were dominant. Zik and the Igbos never rejoined the NYM which, after 1941, was composed mainly of key Yorubas. Thus the Southern Nigerian political scene has ever since been dominated by the cleavage between these two communal groups (Nnoli 1978:142-3).

It is interesting to note that the split in the NYM was not associated in anyway by the conflicting interest of farmers/peasants or members of the working class. Rather it involved the ownership and monopoly of the nationalist press. Nationalism serviced the interests of all strata in society but it serviced some interests more than others. The development of nationalism, nationalist movement, and the political parties depended first and foremost on the dynamics of the interest of their leaders and only peripherally, if at all, on those of the followers. The character of a movement is, therefore, determined by the interest of its leadership (Nnoli 1978:143). In clarifying the economic determinant and class character of the NYM cleavage Nnoli (1978) stressed:

> … ethnic politics arose from the rationalisation of the failure of a faction of the leadership to achieve its economic interests. The failure of Azikwe to prevent the establishment of a rival journalistic enterprise lay behind the Ikoli/Akinsanya affair and its political consequences. The interests of the faction of the emerging privileged classes became generalised and mystified as the interests of the communal group and indeed that of the ethnic group at large.

The complication of the cleavages is a product of the socio-historical station of the emergent dominant classes in the peripheral capitalist social formation in which

emphasis is on distribution rather than production. Lacking the means, organisationally to expand the economic base of the Nigerian society, they have seen politics as the only route to economic power or accumulation of wealth. The class character and interest of the nationalist parties NCNC, AG and NPC were most glaringly reflected in their activities when Nigerians assumed political positions of authority. They immediately embarked on the use of the political machinery to pursue their class interests of amassing wealth and privileges against the interest of the majority of the country, the workers and peasants. Their interest was petty bourgeois in nature, focused on relation of distribution rather than production. They are not interested in the organisation of creative production that characterise the metropolitan bourgeoisie, but only in the perquisites of the colonial political stratum or the superstructure not the substructure or relations of the organisation of production (Nnoli 1978:145).

3.4.1 Political Perquisites and Deadly Post Independence Intra-Bourgeois Struggles

The Foster-Sutton Tribunal in the East and the Coker Commission of Inquiry in the West exposed the selfish and class interests of the nationalist leaders. They used the public as a source of financial capital for their economic interests and those of the aspiring local commercial and industrial classes. The Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry into the affairs of the African Continental Bank (ACB) revealed how the family of the nationalist leader, Nnamdi Azikiwe, sustained a financial empire through the use of public funds. Similarly, the Coker Commission of Inquiry in Western Nigeria in 1962, highlighted this mingling of political/ personal and class interests in the activities of nationalist politics. It was revealed that the public funds invested in the National Investment and Properties Company Limited. (NIPC) were “loaned” to party and its rich industrialists and commercial supporters in the region. In this way, the National Bank of Nigeria and the NIPC both controlled by AG were used by the emergent comprador classes in the region to accumulate capital (Nnoli 1978:146-7).

As a matter of fact, the search for petty bourgeois and comprador bourgeois fortunes dominated the nationalist struggles for independence. Its inevitable consequences were

the regionalisation of politics and the politicisation of ethnicity. In the process, they acquired a regional political and economic outlook which limited their horizon, hampered their venturing out to the other regions economically, and encouraged them to view the regional economy as their own preserve or empire, their sphere of influence, an undisputed area of economic supremacy. This parochial attitude was reinforced by the divide-and-rule policy of the colonial power, its propaganda on behalf of ethnic differences and exclusiveness, its encouragement of the fear of ethnic domination. It resulted in exploring the regional socio-economic imbalances created by its economic activities and its choice of administrative units and political constituencies which ran along regional geographic lines (Nnoli 1978:145-9).

Table 3.11: Ethnic Distribution of The Major Parties in 1958 as Percentage of Total

Party	Igbo	Other eastern groups	Yoruba	Other Western groups	Hausa Fulani	Other Northern groups	Others
NPC	-	-	6.8	-	51.3	32.4	9.4
NCNC	49.3	9.9	26.7	5.6	2.8		5.6
AG	4.5	15.2	68.2	7.6	3.0		1.5

Sources: Richard Sklar and C.S Whitaker Jr. "Nigeria": in J.S Coleman and Carl Rosberg, Jr. *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley, Cal: University of California Press 1966: 612): Richard Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1963:324.)*:* cited by Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* (1978: 164).

Nigerians thus gained independence in October 1, 1960 as a seriously divided country whose leaders were ready to compromise to a fault for material interests and to use anything including ethnic chauvinism to achieve this material interest. With extreme cleavages between the regions and no cross-cutting relations, the problems of nation building and indeed national unity became pandemic and indeed a national disaster. With the collapse of the world commodity prices in 1955/56 after the Korean War boom, the struggle by the comprador/landed aristocratic classes over their material interests intensified. Engels (1983:9) cited Marx"… that world trade crisis of 1847 had been the

true mother of the February and March revolutions (in France), and that the industrial prosperity, which had been returning gradually since the middle of 1848 and attained full bloom in 1849 and 1850, was the revitalising force of the newly strengthened European reaction. This was decisive. A new revolution is possible only in the wake of a new crisis. It is, however, just as certain as this crisis". In an economy that is not based on industrial prosperity but on pre-modern economic relations of peasant political economy based on comprador/landed dominant classes, the revitalisating force of industrial boom is always lacking. It would crumble under the weight of its own contradictions.

The symptoms of the crisis of the First Republic or what Claude Ake would call *Revolutionary Pressures* first occurred between the intra-regional crisis of the Middle Belt and Ahmadu Ballo's NPC Government in the North in the First Republic. The Tiv crisis in the North which was a part of the Middle Belt struggle to redress the minority question in the region was a case in point. The heavy handed suppression of NEPU in the North puts a lie on those who say that Nigerian crisis of the First Republic can only lend itself to analysis on ethnic basis. Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu (1986:192) said that "…the concentration of political power in a bourgeoisie caught in the quagmire of economic crisis would force this class to resort to repressive rule, such as the sabotage of democratic rights… the political intimidation and harassment of workers and other groups and the implementation of unpopular economic measures which would have a devastating effect on the welfare of the ordinary people". Petras (1980) said that such economic crisis in a bourgeois rule always leads to the development of neofascism or a neofascist state.

Baran (1978:368) said of the newly independent neo-colonial state that"… its capitalist bourgeois component, confronted at an early stage with the spectre of social revolution turns swiftly and resolutely against its fellow travellers of yesterday, its mortal enemy of tomorrow. In fact, it does not hesitate to make common cause with the feudal elements representing the main obstacles to its development, with the imperialist rulers just dislodged by the national liberation, and with the comprador groups threatened by the

political retreat of their former principals". In this situation, the wise saying of Lord Ancton (1955:224) holds much water that"… the bonds of class are stronger than those of nationality." The example of the crushing of NEPU by NPC in the First Republic was an excellent testimony of the bond of class being stronger than that of nationality. Despite the alliance between the NCNC and NPC, the *talakawa* ally of NCNC, NEPU was haunted from pillar to post by NPC in the First Republic.

Sign of the different perceptions to the emerging Nigerian state was the 1953 crisis in the Legislative Council when the Northern ruling aristocracy opposed Anthony Enahoro's motion for independence for Nigeria in 1956. In this respect, AG and NCNC collaborated on the motion for independence in 1956 which NPC leadership was against resulting in 1953 Kano riot against Southerners (Ezera 1964). The 1953 crisis was over the interest of the regional emergent ruling classes as the Northern ruling class feared the domination of the Southern ruling classes (Nafziger 1983). At independence, the emerging comprador classes and the old lords of the land or the feudal aristocracy increasingly perceived the availability of economic perquisites and benefits as a "zero-sum-game", where gains by those politically mobilised in one region were at the expense of another region. The first major party that was effectively undermined in its regional base was the Action Group, the Western ruling party and federal opposition in 1962 (Nafziger 1983:38-9).

In other to effectively extend its political umbrella beyond the West, the A.G. under its leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, planned to project its support across a broader constituency, comprising individuals and classes from all regions who felt excluded from the distribution of patronage and lucrative positions and who might be attracted by the seemingly egalitarian programme of the party. The shift in strategy, to gain national spread, particularly in minority areas, came after its campaign for seats, and agitation for the creation of new states in minority areas in the North and East during the late 1950s. These actions of the A.G. bitterly antagonised the ruling coalition of NPC and NCNC …especially the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC), the instrument of the powerful aristocracy whose staying power depended on its dominance in an undivided

North exercising hegemony at the centre (Nafziger 1983:39).

Since the assumption of West Regional Premiership after the 1959 elections when Chief Obafemi Awolowo left to become the leader of the Federal Opposition, Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola had an eye on the perquisites at the national level as a result he and his group were dissatisfied with A.G political strategy. Akintola therefore led a minority at the A.G Convention in Jos in January 1962 that broke from the party and they were primarily supported by rural businessmen, large landlords, and cocoa plantation owners who hoped to advance their regional economic interests. Even many of those who remained within the Action Group were dissatisfied with its pan-regional, anti-capitalist strategy. The faction led by Akintola instigated a disturbance in the Western House of Assembly, which provided an excuse for the federal ruling coalition (NPC and NCNC) to declare a state of emergency in 1962, and to suspend A.G Government of Western Region for six months (Nafziger 19083:39; Ojiako 1981:96).

This struggle between the populist faction of the AG under Obafemi Awolowo and the businessmen and traditional rulers led by Akintola was encouraged by the leading partners at the federal coalition, the Northern Peoples' Congress. This showed a clear pattern of an emerging alliance since the federal coalition between NPC and NCNC was turning soured. We have noted Baran's position that,"…confronted at an early stage with the spectre of social revolution the capitalist bourgeois component of the nationalists turns swiftly and resolutely against its fellow travellers of yesterday, its mortal enemy of tomorrow. In fact, it does not hesitate to make a common cause with the feudal elements representing the main obstacle to its own development, with the imperialist rulers just dislodged by the national liberation and with the comprador groups threatened by the political retreat of their former principals." This philosophy informed N.C.N.C coalition with N.P.C, a party, completely based on feudal orientation. If history would repeat itself, the split in AG, the faction headed by Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola, his formation of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and his alignment with NPC was the repetition of the NCNC alliance with feudalism, imperialism and the comprador bourgeoisie at independence. Even at the level of

populist radicalism, the NCNC and a faction of AG under Awolowo were not prepared to stomach anything of radical politics. Daily Times (April 19, 1953) quoted Awolowo as saying:

> "… it was in the best interest of the North and of the country that neither the communist type nor gangster type of politics should gain ascendancy in the Northern Region. For if either of them did, then woe betide all decency, order and good faith in the country. I argued that it was urgent that he (Sardauna) should assert his leadership by encouraging the nationalist elements, aligning himself with them and mould their efforts (Analyst 1986:20).

3.4.2 Fascistic Tendencies and Intolerance of Oppositions

The alignment and the realignment of forces began with the crushing of the Zikist Movement after Iva Valley Massacre of 1949 over which none of the leading nationalists including Nnamdi Azikiwe raised an eyebrow. The same went for the Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) of Aminu Kano that was vehemently crushed by NPC administration of the North thus setting the stage for gangster politics which Awo had cautioned the Saduana against. The cracks that were papered over by the euphoria of independence soon came to the open with the threatening split in the NPC/NCNC coalition at the Federal level. The weakening of Western Region dominant party AG with the arrest, detention and trial of Chief Obafemi Awolowo for treasonable felony who was charged on November 2, 1962 with 26 others was the first major crack in the First Republic (Ojaiko 1981; 129). The combined forces of NPC/NCNC were mobilised to amputate the old Western Region with the excision of Mid-West from the West in 1963 (Ojiako 1981: 163-7).

The systematic and calculated crushing of the AG by the Federal alliance of NPC/NCNC with the support of the Akintola's faction now turned the United Peoples' Party (UPP) and extra-politico-legal arm-twisting adopted and disposing off the leader of the AG were to facilitate the rise of a more compliant party in the West which the UPP represented. The report of an inquiry into the financial impropriety of public funds by AG officers and a ten-year prison sentence for Awolowo (and imprisonment of his colleagues) for treason in an alleged coup d'etat plan, effectively emasculated the radical populist wing of the AG. With the severing of Mid-West out of the West after the

regional assembly suspension was lifted, Akintolas' wing of the AG the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) formed the nucleus of a new coalition, which in 1964 became the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The majority party in the West and a member of the ruling coalition in the centre (Nafziger 1983:39).

The census crisis of 1962 which returned the South in majority of the population thus turning the apple-cart became the next crisis or flash point in the First Republic. We have said severally that since the Nigerian ruling class is a comprador/landed/rentier class because of its nature, the 1962 census became something of paramount importance to both the North and South in different ways. If the South suddenly turns the majority in population then there will be more seats allocated and the hegemony of the North will go. On the other hand if the North remains dominant then it will control both the North and the centre and thus the status quo be maintained. The importance of the census was basically because it was the basis upon which parliamentary representation was proportioned. Thus the partial returns of the 1962 census alarmed the NPC because it feared that NCNC might become the dominant party in the West and the emergent Mid-West Region, and win the South and a majority of the parliamentary seats. However, protests from the North led to the suppression of the 1962 Census and a 1963 recount inspired by the NPC government gave the North the majority that closely approximated the 1952-53 official census figures. Its acceptance after much protest settled for now the fears of the dominant party in the North and at the centre (Nafziger 1983:39).

With all these happenings, the coalition between NPC/NCNC had turned soured and alignment and realignment of forces were going on prior to the 1964 Federal Election. The quick succession of events had equally threatened to undermine the security of the Ibo dominant class and its petty/comprador bourgeoisie behind the NCNC. As a result the NCNC joined with the Action Group and the Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) to form the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) opposed to the NPC/NNDP coalition, the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The campaign started by UPGA in confidence soon faded as virtually it lost the entire North before balloting took

place, because its supporters were left out of voters' lists. Also its leaders' speeches were not tolerated and were obstructed, its candidates and spokesmen were violently harassed and were arrested while making nominations. Eventually the UPGA staged election boycott anticipating that it would create a stalemate perhaps resulting in postponement and installation of a caretaker prime minister. However, this did not happen. Thus the NNA victory and the NPC/NNDP alliance or coalition was strengthened (Nafziger 1983:39-41).

The transition to self-rule began in 1951,threatened fundamentally the social dominance of the Northern feudal aristocracy, forcing it to choose between economic modernisation rapid promotion of western education or extinction, which it had previously eschewed. It had feared the domination of the North by the emergent comprador classes of the South who were far more educated. Given the stated intention of the latter to dismantle what they saw as a feudalistic and unjust social system in the North, and their political liaison with radical young *talakawa* movement in the North similarly pledged to sweeping reforms, the traditional aristocracy, the *sarakuna* found itself confronted with a choice between adaptation and extinction. The British aided the Northern aristocracy by their control of the pace of change in the North to preserve its social dominance, and to do this it had to control the emergent parliamentary process in the North. The Northern aristocracy, the *sarakuna,* was able also to draw into a political alliance its lower ranks-the educated clerks and officials of the emirates' native administrations-and the highest rank of the *talakawa*- the merchants, or *attajirai* which were the additional social segments it needed to reproduce and entrench its class dominance in Northern Nigeria (Coleman 1963: 353-68; Sklar 1963: 323-358, 502; Dudley, 1968: 134-52; Whitaker, 1970:313-54; Diamond 1988: 36).

In the process of strengthening the dominant Northern aristocracy, the colonial administration played a catalytic role in the incorporation of the *attajirai* into the dominant class, succeeding in persuading the Emir of Kano to appoint the leading Hausa merchant of that commercial capital, Alhassan Dantata, to his council

(Shawood-Smith, 1969:205-6; Diamond 1988:36-7). In the views of Sklar (1963: 335) it is the foregoing that made the fundamental difference between the North and South. In the three regions of the South, the ruling party functioned "…to foster the integration of the dominant elites on a class basis. But in the North, power was used to preserve the position of the traditional dominant class, which incorporated the rising commercial and professional elements in a subordinate role. In the South, however, the ruing parties were engines of class formation, inaugurated and controlled by modern professionals and business elements who enlisted the traditional rulers in a subordinate role" (Coleman, 1963: 284-91, 327-52: Sklar 1963: 353,385-94: Post 1963: 46-47: Diamond 1988: 37).

What these two processes shared in common was a recognition that control of state power was the necessary foundation of class formation and consolidation. In each region, state power became the unifying force that drew educated professionals, businessmen and traditional elements into a party of dominant ethnic group and welded these divers social strata into a dominant comprador/rentier class. This was possible through the vast powers delegated to the regional governments by the 1954 Lyttleton Constitution. Perhaps the most valuable of these regional powers (and crucial at the local levels as well) was the commercial patronage so vital to the formation of private wealth and business control. Government construction contracts were much less instrument for construction *per se* than for enrichment of the officials who awarded them and the politically connected 'contractors' who received them. Inflation of government purchases and contracts, loans given through the expropriated peasant surpluses through the marketing boards which were invested in the regional statutory corporations and so on (Sklar 1963: Schwatz 1977: 190-5, 208-32: Helleiner 1964:98-123: Diamond 1988:37) became many sources of primitive accumulation for the unproductive rising comprador classes of the Nigerian rentier state.

Little or no wonder that the politics of the First Republic was a do-or-die affair. The abuse of public responsibilities and resources for personal enrichment was not the random expression of individual greed: it was the deliberate, systematic effort of an

emerging dominant class to accumulate wealth and to establish control over the means of production, at public expense. Given the paucity of other means of accumulation under the tight grip of the imperialist trading companies, and the cost of maintaining and enlarging politically crucial clientele networks, such political corruption was indispensable to the progress of class formation (Diamond 1988:41). Thus the manipulation of state power by each regional party to entrench its rule has to be seen in a larger context than the mere hunger for political power. It was a process of 'enrichment' and 'entrenchment' (Schwartz, 1977) which were the primary forms of class action (Sklar 1979:547; Schwartz 1977; Diamond 1988:41) in a dependent, unorganised peripheral capitalist social formation.

As the control of the state become the basis of class formation through primitive accumulation, then the dominant class element had to control the state apparatus at any price. In a democratic polity, this meant wining elections, and in a multi-ethnic society … where expectations were growing faster than resources, no electoral strategy seemed more assured of success than the manipulation of ethnic or primordial prejudice (Melson and Wolpe 1971:19-21: Diamond 1988:41). From the first significant elections in 1951 to the last allegedly fraudulently manipulated elections of 1964 and 1965, accompanied by bitter and brutal confrontations, the regional dominant classes used ethnicity as an electoral weapon against each other and against lower-class challenges (Diamond 1988:41), thus serving as ideological weapon against the oppressed who are their class enemy.

The collapse of the economic bases of the regions and the rising profile of the federal centre resulted in the very intense intra-class struggles by the regional dominant classes and their parties for federal power. The 1962 census crisis where the figures of the East were highly inflated and that of the 1963 which was accepted but in which no doubt the North had its share of murderous inflation of figures were cases in point. The 1964 Federal Election became a do-or-die affair because of the collapse of world commodity prices which had persisted since 1955/56 and the rising profile of crude oil which made the federal centre more attractive.

Table 3.12: **Changes in the Structure of Exports 1959, 1962, 1965-69 (N Million and Percentage)**

	1959		1962		1965		1966		1967		1968		1960	
	ENM	%	ENM	%	ENM	%	ENM	%	ENM	%	ENM	%	ENM	%
Cocoa	30.3	23.9	33.3	20.3	42.5	15.8	20.2	10.0	54.5	22.5	51.7	24.5	52.6	16.5
Palm kernels	20.0	16.2	16.9	10.3	26.5	9.9	22.4	7.9	7.8	3.2	10.2	4.8	9.9	3.1
Palm Oil	13.8	8.4	8.9	5.5	13.6	5.1	11.0	3.9	3.9	1.3	0.1	----	0.4	0.1
Groundnuts	27.5	17.1	32.4	19.8	38.0	14.2	40.7	35.6	35.6	14.7	38.0	18.0	35.8	11. 3
Oil & Cake	6.3	3.9	8.6	5.3	15.1	5.6	14.4	9.9	9.9	4.1	14.4	6.8	15.6	4.9
Petroleum	2.7	1.7	16.7	10.3	68.1	25.4	97.9	72.0	72.0	29.8	37.0	17.5	130.6	41.1
Rubber	11.6	7.2	11.4	6.9	10.9	4.1	11.3	4.0	6.3	2.6	6.3	3.0	9.6	3.0
Raw Cotton	7.3	4.5	5.9	3.6	3.3	1.2	3.3	1.2	4.1	1.7	3.3	1.6	3.3	1.0
Total Other	27.0	16.8	29.8	18.0	45.3	16.9	54.5	19.3	46.6	19.3	45.5	21.6	56.7	17.8
Total domestic Exports	160.5	99.7[b]	164.0	100.0	263.0	48.3	277.7	98.1	238.1	98.4	206.5	97.8	314.7	98.8
Re-exports	a	a	a	a	5.1	1.9	5.4	1.9	3.7	1.5	4.6	2.2	3.5	1.1
Total export [b]					268.4	100.0	283.1	100.2	241.8	99.9	211.1	100.0	318.2	99.9

Source: Extracted from Nafziger, E.W. *The Economics of Political Instability-The Nigerian –Biafran War* (Westview Press 1983).

a. Does not include figures for re-exports

b. May not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

The foregoing table 3.12 did not show clearly the collapse in prices but perhaps simply indicated fluctuations. While these fluctuations are sharper in palm kernels and oil trade and also in cotton, it is not that sharp in cocoa, groundnuts and groundnuts oil and cake and rubber. This table is hiding the general trend of prices collapse in world capitalist trade crisis after the Korean War. What the table is hiding is the volume of production which negatively affected not only, Nigerian economy but even that of Ghana at the same time and indeed a general trend in the entire African continent in the deterioration of terms of trade. In this respect the table is deficient. For Ghana, the more cocoa she produced the less she earned. The deterioration in the terms of trade and the erratic fluctuations had serious repercussions on long-term-planning. The fluctuations in the price of cocoa which made Ghanaian cocoa planters to double the cocoa production from 209,000 metric tons in 1958 at earnings of $204,471,080 to 427,700 in 1964 at

earnings of $220,157,960 (Offiong 1980:244) are cases in point. The fall in world price of coffee led to the Brazilian coup of 1964, Tanzania suffered the same when its' world price of sisal fell sharply (Offiong 1980:245). However table 3.12 showed something significantly different from the Ghanaian and the Brazilian situation, that is, the emergence of crude oil in Nigeria.

The collapse of the world commodity prices affected adversely the economic bases of the regions. In the rubber industry in Mid-West Region the peasantry equally increased and doubled the hectres/acres under cultivation without commensurate returns in benefits as a result of extreme deterioration of terms of trade in the First Republic. The rubber industry despite its increase in production in three folds 'between' 1954 to 1964 its contribution to agricultural exports in value declined from 7.9% to 6.6% (Agboola, 1979: 111: Tedheke 1982). This was the trend in all Nigerian agricultural export crops because of the general post-Korean War collapse of commodity prices, which created the basis for crisis all over the underdeveloped world. Not sufficiently focusing on this crisis of global imperialism but making the capitalist crisis issue of intra and inter-ethnic struggles but which has been an issue of class struggles between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the landed/comprador classes, between the landed/comprador classes themselves, that is, between the feudal aristocracy and the new commercial or landed bourgeoisie in the First Republic and the entire bourgeoisie both metropolitan and landed comprador bourgeoisie and the working people (that is, the peasantry and the working class) is a complete disservice to the Nigerian people and the Nigerian state. It is this lack of proper focus on the Nigerian situation that made a Nigerian ruler to say that "Nigerian social problems are intractable". Sklar (1967:6) noted that ethnicity or ethnic politics functioned as " …a mask for class privilege", and as "…one of the major antidotes against the developments of (lower) class consciousness" (Nnoli 1978: 154: Mafeje, 1971: 259: Diamond 1988: 43). Ethnic politics "…became an instrument of competition within the emerging dominant class (in the regions) for the limited political spoils of the developing state. As suggested by their aggressive forays into each other's political 'turf', (a strategy eschewed only by the NPC, and progressively less so after independence) the 'political' class were deeply divided by ethnicity and region"

(Diamond 1988:44).

However after collaborating in crushing the A.G from 1962 to 1963, the NCNC discovered to its chagrin dismay that its alliance with NPC had gone soured. It saw its status in the alliance or coalition in perpetuating the bearing of the tail rather than the head unsatisfactory. The NCNC wanted to use the 1962 census to change the trend and the inflation of figure in the East in particular and South in general would have brought into being a reverse of its fortune in Nigerian politics which was, however, resisted with the 1963 revised figure that placed the North once more in a comfortable stead. This census crisis led to the split in the NPC/NCNC coalition, the realignment of forces and the emergence of UPGA and NNA alliances. As we stated earlier UPGA was an alliance of the NCNC, A.G NEPU and UMBC. The pseudo phantom bourgeoisie who were principally dependent on expropriation of proceeds from the land such as peasant surpluses, mineral exports and so on hence they are also to be called the modern landed bourgeoisie in order to differentiate them from the old lords of the land on the one hand, the feudal ruling class of the North supported by the feudal traditional institutions of the West and its business wing under the leadership of Samuel Ladoke Akintola on the other hand collaborated in conservatism. They can all be addressed as landed/rentier classes in the Marxian sense of the concept.

From the anti-Action Group position of the Federal coalition of NPC/NCNC and deliberate premeditated plan to remove the A.G leadership and government in the West in 1962 and 1963 was an indication to destroy the opposition outside the electoral process. Even on a patently contrived constitutional pretext, reveals a contributing factor to the crisis: the shallow commitment of the key political actors to democratic values and practices. In addition to their determination to eliminate the opposition and their contrivance on the grounds for emergency rule, the ruling coalition of NPC/NCNC demonstrated repeated antipathy to democratic rights and procedures. This was also demonstrated in their suspension of the entire Western Regional Government, their constriction of political liberty in the West, their bias in administration of the emergency and their failure to hold a new election at its conclusion (Diamond 1988: 120-2).

As a result of the 1962-3-census crisis and consequently when NCNC suffered a shattering blow as most of its Yoruba politicians defected to Chief Akitola's new NNDP, new opportunities and imperatives quickly presented themselves. This event removed the most powerful opposition within the NCNC to an alliance with the Action Group and dramatically increased the importance of such an alliance to the NCNC electoral goals. In the same vein, the NPC was moving aggressively to forge a Southern base in the Mid-West. The NCNC attempt at merger with Action Group marked the beginning of a wave of mergers and realignments that continued till August 1964 when the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA)was formed uniting NNDP, NPC, the Mid-West Democratic Front (MDF) and the Niger Delta Congress (NDC). However, NEPU and UMBC joined in a merger in 1963 to form the Northern Progressive Front (NPF) later joined by two other smaller parties, the Kano Peoples Party and the Zamfara Commoner's Party. On September 1, 1964 the AG, NCNC, UMBC, and NEPU united to form the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). Other parties of labour negotiated to join the UPGA alliance (Diamond 1988:194-6).

The December 30 election of 1964 was the next hope of NCNC and UPGA to turn the tide of the table after the failure of NCNC to use the 1962 census to upstage NPC. In the North, NPC had so obstructed the opposition that by 21 December there were 61 unopposed NPC candidates, which included the prime minister and other notables of the party. The NCNC immediately protested this massive wave of unopposed candidacies in the North. No doubt, the massive unopposed returns were perceived by UPGA as leading to its massive defeat in a rigged election crowning her outrage in an escalating pattern of electoral mal-administration. Even midway through the nomination period, the mounting irregularities moved UPGA to call for immediate dismissal of Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa's Caretaker Government; and on 16 December 1964 Alhaji Adegbenro urged the President to appoint an All-party Interim Government. As the nomination closed on 19 December, the Western Region grew more tense as curfews were declared in not less than thirteen areas in the previous day and additional six areas the following day. This rape of democracy was accompanied by deadly violence (West Africa, 2 January 1965:3; Diamond 1988:214-5).

The selfish interests of the regionalised ruling classes have landed Nigeria at the crossroads of crisis which history has proved her inability to overcome. On the evening of 19 December the crisis deepened when Dr. Michael Okpara described the election as a 'colossal farce' and declared, "There will be no election at all" thus the road for a call for electoral boycott was being laid. On 23 December, Alhaji Adegbenro sets out the UPGA position: installation of a Provisional Government and a postponement of the election. In the next day, December 24, a delegation led by Dr. Okpara, Alhaji Adegbenro and Chief Osadebay told Dr. Azikiwe and the public that they would boycott the election unless it was postponed (West Africa, 2 January 1965:3; Diamond 1988:216).

The result of the boycott met with little or no success as NPC used its domineering position to enforce the conduct of the election. In the Western Region the boycott met with very mixed result, as it was not effective as delays made it come too late. As the result of the Federal election came in over the next two days, it became apparent that UPGA had suffered a crushing defeat. The NNA won 198 of the 253 seats awarded in the election, given it virtually a two-third majority in the House of Representatives regardless of the outcome in the remaining 59 constituencies. The defeat was especially crushing in the North, were the UPGA won only four of the 167 seats-all of them in the Tivland and even here the Northern Progressive Front (NPF) lost ground. The result of the election due to shabby conduct was contested by UPGA and it drew to a deadlock over the constitutional authority the contest of which became a trial of strength. It led into the making of various strategies including courting the loyalty of the Armed Forces between the President and the Prime Minister. The President however discovered that the operational command of the Service Chiefs was cleary vested in the Prime Minister or anyone he designated. Thus positions became hardened. The President was advised on a compromise which after some delay he accepted because he feared NPC would try to remove him from office (Diamond 1988:220-4).

The fallout of the election continued with heavy hammer on the opposition, especially, the opposition in the North. In mid-February the UMBC leader, J.S.Tarka was

sentenced to four months jail for 'abetting' the rioting in Tivland the previous year (Post & Vickers 1973:199-200: Diamond 1988:255). The heavy battering of the opposition and manipulation of the 1964 election was a pointer to the fear of losing the system of rewards. Hence the very shallow appreciation for democracy in the North that often the simple presence of opposition was enough to invoke a repressive response. This 'utter contempt for the principle of permitted opposition' motivated the obstruction of UPGA nominations in the North and so was an important cause of the December 30, 1964 election crisis (Post & Vickers 1973:179: Diamond 1988:240). The Northern aristocracy would not countenance anything that would make it to lose its control over the system of rewards in the North in particular and Nigeria in general. The primary causal variable in this struggle among the regionalised ruling class was "… the competition within the 'new and rising class' for scarce resources and rewards, and for a position of class dominance that could only be formed and consolidated upon the foundation of state power. This competition had prominently motivated the previous major political conflicts and was perhaps the most revealing clue to their intensity. In the election crisis, it was a significant cause of conflict polarisation and the collapse of the 'rules of the game.' Militant forces on both sides aspired to secure total control over the system of rewards (Diamond 1988:241-1)

Table 3.13: **Distribution of Federal Parliamentary Seats after Elections of December 1964 and March 1965**

	NPC	NNDP	NCNC	AG	NEPU	Inds	Total
North	162	-	-	-	4	1	167
West	-	36	5	15	-	1	57
Mid-West	-	-	13+1*	-	-	-	14
East	-	-	15+49*	4*	-	2*	70
Lagos	-	-	1*	2*	-	1	4
Final Party Totals	162	36	84	21	4	4	312

*Results from the March 1965 little election. The fifteen Eastern seats won by the NCNC in December Election were in unopposed constituencies
Source Post and Vickers 1973:213.

3.4.3 West Regional Crisis and Deepening National Political Crisis

The political crisis that seemed to have been kept at bay with the acceptance of the election results of the heavily manipulated December 30, 1964 election had not sufficiently subsided when the issue of the Western Region Election came up in 1965. With the dissolution of the Western House of Assembly constitutionally required before 28 September, 1965, the campaign of the two rival alliances began to heat up the political space. The previous eight months since Zik-Balewa agreement had been a period of relative calm. What prevailed was only an illusion of stability, however, for none of the major crisis had yet been overcome in the sense of any mutually acceptable resolution. As the wounds of the previous conflicts festered, each new one became more bitter, more violent and more resistant to compromise. The Western Region Election would bring the final and most violent crisis in this destructive cycle of polarisation over the control of politics that determined the reward distribution. Both NNA and UPGA viewed the election as a 'do-or-die' struggle (Diamond 1988:258).

In the UPGA alliance, the campaign in the Regional Election was a last desperate attempt to, at least, dislocate the NPC and indeed NNA hegemony. Its solid victory in the West would not change the grim balance in the Federal House of Representatives, but it would expand its control from two to three regions (including Lagos), and hence a commanding majority in the senate, where it could exercise influence over crucial legislation. A defeat would likely mean further deadly toll on defections from AG and the NCNC in the West, where the costs of continued loyalty to the UPGA parties had been eased by the expectation that the unpopular Akintola Government would be swept from office in the next election. For Premier Akintola and the NNDP, it was also a 'do-or-die' affair for almost three years in office (first under UPP) and a powerful political machine of the Federal Government, the new party had been unable to establish a strong grassroot's base. With no popular support base, it had come to rely increasingly on blunt manipulation of rewards and sanctions of its regional powers. If this opportunity was lost, it was unlikely to be regained hence the 'life or death' struggle. The West Regional Election was also of great consequence for the NPC that was completely shut from the West and Mid West. It needed to retain its coalition partner in the West in

order to preserve some degree of legitimacy for its control and domination of the centre. A complete UPGA victory in the West would give the opposition total control of the South and make national politics an open and all-out struggle between the North and South that could be out of control, even with a firm NNA majority in the Federal House of Representatives (Diamond 1988:258-9).

From the filing of UPGA nominations to actual elections, their candidates and their election administrators were intimidated by thuggery. On the 26 September, 1965, the day before nominations were due to close, UPGA for the second time released the names of all its 94 candidates for the election and, protesting that only 80 had been able to file nominations, requested an extension of the deadline, the request was ignored, and two days later twelve NNDP candidates were declared elected unopposed. By 30 September, the number had risen to 15, despite the UPGA's claim to have received certificates of validity for 86 of its candidates. In a radio broadcast of 28 September, 1965, the Chairman of Federal Commission, E.E. Esua candidly conceded that some electoral officers had been kidnapped and other had their lives threatened to prevent them from discharging their duties. As the 11 October polling date approached, rumours of election rigging was apparent. When the election date came rigging was pervasive in both voting and also in counting as well. In many constituencies UPGA polling agents and candidates were kept away from the ballot counting by various means and even at gun-point by local government police. Election results instead of being announced at the ballot counting points by electoral officers, an instruction was given to the contrary despite assurance, thus confirming the fears of UPGA. The following day after the election, results were broadcast throughout in the morning from Ibadan, it became clear that NNDP was taking a commanding lead. By noon, it claimed wining majority of the seats as announced by its radio. However, different sets of figures released from Awolowo's house in Ibadan indicated landslide victory for the UPGA. Now in the library of Chief Awolowo's home, Alhaji Adegbenro released returns showing UPGA wining 68 of the 94 seats as against 17 seats in the official returns (Diamond 1988:261-5).

The final returns gave Akintola's NNDP a massive victory (roughly three quarters of the seats). However, they were without any iota of credibility. According to Osuntokun (1982:192) "Every body knew that the election had been rigged and that there was no shred of truth in the official results". The aftermath of the election was violence unlimited. According to Diamond (1988:266) "Although the NNDP remained in office, it no longer could be said to govern. With its authority completely shattered, the Akintola Government proved powerless to halt the waves of protest and violence that swelled in aftermath of the election rigging ". According to Shelleng (2000:815);

> In short the main factors that led to the Civil War were, first, the political struggle in the leadership of the country between the North and the South. The 1964 Federal Elections and the roles played by various political parties in the election which was regarded as a threat that sort of brought a lot of political misunderstanding among the leadership. Then, of course, the Western Election and the Western crisis of 1965, no doubt there was massive rigging. That blew up the whole situation and there were crisis and riots all over the place.

As Abdullahi Shelleg pointed out being a very young army officer during the election of 1965 in the West "…it blew up the whole situation" and indeed was the gunpowder through which the First Republic and indeed the first democratic experiment in Nigeria was buried. It struck the match that ushered in the January 15, 1966 coup d'etat.

3.4.4 The Basis of the January 15 Coup and July Counter Coup.

The split in NPC and NCNC coalition was a fundamental split between the feudal landed class behind NPC and the dependent bourgeoisie that were behind NCNC. It was to polarise the ruling classes of the regions between the conservative forces and the peripheral forces of dependent capitalism. This split manifested in the emergence of the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) for the feudal aristocracy of the North and the traditional semi-feudal elements in the West on the one hand and the dependent bourgeoisie of the East and West and some of them in the North who were opponents to NPC feudal aristocratic class party on the other. It was along these two cleavages that the military finally had to split in 1966. The January 1966 Coup d'etat was representative of dependent bourgeoisie while the July 29 coup represented the

interest of the landed feudal aristocracy.

The limitation of the Armed Forces on the alternative security strategy is the greatest problem of the military in Nigeria even today. Doctrinally, defence and security defined in terms of militarism is too eclectic and isolationistic to make it the all-pervading phenomenon that should touch all aspects of national life. Thus we are of conviction that "… the colonial army from which the Nigerian Army evolved was an army of occupation structured to promote the interests and objectives of the colonial government. The force was largely internally oriented. Second, it was based on issues of territorial defence requirements: the defence establishments were thus perceived purely in militaristic terms as tools designed to enhance the effective control under the British colonial power. The implications of these two variables were that the 'new' Nigerian Armed Force at independence did not have a tradition of thinking and operating in the grand strategic terms:" (Ekoko and Vogt 1990: xiv cited by Tedheke 1998 :14). Williams (1989[a] 144) also pointed out the issue of perpetuation of the "…colonial military doctrine of internal strategic doctrine". These doctrines manifested themselves in the extensive use of the military in the revolts in Tiv Division against the Tiv people as they rose against the oppressive rule of the aristocratic NPC party. According to an Army publication (Okodaso et.al 1992: 118-9):

> During the 1959 Federal election, over 80% of the Tiv people voted against the party in power in the Northern Region of Nigerian. The result of this was alleged maltreatment of the Tiv for refusal to comply with certain government policies. This at first led to slight disturbances and soldiers were drafted to Tiv Division in April 1961 and Febuary 1964. By July 1964, the situation had escalated leaving hundreds of people dead, houses burnt down, essential services disrupted in riots and disturbances. Troops were again invited to deal with the situation and were stationed in Tiv Division for over a year.

Apart from the Tiv revolts against the oppressive rule of NPC in the North, the 1964 December 30 election to the Federal House of Representatives was chaotic coming to a head with the October 11, 1965 Western Regional Election. The electioneering campaign was more chaotic and witnessed more malpractices, violence and rioting

than in any election that had been conducted in Nigeria. At the end, the election was clearly rigged in favour of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) supported by its ally the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) in the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The other parties, the Action Group (AG) and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) refused to accept the results of the election in the Western Region. The outcome was mysterious disappearance of many people, killings, thuggery, spraying of houses and property and setting them ablaze in what was known as "operation wetie." (Okadaso et. al 1992:133-5 ; Diamond 1988: Nafziger 1983). The military had to be called in like the Tiv situation to quell the crisis. Thus the material interests of the regionalised ruling classes made them to resort in the second time to the use of the military for internal security created by these politicians who were particular about their material interests and power than national interests.

We have noted that the Nigerian military as a colonial creation had a limited philosophical orientation as it was based only on internal security doctrine. However, at independence, there was an urgent need to complete its Nigerianisation of the officers' corps which became seriously politicised along regional and ethnic lines in quota allocation. Since the emergence of regionalism, the federal character or quota system has been in vogue. In the military, quota was intensified when the Nigerianisation process began in the 1950s. The quota system had apportioned all army vacancies within the ranks and officers corps according to a formally fixed set of ratios which gave 50% to the Hausa/ Fulani dominated North, 25% to the Ibo dominated East, and 25% to the Yoruba dominated West (then including the Mid-West) within the three-regional Federal system then in operation (Adekanye 1983: 74). The issue of Federal Quota in the Army and indeed the Armed Forces was muted and accepted in 1956 (Adekanye 1976:9). The implementation started for the other ranks in 1958 and officer corps in 1961 and with a minor structural modification in 1963 with the creation of Mid-West Region which resulted in a slice out of the original 25% share allocated to the old West for the new region (Adekanye 1983). These quota provisions in the Army were more or less rigidly enforced up to the time of the January 15, 1966 coup (Adekanye 1976:155).

The quota system which regionalised intake into the Army created a regional political consciousness. According to Ademoyega (1981:23) during selection for cadetship in August 1961, they observed that those candidates from the North were more carefree and more confident of sailing through while those from the South were afflicted by the fear of failing as they wore the look of anxiety and bewilderment. He further stressed that on the course of their discussion they were told that the Northerners were sure of having 50% of the total number while the Southerners would have less than half of their group. Moreover, they knew the eight Northerners to be selected and they knew that at least four of those Northerners would never have made it but for the quota system. The quota therefore polarised and politicised the military. Ademoyega (1981:24) said:

> The fulfillment of that objective was already biting hard in 1961. Military aspirants from the South were frustrated. No wonder then that the Army was not as insulated from politics as it seemed to outside observers. The effects of these were made crystal clear by the events of 1966/67.

In the process of the Nigeriansation of the military there emerged three types of officers. Those trained in Sandhurst who were good in the art but had imbibed the British officer's aloofness from politics and nationalism. A good percentage of them willingly and readily hob-nobbed with politicians in order to attain the highest ranks and positions in their military career. The second group were those trained at the Mons Aldershort, officers who were equally apolitical. Perhaps the only politics they knew very well was the politics of quota that gave them advantages over those with better qualifications. Thirdly, there were officers who were commissioned from the ranks and they were equally apolitical. Within the officer corps there were graduate officers that number just six in 1962 and just half of them had some degree of political consciousness (Ademoyega 1981:28-9).

The regionalisation of officers' selection or quota gave vent to the manipulations of the Army by forces of feudalism. They were now assiduously working their way towards the total control and manipulations of the army through promotion and strategic placement of officers that danced to their tune. In this way they were gradually dividing the Army

into groups. As society was splitting down the middle in the realignment of class forces, the military was equally divided despite the so-called esprit-de-corps. Despite middle ground officers who were just careerists, who were neither here nor there, but desired that they should gain from all sides and not disturbed by the prevailing situation, there were extreme positions which were the conservative pro-feudal officers against those who were politically conscious in populist ideology. In the first place, there were those pro-feudal elements who were hand-in-glove with the feudal aristocracy and other politicians. This group, therefore, was prepared and willing to perpetuate the status quo. The second group was made up of those, though very small who, hated both the military and political situations in the country. They were of the opinion that their country should be free from neocolonialism and from feudal political drudgery (Ademoyega 1981:32). This populist group staged the January 15, 1966 coup while the pro-feudal elements staged the counter coup of July 29, 1966.

The coup of January 15, 1966 was a product of the collapse of the world commodity prices, which made the regions to struggle for federal power, which became a do-or-die affair. The 1961 and 1963 census merely heightened the stake and material interests as the source of regional revenues dwindled. The Tiv crisis in which the military was used was on the one hand to struggle against the material oppression by the feudal aristocracy and on the other hand a struggle by feudalism to prevent its own dismemberment, that is to maintain the status quo in the North and its strength at the centre. It was the same in the West Regional crisis of 1962 in which the NPC/NCNC coalition decided to weaken the populist AG. The 1964 Federal election, the NPC with its ally NNDP were claimed to have rigged massively to retain their regional grip and control over the centre respectively. The 1965 West Regional election in which the NPC and its ally in the NNA massively rigged the election to maintain their strangled hold in the West at all cost, led to the escalation of the crises of the First Republic and in which the NPC used the military extensively in order to retain power negated the principles of democratic tolerance. The consequence was the failed populist coup of January 15, 1966 spearheaded by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. Populist in the sense that it was built on the popular feelings and sentiments of the people or popular masses; it is

the politics of also expecting the messiah or messianism, that is, the rhetoric politics of the good man. According to Muazzam (1982):

> Populist rhetoric of the politics of the good man and good intentions can never in the long run be a substitute for social forces organised and guided by a scientific theory of social development.

This populism bordering on messianism was the root cause of the failure of the January 15, 1966 coup and hence the triumph of the careerist officers epitomised in Major General J.T.U Aguiyi-Ironsi. Populism made the coup plotters of January 15, 1966 feel that the problem could be addressed by just eliminating the key figures of the feudal aristocracy, their hangers-on and their collaborators amongst both the politicians and the military (Nafziger 1983:42). The philosophical limitations of the coup led to its failures as the executioners were a mixed-grill of populists, religious zealots and opportunists (Ademoyega 1981:49-55). It gave birth to the emergence of Ironsi, by accident of the faulty execution of the coup, as the Military Head of State. Being a careerist, Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi could not phantom the social crises that Nigeria was plagued with. Six months was a long time to have had an impact to resolve the imbalances of the Nigerian Federation by creating the Middle Belt Region and the Cross River-Ogoja-Rivers Region. This would have resolved half-way the Nigerian crises and the slide to deepened crises and ultimately the Civil War. Rather Aguiyi-Ironsi promulgated the Unification Decree 34, which made him fell into the trap of the propaganda of the coup being an Ibo coup and that of plans of Ibo domination.

The one sidedness of the killing of the January 15, 1966 coup resulting in the death of Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, the Premier of Northern Nigeria, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa-Balewa, Nigeria's first and only Prime Minister also from the North, key military officers from the North and Chief S.L Akintola, the controversial Premier of the West and Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh, the Federal Minister of Finance painted the coup as sectional. The two Ibo Premiers of the East and Mid-West were left by faulty execution of that coup as Adomoyega (1981) had pointed out. The Decree 34 was to be the last clear indicator of a purported Ibo domination. One could recall the rejection of the 1953 call by Chief

Anthony Enahoro for independence by 1956 by the North as a product of the view of the North in its non-competitiveness in placement in government appointments at both the region and at the centre. The call by Enahoro, the Northern reaction and the counter reaction by the South produced as a result of Northern propaganda, the Kano riots of 1953 against Southerners resident in that city. The Unification Decree 34 of General Ironsi produced a similar effect of the fear of Ibo domination in particular and perhaps Southern domination in general by the feudal aristocracy and their hangers-on in the Northern Region. General Ironsi did not help matters as he promoted more than a dozen and half officers of Ibo extraction from Major to Lieutenant-Colonels and none among the officers of the Yoruba extraction, thus giving the wrong signal as if the coup was designed and executed to achieve Ibo domination of Nigeria (Ademoyega 1981:112). Decree No.34 of May 24, 1966 became the match which sparked off the fire of May 29, 1966 throughout the North which took a heavy toll on thousands of Southern Nigerians in the North (Ademoyega 1981:112-3). This came to a head with the July 29, 1966 counter coup that ended the Ironsi regime by the forces loyal to the feudal aristocracy and the semi-feudal traditional institutions of Nigeria.

The July 29, 1966 coup saw the death of prominent Ibo military officers including the Head of State, Major General J.T.U. Aguyi-Ironsi and Lieutenant Colonel Adekunle Fajuyi, the Military Governor of Western Region who was a host to the Head of State at the time of the counter coup of July 29, 1966. Both the January 15,1966 coup and the July 29 counter coup were the products of the material interests of the regionalised dominant classes. The coups were as a result of the zero-sum game of Nigerian politics, they resulted equally from an economy that has a faulty philosophy of sharing rather than baking the national cake. In the process, crisis upon crisis befell the Nigerian state and its political economy. With deep feudal orientation and control and hedged in by neo-colonialism, the economy lacking expansion in the sense of a modern industrial economy became a trap unto itself and the regionalised ruling classes. It only needed the commodity price collapse of 1955/56 after the Korean War global commodity boom to manifest and the increasing importance of crude oil at the centre to intensify the crisis of primitive accumulation of capital and therefore the accompanying

cut-throat politics that resulted in the 1966 coup and counter coup.

The sliding down the social precipice were the accompanying events of the July 29, 1966 counter coup principally instigated by the feudal and semi-feudal elements of the Nigerian society. The July counter coup that brought Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gawon (later General) to power affected national stability as it decimated national military leadership thus enthroning serious mistrust among the military personnel of different ethnic origins. Political and Army leaders of the three major ethnic groups no longer felt safe in areas with army battalions dominated by personnel of other communities. Yet despite the agreement in early August 1966 between Gowon and the regional military governors, which ordered all soldiers to return to their respective regions of origin, the Federal Government kept Northern troops in Lagos and the West (Nafziger 1983:44; St. Jorre 1972:80).

The rift between the Eastern and Federal Military Governments which eventually escalated into a Civil War, hastened after the July 29, 1966 counter coup. The East recognised the Gowon Government only as an interim regime, on the grounds that Gowon was not the highest ranking military officer in the army based on the understanding by the Eastern Government that he was to retain power only until the military had the opportunity to decide on the country's future. Secondly, the violence directed against Easterners, especially, the Ibos in the North in May and September-October 1966, and their flight to their ethnic homelands, diminished the economic advantage of the East's continuity in the Federation, and strengthened secessionist tendency and forces. Finally, the failure of the coup in the East, the departure of Northern soldiers from the region and the departure of Eastern soldiers in August 1966, meant that its military governor, Lieutenant Colonel Chukuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu,had effective control of all troops and the Nigerian Police in the region (Nafziger 1983:44). The intensity of the crisis led to Aburi Meeting in Ghana in January 1967 whose outcome became controversial. Positions became more hardened and Ojukwu declared secession on May 27, 1967 after the Eastern Consultative Assembly met the previous day 26 May, 1967and gave him the mandate. Earlier that same day,

anticipating the mandate, Gowon proclaimed a state of emergency, decreed the creation of twelve states from the former four regions and the Federal Territory of Lagos (Nafziger 1983:45).

The creation of the states was a master – stroke that rallied the minorities on the side of the Federal Military Government. However, the East considered this as a violation of the Aburi Agreement, which canvassed for a greater regional autonomy. The Eastern leaders, with little support from non-Igbos in the area, moved on 30 May, 1967 to protect their regional hegemony by declaring the Eastern Region the independent Republic of Biafra (Nafziger1983:45). Thus the inevitability of the Civil War stirred Nigerians in the face. The intra-class struggle based on material interest of the regionalised landed/aristocracy comprador bourgeoisie created the crisis that delivered a Civil War to the hands of Nigerians. It equally divided the military as it had divided the politicians and the ruling class into two-the conservatives, represented by the feudal aristocracy of the North and the traditional institutions of Western Region and their hangers-on on the one side and the comprador bourgeoisie of the new landed/comprador classes, the intelligensia, products of the dependent capitalist social formation on the other.

3.5 Summary

The colonial social structure retained in neo-colonial social structure upheld the comprador social classes that made it impossible for a transformative political economy to be cultivated in the post-colonial Nigerian state. As a result of the nature of the class, its class struggles and indeed its intra-class struggles were based on struggles for a fall out from their rnaster's table. This intense struggles for material interest resulted in a do-or-die affair resulting in the collapse of the First Republic. It is therefore, the class character of the Nigerian state, that is, the nature and type of a dominant class and its politics that deepened the crisis of the First Republic which resulted in the Civil War.

With the nature of decolonisation, the emergent regionalised dominant ruling comprador and landed aristocratic classes fell prey to the traps of British imperialism.

They decided to maintain the structures which colonialism had bequeathed to them. Matters were made worse because the classes lacked the organisational rationality of their mentors in national economic development. They depended on the state for primitive accumulation hence politics became a do-or die affair. The politics of self interest tore these unproductive regionalised classes apart and it equally tore society and the military apart. It forced the realignment of forces between the old lords of the land and the new landed/rentier classes. It led to the coup and coup of 1966 and consequently the Nigerian Civil War.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEEPENING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CRISES, SECESSION, NORTHERN AND EASTERN COMPRADOR CLASSES AT WAR

4.0 Introduction

The rapid succession of events that culminated in the declaration of the secessionist Republic of Biafra and the Civil War that followed were products of a neo-colonial political economy and the intra-class struggles of ruling comprador classes that were highly limited in their historic duty as organisers of society's productive forces. The crises of the First Republic could be located at the structure of the Nigerian economy in order to enable us to understand its character, the general tendency towards recurrence and its class logic. We have noted earlier Bangura, Mustapha and Adama's (1986:172) views that the structural contradictions of the global capitalist economy and the activities of the transnational business agencies transmit, and sometimes generate within the Nigerian economy, the contradictions and crises of the global economy.

We had earlier noted Engels' (1983:9) remark that Marx had clearly discovered that "…the world trade crisis of 1847 had been the true mother of the February and March revolution (in France). A new revolution is possible only in the wake of a new crisis". The First part of Marx postulation was about the world trade crisis which mothered the revolution of 1847 in France and the second is the role of general crises at the workings of revolutions. For the Russian Revolution in 1917 during the First World War, Sayers and Kahn (1975:12) said"… hungry, desperate masses of the people spread like a great dark tide over the land." Lenin (1976:22) said: "It is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation: furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to a revolution". He went further to say that a revolution is possible:

> When it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure, through which discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for the lower classes

> not to want to live in the old way, it is also necessary that the upper classes should be unable to live in the old way (Lenin 1976:22).

For all social democracies, their political history rest, however, very tenuously on the state of the economy experiencing a good record of economic expansion and facing a crisis in periods of economic recession (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986;193). Petras (1980) posited that at such times of recessions "…in the initial period is essentially a repressive state: an apparatus geared towards destroying the organisations of mass mobilisation, annihilating of militants …systematic mass demobilisation". These fascistic tendencies, the products of economic downturn or recession led to the repressive policies of the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) against the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) in the Northern Region and the repression of the Action Group (AG) in the Western Region, the collapse of the NPC/NCNC Federal coalition in 1963/64. The foregoing were products of intra-class struggle. However, the workers strike of 1964 was the inter-classes struggles by the workers against the profligacy of the landed/comprador classes. Thus we state our first proposition here that **"The intensification of the contradictions between the comprador classes and the imperialist bourgeoisie in the periods of global economic depressions (recessions) lead to acute social instabilities and even wars in a dependent capitalist social formation like Nigeria".**

The UNICEF document (1995:2-3) states that "…a pattern of economic marginalisation can increasingly be discerned. Its identifying motif is the steady marginalisation of the poorest nations and of the poorest people within nations" This has created "…new crisis in human security…its most obvious manifestations (are) … increasing internal conflicts…frustrated aspirations, rising social tensions, and the disaffection of large numbers of people from their societies, their values systems, their governments, and their institutions. Internationally, the new threats include the increase number of failed states". It is a pity that the UN agencies and indeed the UN itself have always been feigning ignorance of the crises of the world capitalist system that have impoverished

this other half under the global imperialist stranglehold (globalisation-my emphasis) thus creating the unpalatable environment for social crises and indeed failed states. It has resulted in the development of Europe and North America and has always strengthen the thesis of Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.* It has created most of the instabilities in Nigeria and indeed Africa. We have cited Marx and Engels (1977) earlier who said that the crisis in the heart of the bourgeoisie (metropoles-my emphasis) produce violent outbreaks in the extremities (peripheries-my emphasis) of the bourgeois body than its heart, since the possibility of adjustment is greater here than there.

We have made it clear that the collapse of the world commodity prices in the post-Korean War boom of 1955/56 and the revision of revenue allocation to 50% each to the regions and the centre created the basis for the regional economic crisis of the First Republic. This intensified the intra-class struggles among the dependent regionalised bourgeoisie for the federal centre which was appreciating economically, especially with the emergency of crude oil hence politics became a do-or-die affair or a life-and-death matter. It brought incipient fascism into the Nigerian ruling party of NPC as it had to crush first, opponents in the North and second, its national opponent with the tacit support of its NCNC coalition partner which it had to dump in the 1964 federal election. In order to weaken the populist AG, the NPC/NCNC coalition had to emasculate the Western Region by the excision of Mid-West in 1962/63 which were all power play. The 1962/64 crisis and the 1966 coup and counter coup were all products of economic crisis that laced the path of the regions with the collapse of the world commodity prices. It created the basis equally for the 1964 workers` strike, an aspect of the class struggle of the period. The 1966 coup and counter coup which were products of the struggles for power and material interests of the regionalised ruling classes drove Eastern Region into secession and Nigeria into Civil War from July 6, 1967 to January 12, 1970(Cronje 1972:27).

4.1 The Prelude to the Civil War.

Many events preceded the Nigerian Civil-War which were catalytic to the final outbreak of the War. These events were not independent in themselves but were by-products of the primary economic causal variables resulting in the intense class struggle. The structural disposition of the neo-colonial socio-economic formation predisposed the Nigerian economy to highly skewed external linkages, leakages and drainages which placed the economy and the Nigerian state on a dangerous precipice of crises and War. We have noted that this was leading to the intensification of the intra-classes struggles between the imperialist bourgeoisie and their Nigerian collaborators, the comprador landed/rentier bourgeoisie over the surpluses generated by the pleasantry and the extractive industries of the working people's peasant production, mining and semi-finished industrial goods had been at the central stage of the struggles between the metropolitan bourgeoisie represented by the transnational trading companies such as UAC, GB Ollivant, SCOA, John Holt, CFAO and so on, on the one hand and the comprador bourgeoisie at the periphery of the world capitalism on the other hand. In periods of world depressions, it leads in most cases to crisis between the two wings of imperialism, that is, the metropolitan bourgeoisie and their local collaborators, the landed/rentier comprador bourgeoisie. In most cases such crisis are coloured in geo-ethnic and sectionalist tendencies. We have noted that the comprador landed/rentier classes of the Third World are so-called because they unlike their metropolitan mentors depend on the proceeds from the land (Massarrat 1980" 45-6) which are basically extractive industries.

The foregoing struggle has very severe crises generating capacities, especially at periods of the downturn of capitalist world economic crises. It intensifies contradictions and crisis between the comprador classes and the working classes and working peoples of the neo-colonial countries. This is the basis of "…the new crisis of human security (which)… most obvious manifestations (are) increasing internal conflicts, frustrated aspirations, rising social tensions…" and so on. Apart from the political insecurity that the economic crisis called into being, it was equally the basis of the 1964 workers' strike in Nigeria as working conditions severely deteriorated hence the

demand for wages increase and the cut of the bloated salaries and benefits of the overfed politicians and the upper echelon of the civil service (Nafziger 1983: 78-84). Thus the 1960s crises that were painted in geo-ethnic primordial variables were actually products of inter and intra-class struggles. The gradual sliding of agricultural produce, the mainstay of the economy of the First Republic from about 70% in 1964, 57.7% in 1968 and 32% in 1972 as its contribution to national economy and indeed those of the regions and later states was the case in point (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986).

4.1.1 The Dilemma of the Neo-Colonial Political Economy

We have noted earlier Basil Davidson's assertion that colonial and capitalist imperialism "…have utterly failed to raise structures… upon which the deprived peoples can carry themselves into a new civilisation capable of standing and evolving on its own foundation" (Chaliand 1969: ix). The reasons which we had equally earlier stated were derived from the periodic crises of capital arising from the concentration and centralisation of capital that is the development of monopoly capital or imperialism. In addition, the problem of realisation of *surplus value* (profit, rents, dividends) was acute as the home markets became highly restricted thus the development of imperialism or aggressive monopoly financial capital polices adopted by "…a capitalism struggling to defeat its internal contradictions" (Ake 1981: -36).

In order to survive in this game, capital had to create and encourage the emergence of a dependent capitalist social formation. It was found on the development of caricature capitalism, a capitalism that accepted the operations of capitalist relations of production at the level of merchant capital or exchange but refused to encourage the aspect of the revolution in technology or the development of organised productive capital to advance the development of the productive forces. According to Sherton and Freund (1978:9) this "…process of incorporation meant for Nigerians a break-up and re-organisation of the existing social forces. Historians must examine how merchants, among others, became subordinated to the new commercial system as part of the overall creation of a peripheral capitalist social formation within the development of this formation, a major

role has been played by a merchant bourgeoisie which has proved historically incapable of transforming society and served as a fetter on the development of the productive forces".

Sherton and Freund (1978:8) in criticising the works of those who believe that there is a bourgeois revolution going on in Nigeria noted that such:

> …must neglect the various salient features which distinguished Nigeria from advanced metropolitan capitalist societies: the continued impoverishment and the low productive capacity of the mass of the population, the enclave character of a limited and largely foreign-managed (dominated-my emphasis) industrial plants, the continued dependence of the state on economic and political forces beyond its control and the evident failure of planners to lay foundations for self-sustaining development of the productive forces.

This structural dependence of the Nigeria economy on the advanced capitalist countries allows only for an economic development that is dependant and determined by the vagaries of the world capitalist system. It forces the Nigerian economy to be highly dependent on Western enslavement philosophy of *comparative advantage* based on the export of primary export commodities which has been a product of the prevailing world division of labour whose realisation is dependent on the dictates of the oppressive global capitalist relations of production. In this respect, Tedheke (1998:97) said;

> The euphoria of independence in 1960 was short lived not because of any other thing but because of an economy that was under the tight grip of British economic control and a ruling class that is not prepared to bring Nigerians that have been removed from history back into their own history. The inability of the ruling class to see beyond its nose has kept prostrate the historical process in Nigeria. The breaking down of all opposition to colonial capitalism and the acceptance of the peripheral capitalist relations as a mode of the organisation of our economy and society was a process of undermining the historical process. This betrayal is at the heart of the Nigerian development problems and crises.

If we look at the dialectic relationship between the economy and politics we will see how the development problems or crisis would impact negatively on the political process in Nigeria. We have sufficiently proved that the collapse of the commodity prices of Nigeria's primary export commodities in the 1950s negatively impacted on the

neo-colonial Nigerian politics of the First Republic. Osoba (1978; 65) said;

> It is objectively in the interest of our national bourgeoisie to be able to create a relatively independent and autonomous domestic capitalist economic order in Nigeria. If our bourgeoisie were to succeed in achieving this degree of autonomy and independence vis-vis international monopoly capital, then they might be able to retain all, or at least most of the surplus value generated in the Nigerian economy by the labour of Nigerians being applied to the nation's natural resources.

The lack of certain degree of relative economic autonomy and independence in the management of the Nigerian economy exposes the neo-colonial dependent political economy to the recurrent crisis of metropolitan capital in its problems of realisation of surplus value. The crisis of Nigeria's First Republic was the quintessence of the crisis of the global capitalist relations. This neo-colonial political economic crisis was deflected into ethnic, regional and sectional colorations in the Nigeria situation in the First Republic. The sources of the crisis was made inevitable in Nigeria and indeed in Africa due to the new legal chains placed on the ruling classes before power of paper independence was handed over to them. According to Chinweizu (1978; 167):

> The would be independent countries signed to uphold all these laws before power of paper sovereignty was handed to them. They signed to protect multinationals whether it was a stealing against the emergent nations or not and whether it was against the interest of the ex-colonists is never the matter but international laws must be upheld for Europe and North America to get more milk to fatten.

All the Western democracies thrive on robust economies based on the constant revolution of technology, the foundation for a relatively autonomous and independent economic development. This was not the case in the First Republic, the immediate post-colonial Nigeria. Worse still, the primary commodity export economy had collapsed before the power of paper independence was handed over to Nigerians on October 1, 1960. Yet politics was about an "authoritative allocation of value". The very scarce resources occasioned by the collapse of the commodity prices and the collapse of the regional economies meant that politics and power struggle in the First Republic took a

turn for the worse. The struggles for the fall-outs from the master's tables became intensified and it became a life-and-death matter hence the First Republic and indeed democracy came to the cross roads.

4.1.2 Strands of the Dialectical Contradiction and Drift to Anarchy

The contradiction in the inner logic of capital resulting in the problem of the realisation of *surplus value* led to the partition of Africa in 1884/ 85 in Berlin. This contradiction leading to very intense struggles between the imperialist powers resulted in the First World War of 1914-18, which also was a catalyst to the Great October Socialist Revolution of Russia in 1917 (Sayers and Kahn 1975). This contradiction of capital equally resulted in the colonisation of Africa and indeed Nigeria which was brought about by the invasion of a capitalism struggling to defeat its internal contradictions (Ake 1981: 36). Therefore the first strand of the primary dialectical contradiction was the contradiction in the internal logical of capital in which capital in its national autonomous dynamics was struggling for the realisation of *surplus value.* It was at the stage of the concentration and centralisation of capital or the development of monopoly financial capital or imperialism. It brought about the struggles amongst imperialist powers to expand their markets and indeed their sources of raw materials in the accumulation process beyond their home bases hence the struggles for colonial spheres of influence (Tedheke 1998).

The foregoing struggle for the accumulation processes for the metropolitan capital created the environment for the violent suppressions and restrictions of the indigenous peoples and indeed social classes, thus depriving the incorporated peoples of the opportunities of the true roots of economic development and indeed civilisation. The transformation of the contradictions of capital within their home bases and amongst capitalist countries into positive drive for their development was realised by metropolitan capital in the process of the integration of the dependent colonial and the neo-colonial countries into the World capitalist system (Wallerstien 1976). In order to realise its goal, British colonialism in Nigeria had to deliberately create a lot of obstacles to prevent the realisation of national unity in Nigeria which we had noted were: the

policies of indirect rule, divide-and –rule, the deliberate side-lining of the educated elite, the piece-meal constitutional development and electoral reforms, keeping of the North at arm's length from the rest of Nigeria, the imbalances in the Nigerian federation (Ezra 1964) and so on. Thus laying the minesfield for the crisis of the First Republic deflected into ethnic, regional and sectional politics.

The second strand of the dialectical contradictions is that based on the capitalist law of uneven and spasmodic development. This enhanced the developmental differences between metropolitan capital and the dependent capitalist social formations making it impossible for a transformative capitalist development in Nigeria and indeed Africa and the Third World. It also created the basis for the enclave economy that we have stressed in chapter three which worked against national integration but rather consolidated the regional differences and uneven-development among the three regions in Nigeria-the North, East and West. We have noted severally that liberal democracy and indeed social democracy depends on favourable economic development. It cannot survive otherwise, hence at periods of economic crisis social democracy moves towards repressive and fascistic tendencies. For the fact is that the two aspects of uneven-development; first between the metropolitan Britain and the dependent Nigerian capitalist social formation and second between the various regional economic enclaves in Nigeria, were both death traps for the democratic experiment of Nigerian's First Republic.

The first aspect of the capitalist law of uneven-development that between metropolitan Britain and the dependent Nigerian capitalist social formation created the basis for a perennially weakened economic foundation that could hardly support the tenents of democracy. Thus a child that is hard pressed, that has been suffocating in pains, needs just scolding to let loose a flood-gate of tears. The collapse of world commodity prices in 1955/56 after the Korean War boom provided the needed opportunity for the pains of dependent capitalism in Nigeria to be transformed into pains and tears of national crisis of development and pains and tears of the first democratic experiment. The second aspect of this law of uneven-development enhanced and created the disparities

between the regions and even among the ethnic groups in each region hence the sectionalisation of politics and the politicisation of sectionalism. This was what gave vent to the regional orientations of political parties of the First Republic. The regionalisation of the political parties was a product of the consolidation of the politics of colonial imperialism and indeed the entrenchment of colonial economic domination in its current form of neo-colonialism. Hence Cabral (1980: 125) was correct when he said: "We agreed that history in our country is the result of class struggle, but we have our own class struggles in our country; the moment imperialism arrived and colonialism arrived, it made us leave our history and (we) enter another history".

The third strand of the dialectical contradiction is the contradiction between the feudal aristocracy in the North, its remnants in the West and the dependent neo-colonial classes. As a result of material interests, this contradiction was exhibited in the alignment and realignment of forces during the First Republic. The first alignment was the Federal coalition between the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and the National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC) in 1960. The collapse of the NPC/NCNC coalition led to the emergence of two giant alliances, the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) made up primarily of NPC and the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) on the one hand and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) made up primarily of NCNC and Action Group on the other hand. This alliance formation led to the intensification of the inter-class and intra-class struggles in the First Republic. Unable to break the fetters of the colonial and indeed neo-colonial imperialism in order to create the basis for its economic autonomy, the regionalised dominant classes intensified struggles for political power in order to corner more resources for themselves but these they coloured in regional and ethnic perspectives. According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA 2001:93):

> The Nigerian political elite, who inherited the power of the colonialists at independence in 1960, continued this manipulation of ethnic differences for their own selfish interests. In the process, they succeeded in creating the false impression that various politicians and political parties were champions of the interests of ethnic formations for which they spoke and that the struggles of these parties for the political dominance represented the struggle for their various

> ethnic groups for ascendance in society. They covertly and even openly used emotive ethnic symbols and played a negative feelings arising from alleged ethnic conflicts of interests as means of mobilising mass support for their own personal interests.

This process of transforming secondary geo-ethnic or primordial contradictions into prominent or important contradictions and the subsuming of primary economic contradictions which are the basics into non-prominent contradictions is the poverty of the struggles of the First Republic. It is a disservice to the Nigerian people, the nation and indeed nation building. It covers up the imperialist fleecing of the Nigerian economy and its negative impact on the Nigerian political economy and the democratic processes for the First Republic and even till date. It makes the Nigerian dominant classes to turn their face the other way and as a result neglecting the political economy explanations of the root causes of the Nigerian crises but would prefer to explain it in geo-ethnic terms which are merely secondary contradictions but which they have turned into prominent contradictions. Contrary to the foregoing, Cabral (1979: 53) said:

> … you may be surprised to know that we consider the contradictions between the tribes (ethnic groups-my emphasis) a secondary one …our struggle for national liberation and the work done by our party have shown that this contradiction is really not so important; the Portuguese counted on it a lot but as soon as we organised the liberation struggle properly the contradiction between the tribes proved to be a feeble, secondary contradiction. This does not mean that we do not need to pay attention to this contradiction, we reject both the positions which are to be found in Africa-one which says; there are no tribes, we are all the same, we are all one people in one terrible unity, our party comprises every body; the other saying: tribes exist, we must base parties on tribes. Our position lies between the two, but at the same time we are fully conscious that this is a problem which must constantly be kept in mind; structural, organisational and other measures must be taken to ensure that this contradiction dose not explode and become a more important contradiction.

Nkrumah (1973: 60) said “The emergence of tribes (ethnic groups … my emphasis) in any country is natural, or due to historical development. Tribes like other nationalities may always remain in a country, but it is tribalism-tribal politics that should be fought and destroyed”. However, the position of the Northern delegation to the 1967 Ad Hoc Constitution Conference seemed to be a summation of the First Republic politics thus:

> We have pretended for too long that there are no differences between the people of this country. The hard fact which we must honestly accept as of paramount importance in the Nigerian experiment, especially for the future, is that we are different people brought together by recent accidents of history. To pretend otherwise will be folly (cited by Kirk- Green 1971: 3)

In order to explode and make ethnicity become a more important or prominent contradiction, the Northern position which however could be said to agree with other regional positions informed the foundation and focus of the major political parties of the First Republic. The *Quest Magazine* (1979: 112) echoed a commentator who said that "The old politicians had accepted, at least in the beginning, Zik's political philosophy of seeing tribalism (ethnicity-my emphasis) as a pragmatic politic," and this was quite clear when all the major political parties in the country since the 1940s to the end of the First Republic rose from and had the blessings of ethnic associations or ethno-cultural groups. This was the case of the Action Group (AG) in the West which rose from Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a Yoruba cultural organization; the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which was born out of the cultural organisation known as the Jamiyyar Mutanen Arewa, an Hausa-Fulani socio-cultural organisation, and the NCNC which had a strong Ibo State Union connection of which Dr Nnamdi Azikwe was at one time or the other the president.

As the British policy of divide-and-rule did not exist in a pure form but had its fundamentals in their economic interest, so also, "Ethnicity does not exist in a pure form. It is always closely associated with political, juridical, religious and other social views which constitute its important ingredients as well" (Nnoli 1978: 8). The beneficiaries of ethnic politics did not hesitate to heighten the fears of domination of one ethnic group by the other; as a result of this, the people began to look onto their ethnic leaders as their messiahs. Thus the reproduction of the tendency of ethnic messianism, which consciously and curiously has been fed into the Nigerian polity by politicians and senior civil servants in the First Republic. As a result of their successes in ethnic politics, the leaders occupied political and economic positions of power and privileges in the inherited colonial structures which strengthened sectional and ethnic

politics. Therefore they had an objective interests in maintaining the ethnic and sectional patterns of politics and the imperialist economic and political structures both of which are inimical to inter-ethnic harmony (Nnoli 1978 30). By transforming the secondary ethnic contradictions, into important and indeed prominent contradictions, the politicians therefore destroyed the basis of harmonious inter-ethnic relations and national unity which also hampered the growth of national consciousness and hence the drift to anarchy in the immediate aftermath of independence in 1960.

We have noted earlier that the crisis of the First Republic was the crisis of the economic development, the crisis of a bourgeoisie that dose not see its historic role in the proper perspective, the bourgeoisie that only sees its historic mission as only aiding the metropolitan trading firms to corner peasants and workers surpluses from extractive industries. It was the occupation of political offices that aided the primitive accumulation of the regionalised dominant ruling classes of Nigeria's First Republic and indeed even today. On the nature and character of this bourgeoisie Fanon (1982: 141) said thus;

> In underdeveloped countries, we have seen that no true bourgeoisie exists; there is only a sort of a little greedy caste, avid and voracious with the mind of a huckster, only too glad to accept the dividends that the former colonial power hands out to it. This get rich-quick middle class shows itself incapable of great ideas or inventiveness, imperceptibly it becomes not even the replica of Europe but its caricature.

The foregoing summarises the character of the ruling classes of the First Republic and because they were "…incapable of great ideas or inventiveness they could not replicate Europe but became its caricature" in commodious living and luxury cars and so on. In order to maintain this, political power was needed and hence ethnic politics was the game. We have seen how the manipulation of ethnic symbols and election rigging became the game to entrench themselves in power in their regions and the intense struggle for federal power in the First Republic. All were struggles for personal selfish interests of the regionalised ruling classes against the interest of the working people of Nigeria. The Morgan strike of 1964 was a case in point. The struggle for material interests amongst the comprador ruling classes as we have noted, the collapse of the

economic bases of the regions: from 1955/56 leading to the crisis of the First Republic, intensified the intra-class struggles deflected into inter-ethnic and inter-regional struggles which became a do-or-die affair. The struggles for political spoils infiltrated into the military hence the January 1966 coup and July 29, 1966 counter coup (Ademoyega 1981). Thus the primary contradictions, that is, the strengthened economic crisis in Nigeria have been deflected into ethnic, regional and sectional politics and it gave birth to the crisis of the First Republic and consequently the coup and counter coup of 1966 and the Civil War.

4.1.3 The Struggles for Political Spoils

With unproductive capital in its primitive accumulation, the struggles for political perquisites or spoil is always intense. The distortions of the pre-colonial political economy by the demands of colonial imperialism would make it impossible for a dynamic autonomous economic development to take place that could sustain democracy. The Nigerian economy exhibits four behavioural characteristics in the accumulation of capital. In the first instance are the multinational trading firms which through monopolistic practices dominate the economy and the few local firms which were products of the colonial political economy that have put a façade of industrialisation through the failed import substitution industrialisation (I.S.I). The second characteristic is that of primitive accumulation through corruption and sharp business practices which have undermined the Nigerian economy and economic development oriented parastatals. The third characteristic is that of simple commodity production employed mainly by the peasantry, small scale artisans and craftsmen. The fourth is the development of competitive industries, mainly local medium-scale manufacturing enterprises, nurtured in the womb of petty commodity production and the impact of transnational corporations on the indigenous economy (Bangura 1988: 5-6)

The major concern of the post-colonial Nigerian state was the creation of a national bourgeoisie within the context of transnational capitalism. The evolution of such a class took place within the broad parameters of the articulation of the four characteristics of capital accumulation which we have outlined. To be honest with ourselves, the first

three are not conducive for the development of the Nigerian economy we should anticipate in the competitive world power game and indeed the necessary stability there to. The fourth is too weak to assert itself in the political economy (Bangura 1988: 6). The weak technological base is the issue at stake in order for Nigeria to develop the framework for economic growth and development. A dependent primary export commodity economy cannot afford the necessary stability that an industrial and technological driven economy can afford in its process of adjustments in periods of global capitalist crises. The post-Korean War commodity price crisis therefore drove the Nigerian state, the economy and the nascent democracy of the First Republic into serious crisis and intensified the struggles for political spoils or perquisites.

The geo-ethnic perspectives do not adequately explain the eager, often malicious manipulations of ethnic competition and distrust that deepened the polarisation and fed the other elements of anti-democratic behaviour (Diamond 1988) such as the intolerance of opposition, election riggings, fascistic tendencies and so on. Diamond (1988 240-1) further stressed:

> Thus demagoguery was partly motivated by the previous animosity and conflict, but more so by the same factors that gave rise to that previous tension. Primary among these factors was the competition within the 'new and ruling class' for scarce resources and consolidated upon the foundation of state power. This competition had prominently motivated the major previous political conflicts and was perhaps the most revealing clue to their intensity. In the election crisis, it was a significant cause of crisis polarisation and the collapse of the "rule of the game". Militant forces on both sides aspired to secure total control over the system of rewards.

The culture of greed and the struggle for maximum rewards for the dominant regional ruling classes intensified beyond measures the political crisis of the First Republic. This crisis was however limited to various factors of the dominant regionalised ruling classes. Among the working class, the antagonism expressed in inter-ethnic or primordial forms was relatively absent especially "…were the population works together e.g. in a factory-than where politicians collaborate" (Diamond 1988: 241). For the politicians or the emergent dominant regionalised ruling classes, all was tension and a succession of tensions translated or coloured in ethnic rhetorics hence ethnicity

became politicised and politics became ethnicised at the regional levels and to some extent at the national level. At the higher level, regionalism became equally a political weapon to capture federal power in order to restrict the political spoils to a particular region or a coalition of regional parties at the Federal level. The conspiratorial attitude of the NPC/NCNC coalition in the destruction of AG in 1962 right from the Jos AG Conventional crisis to the arrests and trials of Awolowo and his colleagues for treasonable felony and their eventual imprisonment was a case in point. At the marginalisation of the ethnic minorities and the high-handedness of the dominant ethnic groups of each of the regions that controlled the regional government were cases in point. In the North, the government under the grip of Hausa-Fulani hegemony was being resisted by the regional minority ethnic groups under the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the Bornu Youth Movement and also the anti-feudal forces of Mallam Aminu Kano's Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) based in the heartland of the Hausa-Fulani.

In the Western Region, the Action Group (AG), a Yoruba dominated was being resisted by the minorities from the Benin/ Delta provinces. The same was the true of the Eastern Region, under the grip of NCNC, an Ibo dominated party, which was equally being resisted by the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers (COR) minorities (Ezera 1964; 244-6). At the regional level, the pretence by the regional ethnic majority dominated parties and their politicians was that "…the various politicians and political parties were champions of the interests of the ethnic formation for which they spoke and that the struggle of these parties for political dominance represented the struggle for their various ethnic groups for ascendance in society" (IDEA 2001: 93). This was replicated at the federal level in the struggle for regional dominance. With the collapse of the sources of the regional economic survival in 1955/ 56 which lingered on till in the First Republic, thus restricting the sources of the regional rewards system, the struggle for federal power among the regions intensified beyond manageable proportion hence the crisis after crisis from the 1962 AG crisis, the Western Regional crisis, the Federal Electoral crisis of 1964, the 1965 Western Regional Electoral crisis, all in attempts to retain or capture political power and the reward system. It aggravated and resulted in the coup and counter coup

of 1966

4.2 The Coup and Counter Coup of 1966

One of the greatest setbacks to Nigeria's First Republic was the inability of the regionalised dominant classes to insulate the military from the naked form of the system of rewards. Under the hegemonic control of feudal aristocracy in the North and its collaborators in the East, such a reward system led to respect for the sources of such rewards than the state. This was the beginning of the destruction of the Nigerian state even before the handing over of paper independence. With the collapse of the sources of regional revenues, a product of the post-Korean War boom in 1955/ 56, there arose shrinkage of the system of rewards or political spoils at the regional levels and the increasing shift of attractions to the federal centre. This intensified the struggles for federal power and the need for extra-political survival made the regionalised ruling classes to court the favour of the military. Thus the introduction of the quota system had a self-serving interest of those in politics. According to Dudley (1973: 27)

> The introduction of the quota system of recruitment into the armed forced has to be seen as an indication of the awareness of the political leaders that the armed forces could be used as a political instrument to subserve sectional ends.

The quota system in the military had its own dialectical contradictions and indeed negative implications for the military and the nation. However, it is argued that a given army or military force is a national institution which belongs to all rather than a segment of society and as a result should be representative of the entire society, especially in an ethnically plural society. Thus the quota system of recruitment does arguably have considerable "melting point" potentials which can then be employed to advance the course of national integration (Reports of Constitution Drafting Committee Vol II 1976: VII). The arguments that the quota system makes an organisation belong to all in a multi-ethnic or segmented society and also that it works towards national integration in general and for the military, that is, makes it very representative and attributes to its organisational health in particular are quite acceptable in the face value of the arguments. This is however contrary to the integration of the European states and the

United States that had the economy and industrialisation as the basis of their national integrations (Laborde 1968: 57; Sills 1968 & 1972). Although it also agrees with the principle of correcting the imbalances in a state system, such imbalances to be rectified by quota are in the final analysis ameliorated principally at the economic level that would eventually have its impact at the superstructure or the political. Hence the lack of adequate focus at the economy as the primary level of integration and with the attendant effect of increases in the number of states portends greater frictions among the states in the struggle to achieve equity, in the allocation of national resources (Shagari: 1982: 53)

The military in the First Republic was not left out in these frictions which were products of intra-class struggles among the regionalised ruling classes. The quota system of recruitment in an unproductive rentier capitalist economy was to solidify these frictions right inside the structure of the Nigerian military. In a multi-ethnically segmented society there is the probability of a negative impact or deficiency on military organisation whose organisational essence is, unitary and centralising while a multi-ethnically segmental society is always pluralistic and even potentially disintegrative. As matter of fact because of the possible recrudesce ethnic consciousness and conflicts within the barracks which it inevitably generates among the members, the effect of a typical quota system of recruitment or intake tends to be disruptive organisationally for a given country's military (Kirk-Greene 1971: 106). Kirk-Greene (1971: 280) further states that the foregoing could explain the problem of civil-military relations in the First Republic and the in-fighting that laced the better part of the Nigerian Army in 1966 leading to the coup and counter coup and their associated killings resulting in the near disintegration of the Army by early January 1967.

As we have stated all along that in an economy which is not organised on internal autonomy but depended on the vagaries of external economic fortunes, the crisis in the metropolitan economies will impact negatively on its economic survival and thus the intensification of the struggle for the perquisites from the state. The military is not left out in these struggles. Ademoyega (1981:23) noted that the selection of cadets since

the introduction of the quota system prior to 1961 gave candidates in the North an edge over their counter-parts in the South. The intensification of the quota allocation was a product of the economic crisis, of the collapse of the world commodity prices which weakened the regional economies from 1955 throughout the First Republic to the emergence of crude oil as a dominant national revenue earner. Ademoyega (1981: 24) further stressed, “The fulfillment of that objective (quota) was already biting hard in 1961. The military aspirants from the South were frustrated. No wonder then that the Army was not as insulated from politics as it seemed to outside observers. The effects of these were made crystal clear by the events of 1966/ 67”.

The Nigerian military was thus politicised with the negative impact of quota right from the beginning of the First Republic. As the economic crisis had affected negatively the political struggles and had led to the collapse of the NPC/ NCNC coalition, the emergence of the grand alliances, the NNA and UPGA, thus splitting the Nigerian politics and politicians down the middle, the same was true of the Nigerian Army of the First Republic. According to Nkrumah (1973: 43) when the military intervenes in politics it does so as part of the class forces in society. Coups d’etat are expressions of the class struggle and the struggle between imperialism and radical reforms. The military, after it has seized power, gives its weight to one side or the other. In this respect, the military is not merely an instrument in the struggle, but becomes itself part of the class struggle, thus tearing down the artificial wall separating it from the socio-economic and political transformations in society. The theory of the “neutrality” of the armed forces, consistently propagated by the exploiting classes, is thereby proved to be false. Nkrumah (1973: 45) further stressed that:

> When faced with a political crisis the army tends to split along the same lines as the political community. In other words, it tends to divide along lines of class and sometimes tribe. The officer strata tends to be on the whole conservative, if not downright reactionary. It will usually side with the old established order.

In further stating the obvious Nkrumah (1973: 47) said:

> Coups d’ etat are forms of struggle, the objectives being the seizure of political power. Though carried out by a special organ of the state apparatus seemingly

> isolated from society, they reflect class interests and are part of the class struggle… They do not change the nature or the content of the struggle; they only change its form. The politico-economic and social situation is in essence unchanged…

The Nigerian military in the first Republic conformed to the foregoing criteria of Kwame Nkrumah and even today the tiger has no changed its paws. We have noted that the struggle for material and indeed the regionalised class interests which tore the politicians and the political community down the middle also did same on the Nigerian military. Adewale Adomoyega had opened or laid bare the inner decay of the military and indeed of society which resulted in the January 15 coup and July 29 counter coup of 1966. The processes of the selection of young army officers based on the quota system, a product of the political spoils of the First Republic had spilt the military down the middle and created bad blood in the Nigerian Army and indeed the Armed Forces. A section of the military saw the suppressions of the Tiv revolts and the Western Regional crisis all of the First Republic in which the military was used as a part of maintaining the status quo or the NPC domination of federal power. The manner in which the 1964 Federal Elections and the 1965 Western Regional Elections were conducted in favour of NPC/ NNDP and its alliance of NNA as against the suppression of NCNC/AG alliance of UPGA became the last straw that broke the back of the camel. The split of the politicians and the political community down the middle also affected negatively the military, the only national institution that pretended to bear national cohesion was torn down the middle in the coup and counter coup of 1966. Thus Nigeria came to a cross-road, a product of class and intra-class struggles of the nation's First Republic.

4.2.1 Aftermath of January 15 1966 Coup

The January 1966 coup led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu exposed the inner decay of the military and a republic that was senile at birth. It showed that all was not well with Nigeria and the only supposedly national institution seemingly untainted, the military. The coup showed a society and indeed a polity torn down the middle. According to Nkumah (1973:47) bourgeois observers explain the causes of the

succession of coups in Africa as attributable to tribalism and regionalism. Others saw it as a product of the disgust of elements of the armed forces and the police with the ineptitude and corruption of politicians and the 'economic chaos' they have caused. Nkrumah (1973: 47-8) further stressed:

> Not one of these explanations accords with the true facts. Those who put forward these and similar explanations, have made a superficial and distorted analysis of the actual situation. They are seemingly blind to the neo- colonialist pressures.

What Nkrumah is saying is that bourgeois scholars see the symptoms of the crisis in Africa as the causes of the crises. Thus the alliance between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and their African collaborators against the peasantry and the working class and or the working people is completely ignored. He (Nkrumah 1973: 48) noted that, "At present there is in Africa an intensification of struggles and conflicts between imperialism and its class allies on the one hand, and the vast mass of the African peoples on the other. Imperialist aggression has expressed itself not only in coup d'etat, but in the assassination of revolutionary leaders…" we have noted earlier the fact that "Populist rhetoric of the politics of the good man and good intentions can never in the long run be a substitute for social forces organised and guided by a scientific theory of social development" (Mauzzam 1982). This defined the January 15, 1966 coup and should put paid to its transformatory propagandistic perspective as has coloured the reasoning of many Nigerians.

The first conclusion that came to ones mind in the assessment of the participants of the January 15, 1966 coup is that if they were revolutionary as they claimed, it would have been impossible to surrender power to Major General JTU Aguiyi-Ironsi as they did being the type of a completely apolitical and indeed reactionary officer as Ademoyega (1981), one of the January 15, 1966 coup makers claimed. Perhaps this surrender of the coup to Ironsi on a platter of gold by a group of coup makers whose leadership claimed to be revolutionary gave the coup a different meaning far from a revolutionary one. It made others to view it as an Ibo coup. On 15 January 1966 a group of officers tried to seize power. Most but not all of them were Ibos-about half the officers in the

Nigerian Army were Ibos at that time. They killed the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa; the Northern Premier, Sir Ahmadu Bello; the Western Premier, Chief Akintola; the Federal Minister of Finance, Chief Festus Okotie Ebo, and a handful of senior Army officers" (Cronje 1972: 15).

The coup was not implemented neither in the Eastern Region nor in the Mid-Western Region whose premiers were Ibos, they both escaped with their lives. Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi who was listed among those to be assassinated was said to have escaped and managed to get the situation under control. All these facts later gave rise to the claim that the coup was on Ibo plot. The makers surrendered and were arrested-the fact that they were not brought to trial subsequently inflamed feelings in the North …Ironsi was formally asked to take over power of what remained of the Federal Cabinet, though the move was unconstitutional. He agreed and appointed five military officers to govern the four regions and the Federal Territory of Lagos. Ojukwu who was in Kano at the time of the coup as a Battalion Commander was appointed Military Governor of Eastern Region (Cronje 1972)

However, the initial popularity of the new regime was frittered away by the unpopular policies such as the Unification Decree 34 of May 24, 1966 with which Ironsi hoped to redress the unrest caused by regional imbalances by abolishing the regions to unify the country. This aggravated the idea that the coup had been an Ibo plot which was implanted in the thinking and feeling of the North by its side-tracked politicians, civil servants and the local or regional press. A Federal Government in 1967 (Nigerian 1966 Government Printer, Lagos) confirmed this by blaming "…local party contractors and party functionaries whose livelihood depended on political party patronage for resorting to whispering campaigns, rumour-mongering and incitement". Nevertheless, as time sped past the events of January 15, 1966 were represented by Lagos as a purely tribal (sic) affair. Chief Anthony Enahoro who led a Nigeria delegation to a Peace Conference in August 1968 told participants that "…to most Nigerians the incidents of January 15, 1966 were a clumsily camouflaged attempt to secure the domination of the government of the country". This impression was later reinforced by certain appointments and

actions of the new regime under Major General Ironsi, himself an Ibo (Cronje 1972: 15-16)

Those who were swept off power by the January 15, 1966 coup mobilised against, the lack-luster regime of Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi. The campaigns that the coup was an Ibo coup against the North had borne fruit, as the Unification Decree of 24 May, 1966 the last straw that broke the camel's back, was followed almost immediately by mass demonstration in Northern Nigeria demanding immediate seccession of the North in preference to the Ibo domination which, it was believed, unification would bring. So it happened that on May 29, riots broke out in the North in which many Ibos and other Western residents in the North were killed and it equally took tolls on the other Nigerian citizens from the South (Cronje 1972: 16; Ademoyega 1981: 112-3)

Scared of Northern reactions to his Decree 34, Ironsi back-pedaled reassuring Nigerians that it was not designed to have a detrimental effect on the nation. Thus Col Ojukwu pleaded with Easterners who had fled the North to return to their posts, assuring them of Government's protection. Many of them responded, and were killed in massacres that took place in the North later in the year. However, the North continued to regard the Ironsi regime as a threat and a counter coup of July 29, 1966 put paid to that administration (Cronje 1972: Ademoyega 1981). After the counter-coup, security situation deteriorated as the hierarchy of military leadership was seriously breeched with the emergence of Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon as the new Head of State. At the end of September, just at the end of an Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference in Lagos new massacres broke out which claimed the killing of an estimated 30,000 Easterners who lived outside their own region mainly in the North. The 30,000 figure claimed was given in the East, however, the British Government in 1969, puts the figure at 7,000. The meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of Constitutional Conference which was to resume on 23 October, 1966 could not hold as the Eastern delegation could not turn up due mainly to the pogrom and also the Northern troops stationed in the West had not been removed as agreed earlier on (Cronje 1972: 18; Ademoyega 1981: 131).

With the foregoing dead end, options for other meetings to avoid total collapse of the edifice, Nigeria, were being searched endlessly. The contradictions of incompartability of the ethnic groups, especially, the three major ones and the regions they controlled had already turned what we called secondary contradictions into what Claude Ake would call prominent contradictions and equally what Amilcar Cabral would call important contradictions. The coups of January 15 and July 29, 1966 justified these painting of secondary contradictions into prominent or important contradictions. Lacking the means of assuring their people as a result of their failures in the economic front, the emergent landed/comprador classes struggle through ethnicity and regionalism as a cover for their economic interests had boomeranged on the politicians even finding its worst expressions in the coup and counter of 1966. Just like the worst of capitalism and its failures in the 1930s' depression turning itself into fascism of which Hitler's German fascism was the arrow head. The quota system of intake or selection into officer's corps became a form of political spoil and equally appointments and promotions in the Nigerian Army also followed the same pattern hence officers had to hang on regional politicians and indeed the landed classes for their career prospects. Thus Nafziger (1983: 42) emphasised that:

> The stress resulting from the regional and communal competition for a share of the economic pie had been transmitted to the army, and had politicised its officer corps. Perhaps the conspirators (January 15, 1966) perceived that their positions and promotions were endangered by policies of regional quota for lower ranks, and regional balance for officer recruits, which enhanced the share of the educationally backward North. Additionally, some radical Southern soldiers resented the way the ruling coalition used the Army for political purposes in the Western party struggles in 1962, in the riots of the Tivs… in 1964, in the election crisis during 1964-65, and to repress opponents in the rigged Western election of October 1965.

The politicisation of the military along regional lines, a product of material interest of the regionalised landed/comprador classes was to affect negatively the perception of some sections of Nigeria about the January 15, 1966 coup and indeed the Major General JTU Aguiyi-Ironsi's regime. Thus within a few months, potential opposition elements, especially in the North, became convinced that Ironsi was using the powerful political

and economic levers at the centre primarily on behalf of the Ibo (Ademoyega 1981). According to Ademoyega (1981: 112)

> … Ironsi had implicit faith in his own type of Nigerians: the non-revolutionary and reactionary type of Easterners and Mid-West Ibos. Therefore, as soon as he took over the reins of power, he promoted more than a dozen and half of them from Major to Lieutenant-Colonel, and gave them all the senior and sensitive positions in the Army and Air Force. Apart from these, only three others were promoted from Major to Lieutenant-Colonel; and these, only three were Northerners. Their promotions stepped from the guilt of Ironsi and his ill – conceived notion of placating the Northerners. But in so promoting the Northern officers, he jumped over the heads of five Yoruba officers whom he did not care for, thus giving people the impression that the coup was designed and executed to achieve and promote Ibo domination of Nigeria. Again by so doing, he alienated the relatively few senior Yoruba officers who (equally) needed to be placated… in this way, he separated the Easterners and Mid-West Ibos from the remainder of the officers of the Armed Forces. Therefore, in the trouble that followed the Ironsi's type did not receive the sympathy of others.

The promulgation of Decrees 33 and 34 which was to replace the regional federation with a unitary administration, imposed a united civil service, banned parties and communal organisations of a political character and intended the continuance of the regime for three years. The timing of these decrees was inept and insensitive to the mood of the time (Nafziger 1983: 42-3; Ademoyega 1981). The haste with which the Unification Decrees were pushed on the national stage made the agrieved suspicious. Meanwhile, the Nwokedi Commission was studying unification of Nigerian administrative machinery and public services, and the Constitutional Review study group was considering the relative merits of Unitary and Federal forms of government (Nafziger 1983: 43; Luckham 1971: 264- 6; Kirk-Greene 1971: 42-3, 48-9).

The dominant economic interests behind Ironsi; represented by the Ibo dominant class, in the Federal administration and the joint stock companies in Lagos and East, made few overtures to win the support of the non-Ibos in the South, and even some Ibos in the East were disenchanted (Nafziger 1983: 43). The new regime equally antagonised the progressive elements in the Armed Forces who in the West and Middle Belt were opposed to the civilian government of the First Republic. It even alienated the influential politicians and the feudal aristocracy of the far North, while doing little to undercut their

base in the Native Authority Councils and Administration, districts, and villages and their power to incite the peasants and urban unemployed (Nafziger 1983: 43 cited Smith J.H 1969 unpublished manuscript). The apolitical nature of Ironsi and his like made them fell victim of their own inactions. The government of Ironsi would have offered political concessions to the Middle Belt such as excising it as a region of its own which would have weakened their tennous ties to the far North. Instead Ironsi temporarily united the elites of the North and Middle Belt by threatening the long-standing practice on Northernisation of employment, a policy in the interest of both sections (Nafziger 1983).

The Unification Decree 34 was the last straw that broke the camels back. The decree was to unify the country by abolishing the regions, replacing them by groups of provinces; the federal and regional civil services were unified and to be administered from Lagos; political and tribal (sic) organisations were dissolved and political activities banned for the next two and half years (St Jorre 1972: 57). He further stressed:

> Many of these changes, however, were more apparent than real. The new title of the government and the abolition of the regions altered nothing except nomenclature since the new groups of provinces coincided with the former regional boundaries and remained under the rule of the existing military governors. The political ban dated from the early days of the regime but its prolongation for such a long period was ominous since it suggested that the military government would remain in power and political activity would be forbidden while the constitution was being prepared and implemented (St. Jorre 1972).

On the face value, the Unification Decree would seem reasonable and progressive but in an ethnically segmented society whose landed/comprador classes lacked the basis for the organisation of society on productive endeavour, it was a dynamite because it threatened regional autonomy at its very roots. The North had most to fear since it lagged far behind the other regions in education. In 1960 it had 41 secondary schools as against the South's 842 and it equally lacked enough administrative skills. Clearly, if educational qualifications alone were to be the criterion for government jobs-there was no mention of any other-the North was bound to be the loser. Northern posts would be

snapped up by Southerners and the long-feared 'denomination' by the South would at last become a reality (St. Jorre 1972: 58). Thus with the biting economic conditions resulting from the collapse of world commodity prices the fears became more heightened. The lack of economic integration that played against national integration which we have discussed sufficiently in chapter three hardened the positions of the regional landed/comprador classes.

The January 15, 1966 coup had strengthened the fears of Southern denomination in an un-productive economy. Nigerians' fears were still the old ones of ethnic or regional denomination; of control of the centre, the preservation of privileges; of the division of 'national cake' (a favourite metaphor of the distribution of political spoils such as new industries, schools, clinics and pipe borne water). And it was the North, the most populous and backward of the regions that was deeply concerned because it had lost most as a result of the coup. It was true that some people in the North such as the minorities and some radicals had no love for the feudal aristocracy and their rule under the Sarduana of Sokoto and as such had welcomed the political changes of January 15, 1966. But the region as a whole was still very alien from the South and knew that due to its educational shortfall, it could not compete on straight terms of merit with the South within a unitary system of government. Thus on May 29, 1966 riots broke out in the North. The trouble sparked off in Kano by civil servants and students in an organised demonstration. The same took place in Kaduna, Zaria and other Northern cities which flared into wild riots in which several hundreds of Ibos were killed and also resulting in looting and burning of property (St. Jorre 1972: 58- 9; interview with Ubah 2007; interview with Oradiwe 2007).

Although popular feelings in the North were mounting against the regime of Ironsi, it needed, as always in Nigeria and indeed in Africa, embittered and determined elite to express it in terms of positive or violent action. This disaffection of the civil servants and the students was swollen by that of the dispossessed Northern politicians and indeed the landed/comprador unproductive class who profited from the political spoils but had lost much on the account of the January 1966 coup and whose fears and suspicions

had been worsen by the Unification Decree of May 24, 1966 (St. Jorre 1972: 60). Thus the counter coup of July 29, 1966 was a product of the fears of the loss of political perquisites in a rentier state or in a prebendal political setting. Both the coup and the counter coup of 1960 were products of capitalist underdevelopment and of a state and classes that depended on primitive accumulation of capital. The state was thus the only avenue for this accumulation and indeed for cornering political spoils hence the very intense struggles over state power with its contagious effect on the military and hence the coup and the counter coup of 1966.

4.2.2 The Coup of July 29 and Its Aftermath

With the July 29, 1966 coup or counter coup the split in the Nigerian political community was complete and its intra-class struggles between the caricature bourgeois classes and the aristocratic class or lords of the land was exposed. Thus the struggles between the aristocracy and the comprador classes assumed the North/South dichotomy because the accident of the history made the North the domain of the old feudal class and the South the domain of the comprador class that came into being with dependent capitalism and its fallouts. What had united both of them were prebendal relations that have made both of them to depend on the fallouts from the rentier state. Hence they would not hesitate to unite in the face of revolutionary pressure from the working classes and the toiling people, especially at the period of economic down-turns arising from world trade depressions. This was compounded in the first half of 1960s when the modern sector of Northern private economy was still dominated by Southerners, Levantines and Europeans, who were, in general, sending their earnings out of the North. Despite the seeming alien values exhibited by Southerners in the North the growing enmity in the urban areas was less a conflict of values than competition for the benefits of modernisation but for which majority of Northerners were disadvantaged because of their late arrival on the scene with less education (Nafziger 1983: 100; Nnoli 1972).

The urban lumpen-proletariat were beginning to be restive in the North and formed the basis for thugs that were recruited for political purposes and for the post-Unification

Decree revolts in the region. However, the resentment against the Southern migrants peaked after May 24, 1966 when Ironsi announced the abolition of regions and the establishment of unitary administration. The uneasiness concerning the impact of this on economic opportunities for Northerners in their own region was one factor that helped to ignite the disorders in May and July. The May 29 riots or disorders appeared too far-reaching and well ordered to have been entirely spontaneous and can be interpreted as one of the desperate last-ditch strike by the insecure far Northern landed aristocracy at the most vulnerable groups available. We have noted that the army was one example of the way in which political enmity was exacerbated in the regional competition for jobs. Communal and regional affiliation in the army became especially crucial after its politicisation which was particularly stronger after the last of the British officer departed in early 1965 (Nafziger 1983: 100-103; Ademoyega 1981). The January 15, 1966 coup and the Unification Decree 34 exacerbated the uneasiness in the North resulting in the May 29 riot and the July 29, 1966 counter coup against the seemingly Ibo denomination leading to the restoration of the Northern hegemony or the rule of the feudal aristocracy that was displaced by the Major C.K Nzeogwu coup.

The dynamite that finally exploded and killed the interests of the Ibos in the Nigerian federation was their massacres in the North in September and October 1966. The rift between the Eastern Region and the Federal Military Government which later widened into a Civil War became exacerbated after the second or counter coup that brought Yakubu Gowon to power on July 29, 1966. The Military Government in the East only recognised Gowon's Government in the interim on the grounds that he was not the most senior or the highest ranking military officer and on the basis of the understanding by Eastern Regional Military Government that he was to retain power only until the military had the opportunity to decide on the country's future. Equally of importance were the violence perpetuated against the lumpen-bourgeoisie or commercial elements and working people of Eastern Region in the North in May and September/October 1966 and their flight to their region, thus diminishing the economic advantages of the East continuing in the federation and strengthening the secessionist resolve.

The aftermath of the counter coup of July 29, 1966 affected national stability as it decimated national military leadership traditionally built on hierarchy of seniority, thus leading to mistrust among military personnels of the different ethnic origin. The January 15, 1966 coup would have produced the same effect if the accident of its failure had not made the planners to hand over power to Major General J.T.U Aguiyi-Ironsi. The aftermath of the July 29, 1966 coup made the political and army leaders of the three major ethnic groups not to feel safe in areas with army battalions dominated by other communities. As a result, there was an agreement in early August 1966 between Gowon and the Regional Military Governors which ordered all soldiers to return to their respective regions of origin, however, the Federal Government kept Northern troops in the West and Lagos (St. Jorre 1972: 80; Nafziger 1983; Momoh 2000: 45; Ademoyega 1981: 132).

One of the resultant negative effects from the counter coup of July 29, 1966 was the balkanisation of the Nigerian Army into regional armies called Area Commands, which were under the control of the Military Governors of each region with Lagos as a neutral ground for all officers. This order to regionalise the army took effect from August 1966, which made it necessary for officers and soldiers to move to their regions of origin. The anarchy and total breakdown of law and order after the July counter coup was such that other ranks and indeed their NCOs from the North took great pleasure in hunting down the Ibo officers in other parts of the country except in the East. As a matter of fact, order of command broke down between the Northern NCOs and their officers. The situation was that bad as orders by officers of the Northern extraction to their NCOs were never obeyed excepting from the ringleaders of the July 29 counter coup (Momoh ed. 2000: 45-7; Ademoyega 1981). According to Alli (2000:213-14).

> The 29 July 1966 coup was strictly regional and a Northern martial intervention designed to restore Northern spirit, meet Northern interests and to redress the killings of January 1966 coup. The North, apparently, had no apologies to make for the coup and the subsequent genocide that followed. It was organised by Northern officers for the North. Strictly speaking, it was not a tribal coup; rather, it was a regional hegemonic coup of revenge. General Yakubu Gowon was a product of this coup. It is inconceivable that he was ignorant of its intents and planning.

The restoration of the Northern hegemony on July 29 coup and indeed the revenge for the killings of Northern prominent officers and politicians was a correct assessment by the one time Chief of Army Staff, Major General Chris Mohammed Alli. Apparently, that it was organised to meet Northern interests was the true and courageous explanatory kernel of that action. Such interests in a prebendal political setting according to Joseph (1999;8) means that pattern of political behaviour… rest on the justifying principle that such offices should be competed for and then utilised for personal benefits of office holders as their reference or support group. The official public purpose of the office often becomes a secondary concern, which however, might have been originally cited at its creation or during the periodic competition to fill it. Thus the 'northern interests' that were restored by the counter coup were those of the dominant landed/comprador regional ruling class. Joseph (1999:7) further stressed that:

> There is little disputing the fact that individuals at the top of the social hierarchy benefit disproportionately from the prevailing mode of interests association. Yet while making such an assertion, we should not overlook the fact that support for these arrangements is generated at all levels of the hierarchy. Crawford Young's (1982:85) use of the term "instrumentalities of survival" is most appropriate and coincides with the arguments I shall advance regarding the pronounced tendency in Nigeria in the pursuit of the most basic of economic and political goods. It is therefore necessary to correct the tendency to underemphasize the part played by non-elites in Africa in sustaining dominant patterns of socio-political behaviour even though they seem to benefit so little from it. A different system might certainly be more to their advantage. The task of winning their support for such a change, however, requires the supplanting of attitudes and informal social networks which are believed to be as necessary to getting ahead in modern society as are the licenses, scholarships and contracts which represent the most visible milestones of success and survival.

Thus "instrumentalities of survival" was responsible for the July 29 counter coup of 1966 and equally the refusal to honour the agreement reached to withdraw troops to regions of their origin for which the North reneged over the West. As such, the withdrawal of Northern troops from the West could not materialise. Instrumentalities of survival also made Colonel Robert Adeyinka Adebayo, the then Military Governor of the West to encourage the stay of Northern troops in Ibadan. Equally the hegemonic interests of the North made the hegemonic forces to transcend its secessionist

tendencies which were epitomised in Gowon's earlier view in seeing "… no basis for the collective existence of Nigeria" and set in motion in the regions Consultative Conferences for Constitutional Review whose proposals were to be deliberated upon by an Ad Hoc Committee on the Constitution with representatives from all the regions (Momoh ed. 2000: 45-7; Ademoyega 1981).

At the Ad Hoc Committee on the Constitutional Conference held on 12 September, 1966 all the regions except Mid-West called for a confederal system of government which would allow the regions a greater measure of autonomy than had existed prior to January 15, 1966. The Mid-West, under Lieutenant Colonel David Ejoor argued for the continuation of the federation which was accepted at the end as basis for the continued existence of Nigeria (Ademoyega 1981: 130: Momoh ed. 2000: 47-8). Soon after this conference, violence broke out again in the North in the later part of September to early October targeting the Ibos in the region. According to St. Jorre (1977: 84):

> The deliberation of Nigeria's wise men were cut short, shelved and finally wrecked by a terrible new cataclysm in the North which made all the year's preceding violence look like a barrack-room brawl. Ever since the July coup, persecution of the Ibos in the North had gone on with varying degrees of intensity. On 19th September a band of Northern soldiers from the now infamous 4th Battalion, recently transferred from Ibadan to Kaduna, drove down to Makurdi and Gboko in Tiv country and started killing Ibos. The news of these massacres triggered off violence against Northerners living in the East and this, in turn, put out by Radio Cotonou in Dahomey and re-broadcast by Kaduna Radio, launched a veritable pogrom. As in the May troubles, students, civil servants and local politicians led the demonstrations and helped to get the mobs out on the streets. There were several notable differences with the May massacres. This time the army was deeply involved and killing spread out of the Muslim North into Middle Belt areas where it was particularly savage.

In the view of St. Jorre (1977: 86-7), "The motives behind the pogrom are more baffling than those which caused the May massacres. The January slate had been more than wiped clean by these killings and the bloody July counter-coup. Nor was there any longer a fear of Ibo or Southern domination and Gowon, a Northerner, was reassuringly in the saddle in Lagos. But lower down, there was a host of historical, social and

economic factors-envy, resentment, mistrust and fear-buried, yet slowly building up into an explosive force. Whatever the cause of the massacres, the effects were disastrous to the unity of Nigeria and more than any other single factor, sent it slithering down the slope of disintegration and war." It led to the massive transfer of the civil population, not only from the North but also from other parts of the country as the Ibos left their homes and jobs in increasing numbers and returned to the East, repeating the same pattern of separation, which had already occurred in the military sphere (St. Jorre 1977: 87)

We have noted extensively in Chapter three the economic crisis that underpinned the crisis of the First Republic that heralded the coup and the counter coup, the declaration of secession and finally the Civil War. The bitterness in the May massacres, the July coup, and the September/October massacres of 1966 were products of the resentment by the North against the audacity of the Ibos to negatively impact on the Northernisation policy of the Sarduana which they feared the Unification Decree 34 was meant to achieve. This policy created the basis for resentment against Southerners in the North and equally worked almost precisely as intended: purging the bureaucracy of all but one Southerner by 1959 raising its proportion of Northerners from almost nothing to one-half in 1961; heavily disposing it to manipulation by the ruling NPC and so further concentrating administrative and political power in the narrow, dominant class of the North (Dudley, 1968: 220-1 Diamond 1988:50). The character of Northernisation at the confluence of ethnic and class action was apparent in its other ramifications as well. Northern businessmen used their growing prominence in NPC to press for provisions excluding Southerners from government contracts, retail trade and ownership of land (Sklar 1963: 328; Dudley 1968: 232; Nnoli 1978: 194; Diamond 1988: 50).

From the foregoing, it was therefore not surprising that the post-July 29 counter coup crisis took the deadly from it took. It was principally over the pattern of spoils of politics of the First Republic which the January coup almost derailed, almost removing the morsel from the mouth of the Northern dominant class. According to Dudley (1968: 220) the Sarduana by1958 declared that the goal of Northernisation was to have "Northerners gain control of everything in the country". In this respect Diamond (1988:

51) said, “In fact, the political instability of the time stemmed significantly from the determination of the Northern ruling class to establish firm control over the federal state and its resources and so to secure its dominance over the political classes (sic) of the Eastern and Western regions”. The crisis of the division of political spoils in the First Republic created the basis for alignment and the realignment of forces in that Republic leading to the coup, counter coup and massacres of the Ibos in the North, the Aburi meeting and its failure, the declaration of secession and the Civil War.

4.3 The Aburi Meeting and its Aftermath

The killing of September/October 1966 of Ibos in the North made further meetings of the Ad Hoc Constitutional Committee impossible. Nigeria’s official version from Lagos stated that the killings were in retaliation for Ibos attacks on Northerners in the East, but a detailed investigation of this claim has produced no evidence or substance in its support which shows it to be ill-founded (First 1970: Cronje 1972: 18). The killings of Easterners which figures were given as 30,000 and 50,000 respectively at various times by the Eastern Military Government and later the Republic of Biafra were also put at 7,000 by the British Government in 1969 in its publication outlining the Federal Nigeria cause (Cronje 1972). Ademoyega (1981: 131) noted that this one singular act, the “…September-October pogrom staged throughout the Northern Region and directed in the main against the Ibos, made the Civil War inevitable”.

The foregoing made the relations between the Eastern Region and the Federal Government under the dominance of the Northern Regional Military Officers deteriorated rapidly, however, a last minute attempt to salvage the situation resulted in a meeting of Nigeria’s military rulers in Aburi, Ghana at the beginning of January 1967. The fixing of the Supreme Military Council’s meeting in Aburi was due largely to the fears by Ojukwu, the Military Governor of Eastern Region that he would be in danger elsewhere in Nigeria (Nafziger 1983: 44). However, the outcome of Aburi seemed to place Lagos on the defensive. Hence Stremlau (1977:46) stated thus:

> Anyone who had read (either the Federal or Eastern text of) the highly

> controversial Aburi transcript cannot deny that Gowon was immediately put on the defensive by his adversary from the East who, through careful preparation and quick wit, extracted a series of apparent concessions that could be construed as leaving Nigeria without a central government.

In Aburi Eastern Regional Government's proposals were all nearly accepted by Gowon and others all of which seemed reasonable enough on their face value. For the East a cooling off period to allow tempers and indeed tensions to calm down was essential. A defecto separation of the army was agreed as it was felt that Eastern troops could no longer live in the same barracks with their Northern counterparts. Ojukwu also refused to accept Gowon as the Supreme Commander, as successor to Ironsi as such the Aburi Accord accepted his down-grading to Commander-in-Chief and Head of the Federal Military Government. Furthermore, apart from controlling their internal affairs, the concurrence of each region was now required for any major decision affecting the country as a whole. This, in effect, gave each region the power of veto over a host of crucial subjects ranging from the declaring of war on an outside power and the signing of treaties to the appointment of senior military and police officers, federal civil servants and ambassadors. The complex detailed and difficult task of squaring the Aburi According with the pre-January 1966 constitution, which was to remain in force, was left to the law officers and civil servants to work out. Meanwhile, to placate the West, it was agreed that massive recruitment of Yorubas into the military should begin and the Ibo civil servants who had fled to the East would continue to be paid from federal funds until March 31, the end of the financial year. Aburi amounted to a defacto confederation, though no one on the federal side at the negotiation table appeared to realise it at the time (St. Jorre 1977: 94-5).

Ojukwu was at his best at Aburi as he was able to wrung from Gowon and his Northern controlled Federal Military Government much opportunity which gave him ample room to manoeuvre in the future. He could either move back towards the federation or away from it and would still be within the letter, if not the spirit, of the agreement. For Gowon, Aburi was a complete negation of the strong policy lines he had decerned in his speech on 30 November, 1966. The Aburi Accord never mentioned the creation of states which

Gowon's 30 November speech envisaged and confederation which was one of the high marks in that speech was overwhelmingly renounced on the first day of the meeting on January 4, 1967. Ojukwu's success at Aburi was a pointer to the fact that Gowon had underestimated both the mood and strength of the secessionist forces in the East and the determination of the pro-federalist forces (St. Jorre 1977: 95-6)

The proceedings of Aburi were published by both Lagos and Enugu which differed in no essential aspects. However, the agreement was not implemented. The Federal Decree which was supposed to embody the Aburi decision contained provision for declaring a state of emergency in any region with the consent of Lagos and the three other regions whereas it had been agreed in Aburi that decisions affecting the country as a whole would require the concurrence of all military governors as such Enugu refused to recognise the decree. Tensions rose sharply again between Lagos and Enugu over the non-implementation of the Aburi Accord by Gawon's Northern controlled Federal Military Government. Ojukwu refused to attend any further meetings of the Supreme Military Council outside the borders of the East as long as Northern troops remained in control of Lagos and Western Region: their presence, he maintained constituted a threat to the lives of Easterners. In this matter, Ojukwu had support of Colonel Adebayo, Western Nigeria's Military Governor and Chief Awolowo, the Yoruba leader, who complained that the presence of the Northern "army of occupation" had virtually turned Lagos and the West into a protectorate (Cronje 1972: 19). However, these discordant notes from the West would soon be drowned in self interests or the "instrumentalities of survival' by both the Governor and Chief Awolowo himself and the Western Regional landed/comprador bourgeoisie.

Events moved in quick succession as such Ojukwu declared in February 1967 that further acts of the Federal Government would be regarded as illegal by the East, since he contended that the East was ignored and by-passed in the agreements at Aburi. The East which had previously held Northern produce sent to Port Harcourt for export and railway rolling stock, on April 1, 1967 seized a portion of the federal revenues collected within the region, citing alleged delays in payment of their share of the pool and of

salaries to Eastern refugees in federal employment. The Gowon Government retaliated by suspending certain services and imposing increased restrictions on converting international currency in the Eastern Region. Events further escalated pushing Nigeria rapidly down the precipice to the brinks of total collapse (Nafziger 1983: 44-5).

4.3.1 The Move Towards Secession and Its Declaration

Prior to the meeting of the Eastern Region's Consultative Assembly on May 26, 1967 were the seizure by the Enugu Government of an aircraft of the Nigerian Airways, purchase of 6 million pound sterling, taking over of all federal statutory bodies. It also authorised its marketing board to enter into direct contacts with foreign buyers, abolishing appeals to the Federal Supreme Court and calling all Easterners serving in federal police and navy to return which led to additional economic sanctions, including a limited embago against the East (Panter-Bricks 1970: 48-9; Nafziger 1983: 45). On May 26, 1967, the Eastern Region's Consultative Assembly began a meeting that gave the military governor the mandate for secession late on 27 May. Anticipating the mandate, Gowon proclaimed earlier that same day a state of emergency and equally decreed the creation of twelve states from the previous four regions and federal territory (Kirk-Greene vol 1, 1971: 414; Nafziger 1983: 45). The creation of the new states was considered by the East to have violated the Aburi Accord for greater regional autonomy. Thus the Eastern leaders moved on May 30, 1967 to protect their regional hegemony by declaring the East the independent Republic of Biafra (Cronje 1972; Ademoyega 1981; St Jorre 1977).

The declaration of secession thus threatened the interests of the dominant comprador classes made up of the politicians, the ethnic/community leaders, high ranking military leaders already half decimated, senior civil servants and the minority communities whose interest coincided with a strong central government. The Western Region, contrary to its indications early in May by its Consultative Assembly and its leading spokesman, Chief Awolowo (freed from prison in 1966) remained in the federation, where the region's economic interests lay. Although Ibos held fewer posts in the federal civil service than Yorubas, the Ibos provided strong competition for certain positions

and here was a chance for Westerners to make gains at the centre by supporting the federal cause against Eastern secession (Nafziger 1983: 45; Dudley 1973). The appointment of Awolowo to be the top civilian in the government, Deputy Chairman of the newly created Federal Executive Council, and as the Finance Commissioner and the Biafra attack on Lagos were some of the important factors in the West's decision to opt for the federal side (Nafziger 1983; Dudley 1979; 106-9). In Momoh (ed.) (2000: 46), it was attributed to Major General J.J Oluleye (rtd) that one of the reasons for the retention of Northern troops in the West despite initial protest was Colonel R.A Adebayo's fear of some officers of Western or Yoruba origin at Ibadan at the time. The Military Governor of the then Western state was afraid of such elements as possible threat or his overthrow. Another of such according to the same source was the growing realisation that the country should not be left to disintegrate: hence the deliberate refusal to take concrete action to move Northern troops from the West. The turncoat federalists who were openly in favour of secession had suddenly changed. The British High Commissioner to Nigeria at the time was said to have prevailed on Gowon to ensure that Nigeria did not break up (Momoh ed. 2000:46; St Jorre 1977). Colonel R.A. Adebayo like Awolowo and the Western ruling comprador class seemed to be pleased with the development for his personal interest and that of the West Regional dominant rentier/landed class hence the status was accepted and maintained.

4.3.2 Military Mobilisation

Marx (1978: 9) said, "Hegel remarks somewhere that all the events and personalities of great importance in World history occur, as it were twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce". He added "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under given circumstances directly encountered and inherited from the past. The tradition of all the generations of the dead weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living". Thus Gowon stood between pre-January 15 principles-the Northern hegemony and the survival of the North under the guise of survival of Nigeria while at the same time he was undermining that hegemony with the creation of states. In the East Ojukwu refused to let go the hegemonic tendency that had been battled by

the Eastern minorities, hence on both sides, the war was not a just war. It was a war between the two factions of the comprador/landed ruling class. Therefore their mobilisation for war was to maintain their class positions not after the interests of the toiling people in their regions not to talk of other reasons. We have cited earlier Okoye (1979: 129) that "When war is declared, truth is the first casualty. Facts are twisted, lies fabricated and news slanted to suit the demands of political expediency; the masses are generally and tragically deceived and in their blind concern with daily living they become woefully ignorant of what is going on in the world." It is at such critical time that spirit of the dead is conjured up to serve as the mobilisation force to aid the struggles of the living in order to deceive the toiling people.

Thus the September-October massacres of the Ibos, the July 29 counter coup that proceded it in which Ibo prominent military officers were extensively eliminated and the exodus of the Ibos to their region of origin became the battle cry for mobilisation for the course of Biafra. The declaration of Biafra and the Civil War were the final products. We have earlier said that these happenings were products of the struggle for material interests, the antagonistic interest between the feudal aristocracy in the North and the regional comprador classes in the West, Mid-West and Eastern regions. The July 29, 1966 coup rallied the dead of the North to their success and thus the rallying in the name of the dead became the mobilisation underpinning for the Civil War. According to Alli (2000: 213) the 29 July 1966 coup was strictly regional and Northern martial intervention designed to restore Norhern spirit, to meet northern interests and to redress the killings of the January 15 coup and the North had no apology for the subsequent genocide that followed. It was organised by Northern officers for the North". The foregoing was the philosophical and ideological basis for the mobilisation for the Nigerian-Biafran War-the Civil War on both sides.

At independence in 1960, Nigeria had only the Army and Navy and the Air-force later came on stream by 1964. By October 1, 1960 the Nigerian Army had about 7,500 men and about 50 Nigerian officers while the British officers who controlled the Army stood at 228 as at January 1960 (Momoh (ed.) 2000: 53; Okodaso 1992:113). From 1960 to

1963 the Army only increase minimally from 7,500 to 7,816 in 1963, an increase less than 5%. Most of this increase was made up of the formation of a number of small units such as two artillery batteries, additional reccee squadron, a Federal Guards Company and so on (Okodaso. 1992: 115; Momoh (ed) 2000: 53). Before the Nigerian Army split into two in 1966 it had risen to about 10,000 men and officers. After the July 29, 1966 coup and the exodus of officers and soldiers of Eastern origin, particularly the Ibos to their region the size of the Nigerian Army fell to about 7,000 men (Momoh (ed.) 2000:45; Okodaso (ed.) 1992:145). Initially at independence, the Nigerian Army was made up of 2 Brigades which were 1 Brigade stationed at Kaduna and 2 Brigade stationed at Apapa. The 1 Brigade had two Battalions which were 3 Battalion at Kaduna and 5 Battalion at Kano while 2 Brigade had three Batallions, namely: 1 Battalion at Enugu, 4 Battalion at Ibadan and 2 Battalion at Ikeja. In addition there was the Lagos Garrison Organisation at Abalti Barracks in Yaba. The July 29, 1966 coup, the September-October progrom against the Ibos trimmed the size of the Nigerian Army from 10,000 to 7,000. However, 6 Battalion was added to the strength of the Nigerian Army after the departure of Ibos from the other parts of Nigeria and the non-Eastern elements of 1 Battalion Enugu became the nucleus of the 6 Battalion (Momoh (ed.) 2000:53; Okodaso (ed) 1992).

According to Mbachu (2006:12) the fact that former Eastern Region that later declared itself as the “Republic of Biafra” was able to engage in a total war against the Nigerian Federal Republic for 30 gruesome and agonising months was unbelievable. The reason he adduced was that in strategic military terms, Biafra was grossly disadvantaged, Ojukwu’s posture of “no power in black Africa could subdue the breakaway republic” notwithstanding. He laid bare and indeed made issues clear comparatively in the location of military installations in Nigeria and in the self – proclaimed secessionist republic at the commencement of the shootout. He however excluded Lagos from the Table 4.1 he sourced from Alexander A. Madiebo which we felt should be included to have the overall picture and also added are the Brigade locations. Table 4.1 shows the obvious that Gowon had the upper hand in military human materials and hardwares than Ojukwu.

Table 4.1 Distribution of some Military Installations in Nigeria Before the Outbreak of Nigeria – Biafra War.

	REGION	**LOCATION**
S/No.	EAST (IGBOLAND)	
1.	1st Battalion	Enugu
	Under 2 Brigade	Ikeja
	WEST (YORUBALAND)	
1	4th Battalion	Ibadan
	Under 2 Brigade	Ikeja
2	2nd Reconnaissance Squadron	Abeokuta
3	2nd Field Battery (Artillery)	Abeokuta
4	Military Hospital	Lagos
	NORTH	
1.	Nigeria Military School	Zaria
2.	1 Brigade	Kaduna
3.	3rd Battalion	Kaduna
4.	Under 1 Brigade	Kaduna
5.	5th Battalion	Kano
6.	Under 1 Brigade	Kaduna
7.	1st Field Battery	Kaduna
8.	1st Field Squadron (Engineers)	Kaduna
9.	Recruit Training Depot	Zaria
10	Nigerian Military Training College	Kaduna
11.	Ammunition Factory	Kaduna
12.	88th Transport Regiment	Kaduna
13.	Nigeria Military Academy	Kaduna
14.	6th Battalion (under formation)	Kaduna
15.	Ordinance Depot	Kaduna
16.	Nigeria Airforce	Kaduna
17.	44th Military Hospital	Kaduna

18.	R.S. and Regimental HQ	Kaduna

Source: Madiebo, A.A. (1980), The Biafra Revolution and the Nigerian Civil War, Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers.

The fact that the foregoing table 4.1 showed that Gowon had an upper hand did not preclude the egg – heads behind the secessionist leader and his propaganda machinery which he used to his great advantage. In the absence of war arsenals Ojukwu mobilised scientists and charged them to use their scientific ingenuity to research on and develop both conventional and unconventional weapons. Armed with this mandate, the scientists who were drawn from universities, ministries, private companies, polytechnics, technical and even secondary schools, setout to work in groups known initially as "Science Group". The Science Group was officially inaugurated in Enugu in June 1967, after the proclamation of Biafra (Arene 1987;29 cited by Mbachu 2006:13-14). As the war loomed, the various "Science Groups" were merged together into what was later known as "Research and Production (RAP) Directorate" in Enugu in June 1967 and was headed by Late Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna. The mainstream Biafran scientists are listed in table 4.2 below

Table 4.2 **Biafran Operations Research Scientists**

S/No	**Scientist**	**Designation**
1.	Professor Gordian Ezekwe	a world renowned Mechnical Engineer
2.	Professor Ezeilo	a world renowned Mathematician
3.	Professor Onwumechilli	a world renowned Physicist
4.	Professor Chijoke	a world renowned Electrical Engineer
5.	Professor Njoku Obi	a world renowned Microbiologist
6.	Professor Agu Ogan	a world class Scientist
7.	Professor Bede Okigbo	a world renowned Agronomist and Coordinator of Land Army
8.	Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna	Military Coordinator of Biafran Scientists
9.	Mr. Ekechukwu	A first class Chemical Engineer
10.	Dr. Eugene Arene	A world renowned Chemist

11.	Mr. Willie Achukwu	A world renowned Agricultural Engineer and Director of RAP, BOFF Operation
12.	Dr. Nwaji	Chemist
13.	Dr. Ikoku	Chemist
14.	Dr. Nwankwo	Chemist
15.	Dr. Ekpete	Agriculturist
16.	Dr. Obasi	Scientist
17.	Dr. Obiakor	Engineer
18	Dr. Okafor	Chemist
19.	Dr. Onyiriuka	Chemist
20.	Dr. Ben Nwosu	First class Nuclear Physicist and later Coordinator of RAP
21.	Mr. Felix Oragwu	Nuclear Physicist
22.	Dr. G. Leton	Physical Chemist
23.	Dr. Odigbo	Engineer
24.	Mr. Ken	Chemical Engineer
25.	Mr. Jerry Nwankwo	Chemist
26.	Mr. Mathew Uhiara	Expert Brewer
27.	Mr. Ben Arene	Expert Brewer
28.	Dr. Kaine	Engineer
29.	Dr. Okolo	Chemist
30.	Dr. Awachie	Scientist
31	Dr. Fred Ezedinma	Scientist
32.	Dr. Nduka Okafor	Microbiologist

Source: Compiled by Mbachu (2006)

Table 4.3 Biafran Science Groups, their Workshop/Laboratory Locations and type of Research Efforts

S/No	Science Group	Location	Research Efforts	Director
1.	Engineering Group	Enugu, Umudike	Production of Armoured vehicles, Ogbunigwe, rocket, mortar barrels, grenade, bombs, Red devil Tank	Mr. Willie Achukwu
2.	Engineering Group	Methodist College Uzuakoli	Ogbunigwe, Mortar, rocket, land mines, hand grenade	Dr. Obiakor
3.	Engineering Group	Mbaise	Rockets, grenades, ogbunigwe, bombs, land mines	Dr. Kaine
4	Engineering Group	Bishop Shannahan College, Orlu	Red Devil Tanks, Ogbunigwe, Bombs	Prof Gordian Ezekwe
5.	Engineering Group	Aba, Orlu	Shells, Ogbunigwe, Mortar, hand grenade, bombs	Mr. Onyewenyi
6.	Petroleum Management Board (PMB)	Uzuakoli & Amandugba	Refined petroleum product including diesel and kerosene	Chemical Engineers from various oil coys in Eastern Nigeria
7.	Chemical Group	Enugu Govt. College	Productioin of Explosives, Napalm, bombs, various	Dr. Eugene Arene

			incendiary materials, chemical warfare materials, nitrogen, nerve gas	
8.	Chemical Group	Methodist College, Uzuakoli	Salt, matches, rubber latex, acetone	Dr. Ikoku
9.	Chemical Group	Govt. College Orlu	Nitrocellulose explosives, mustard gas, incendiary materials	Dr. Ekpete
10.	Chemical Group	Owerri	Brewing gin, whisky, brandy and liquors salt, etc	Dr. Leton
11.	Chemical Group	Orlu & Ezinnihitte	TNT explosives, pyrotechnics, detonators, batteries	Dr. Okafor
12.	Biological Group	Govt. College Umuahia	Biological Warfare materials	Prof. Njoku Obi
13.	Biological Group	Agric. Research Station, Umudike	Biological warefare materials	Dr. Awachie
14.	Alcoholic Beverages and drinks	Golden Guinea Breweries, Umuahia	Beer, Stout, Alcoholic Beverages	Mr. Mathew Uhiara

Source: compiled by Mbachu (2006)

Table 4.3 shows only a few, ingeneous Biafran war scientists and their “mobile” secret workshops/laboratories. They manufactured the most dreaded home made mine “Ogbunigwe”, rockets, riffles, pistols and above all, the Biafran “Red Devil” armoured

tanks and other armaments. The strategic role played by these physical scientists in Biafran War effort cannot be down played. However, the unfortunate thing is that Nigeria lost the rear opportunity of "capturing" and utilising the Biafran Scientific wizardry. This is regrettable because Nigerian indigenous technology would have been developed greatly if the scientific achievements of the Biafran scientists were harnessed and nurtured (Mbachu 2006:17).

The beginning of the actual mobilisation for the cause of Biafra began with the first conference of senior army officers which was presided over by Colonel Njoku in January 1967 at Enugu. The conference tried to find the best possible ways of establishing formally the Eastern Nigeria Area Command as approved by Lagos and as such it recommended the formation of two new infantry battalions, the 7th and 8th Battalions commanded by Colonels Madiebo and Kalu respectively. The new battalions which were to be based at Nsukka and Port Harcourt were apportioned the task of the defence of the northern frontier for the 7th and 8th Battalion to defend the south with the 1 Battalion serving as a reserve force and also an additional task to taking care of the Niger Riverline to the West. A training depot was also established inside Enugu Prisons which was strategically located to prevent Lagos from knowing that recruitment and training of soldiers were going on. Equally, an Officer Cadet School was envisaged outside Enugu to be run in absolute secrecy (Madiebo 1980:98; Momoh (ed) 2000:54). According to Madiebo (1980:98-9):

> There was no difficulty at all in finding recruits for the Baifra Army. Several hundreds of people turned out daily in front of the First Battalion barracks to be recruited. The majority of these were refugees who were very bitter over the treatment they had received from their fellow Nigerians and were anxious for vengeance. The rate of intake of these recruits was unfortunately very slow due to inadequacy of existing training facilities as well as acute shortage of weapons and essential administrative support. By the middle of April, 1967, the 7th and the 8th Battalions had received sufficient small arms to go round as well as a few machine guns and were deployed in the field.

The building towards the Civil War accelerated on the side of the Biafran authority. And Madiebo (1980:99-100) further stressed:

> When more weapons were received in May, 1967, a decision was taken to form two new Battalions… the 9th and the 14th Battalions. The First, 7th and 14th Battalions would then be grouped to form 51 Brigade, under my command, for the defence of the Northern Sector. The 8th and the 9th Battalions would form the 52 Brigade under the command of Colonel Eze with the responsibility of defending the Southern Sector. Colonel Eze was promised a third Battalion to bring his Brigade up to strength as soon as possible. This unfortunately was not possible before the outbreak of the war.

In the preparation towards the war, all the human materials available could not be absorbed into the Biafran Army. This was due to acute shortages of weapons and the means to meet the personal emoluments, thus at the initial stage, the need for the militia presented itself at the outbreak of the war. The militia which had been developed at the out break of the war played a very crucial and important role in the Biafra's war efforts. These people who could not find their way into the Biafran Army were determined to be actively identified with the war efforts. It was for this reason that several organisations which later became known as *militia*, sprang up in the various Eastern provinces. In these organisations, local leaders and ex-servicemen trained young men and women in the use of whatever weapons were available, mainly imported and locally manufactured shotguns. They became very useful when the pressure from the Northern led Federal Forces mounted (Madiebo 1980:102). The *militia* was disbanded after the fall of Port Harcourt as the pressures forced Biafra to adopt the guerilla welfare against Nigeria in addition to the conventional warfare. This led to the formation of the Biafran Organisation of Freedom Fighters (BOFF) to enhance the war efforts of Biafra (Madiebo 1980: 104).

Furthermore, many pilots and technicians formerly of the Nigerian Air Force who returned to the East became the nucleus of the Biafran Air Force (BAF). Initially they had no planes to fly but later two old planes a B26 and a B25 were acquired together with three new helicopters. The planes were fitted with machine guns and locally made rockets and could deliver bombs also made locally. The Navy had some patrol boats and a ship, NNS Ibadan. In the course of the war, the Biafran Navy (BN) had more boats locally made; these were armour-plated, fitted with light guns and machine guns

used effectively at a certain stage of the war (Madiebo 1980: 100-2; Momoh (ed.) 2000: 55). The pogroms of September-October 1966 and the preceding counter coup of July 29, 1966 carried out by the agents of the Northern comprador/landed class, the representatives of the feudal aristocracy created the basis for the rapid mobilisation of Easterners for the war in all its ramifications. Hence all efforts were put to build a Biafran Armed Forces which by the outbreak of the war had achieved an almost equal strength in men as the Nigerian Army (Momoh (ed.) 2000:55). According St. Jorre (1977:114):

> The September massacres were crucial in the move to secession. They led directly to the point of no return and a factor which should never be lost sight of in the story of Baifra. For the Ibo masses-less so for the Eastern minorities-they had the same catalytic effect as the May riots had had on the top Ibo elite and the July coup on that elite's "second division". But the fact of the massacres alone probably would not have been enough to produce the kind of the sustained popular support that the government needed to carry the East out of the federation. It was only when their horrific details had been hammered home in a pervasive and gifted propaganda campaign over a prolonged period, reinforcing fears of mass killing and forging a solidarity unppprecedected in their history, that the East was ready both to pull out and to fight for their newly won independence.

The controversial Aburi Accord was reflected differently by both Lagos and Enugu in their post-Aburi press briefings. However, it was agreed at the Aburi Conference that the resolutions of the meeting should be embodied in a Decree to be issued by Lagos with the concurrence of the Military Governors. As we had noted earlier, Ojukwu had scored all his points at the meeting. According to Ademoyega (1981:133):

> If Gowon were to be faithful to the resolutions, the Nigerian Civil War might have been averted. But as was usual with him, as soon as Gowon stepped down in Lagos, he gave his ears to the Federal civil servants and to his Northern masters, who advised him that he had conceded too much to Ojukwu. There and then he was prepared to dishonour his own word and break the terms of the Aburi agreement.

The Decree 8 that was supposed to bring out the Aburi Accord, had mutilated the resolutions hence Ojukwu did not attend the Banin meeting of March 10, 1967 because

he had earlier rejected the draft of that Decree which made mockery of the Aburi resolutions. The offending clauses of the Decree were sections 70 and 71 which empowered the Supreme Military Council to declare a state of emergency in Nigeria, if the Head of the Federal Military Government and at least three of the Governors agreed to do so. Section 71 also empowered the Head of the Federal Military Government in agreement with at least three of the Governors to legislate for any particular region whenever they deemed it fit during a state of emergency with or without the consent of the Governor of that particular region. In effect Gowon had bestowed powers on himself to deal with Ojukwu whenever he pleased, how he pleased and as long as he pleased (Ademoyega 1981: 133-4).

However, Ojukwu had threatened earlier that should the Aburi resolution be not fully implemented by March 31, marking the end of a financial year in those days he would feel free to take steps to implement those resolutions in the Eastern Region. Ojukwu had to promulgate his Revenue Collection Edict II on that day, 31 March 1967 which to all intent and purpose gave him financial freedom from Nigeria. The East had held previously Northern produce sent to Port Harcourt for export, the railway rolling stock and by April 1, 1967 a portion of the federal revenue, collected within the region, citing alleged delays in payments of their share of pool and salaries to Eastern refugees in Federal employment. Further actions where precipitated by the Eastern Regional Government which included the seizure of an aircraft of Nigeria Airways enroute from Benin which was hi-jacked and flown to Enugu: abolishing appeals to the Federal Supreme Court and calling all Easterners serving in the Federal Police and Navy to return (Ademoyega 1981: Nazgizer 1983:44-5: Momoh (ed.) 2000: Panter-Bricks (ed.) 1970:48-9).

The Gowon Government retaliated by suspending certain services and imposing increased restrictions on the converting of international currencies in the Eastern Region. Last spirited attempts to savage the situation were put in place. Such were the National Peace Committee put in place which got Ojukwu agreed to attend all future meetings but which he could not honour. Also a Yoruba mission of Obas failed to get

Ojukwu to return to the federation. In the end, Lagos decided to impose an economic blockade on the Eastern Region (Cronje 1972: St Jorre 1977; Momoh (ed.) 2000:50; Madiebo 1980:9-3). The deteriorating situation made Colonel Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu to convene a meeting of the Eastern Advisory Committee of Chiefs and Elders at Enugu on the 26th May, 1967 to acquaint them with the latest developments and seek their view on the way forward. In an address to the Committee, Ojukwu outlined the history of the crisis, asserted that the East was fully prepared to defend itself. He further stressed ‘‘There is no power in this country or in black Africa to subdue us’’-and presented before the Assembly three loaded posers to select from: (a) accepting the terms of the North and Gowon and thereby submit to domination by the North, or (b) continuing the present stalemate and drift, or (c) ensuring the survival of our people by asserting our autonomy (St. Jorre 1977: 121; Momoh ed. 2000: 50; Madiebo 1980:93).

The result of the two day Consultative Assembly or Committee was the mandate given to Colonel Ojukwu on the 27th May “…to declare, at the earliest practicable date, Eastern Nigeria a free sovereign and independent state by the name and title of the Republic of Biafra” (Mediebo 1980:93; Momoh (ed.) 2000:50; Ademoyega 1981:135; St Jorre 1977:121). On the same day, Gowon also decided to implement an earlier Supreme Military Council decision on creation of more states. Accordingly, on 27 May, 1967, Gowon assumed full powers, declared a state of emergency, abrogated Decree 8 and, most far- reaching of all, divided the country into twelve new states, abolishing all the old regional structures and their imbalances (St. Jorre 1977: 121; Momoh (ed.) 2000: 50; Ademoyega 1981: 136). According to Ademoyega (1981:136);

> There was no doubt that by this singular act Gowon had pressed the button that united the country behind him. By declaring a state of emergency in Nigeria, especially while Nigeria yet remained one, he had forestalled the anticipated secession of the East-thus rendering such an act, if undertaken, both illegal and rebellious. He had made politics illegal, thus silencing those who would rather that force was not used, especially the West.

The declaration of secession was done by Ojukwu on the 30th of May 1967. However, Gowon master stroke of states’ creation had rallied the entire Nigerians, excepting,

majority of the Igbos, behind Gowon and his Northern aristocracy. Ademoyega (1981:140) said, “If there was a side less committed to war, it was Nigeria where formerly two of the remaining three loyal military governors were opposed to the use of force. Although there was an emergency in Nigeria and no one could really oppose the mobilisation for war yet the Military Governor of Mid-West state …Lt Col David Ejoor assiduously held his ground, refusing to let his state be used as a launching ground for Federal Military operations against Biafra. “After the declaration of secession, Gowon on 5 July declared “Police Action” to crush the Eastern rebellion under the leadership of Colonel Ojukwu. All preparations were thus geared towards the Civil War earlier tagged “Police Action.” In Nigeria, the Military Government took a very naïve assessment of the war hence the Colonel Hassan Katsina was quoted to have said that the operation would be concluded within 48 hours (Momoh (ed.) 2000:58).

The mobilisation for the “Police Action” which later became a full blown war was restricted initially to the north borders of Biafra as the war was considered to be mainly between the Hausa-Fulanis and the Ibos at this stage. In the Mid-West, Colonel David Ejoor had refused his state to be used as battle ground against the Ibos though he was strongly supportive of Federal Nigeria. One peculiar initiative the North took in preparation for the war ahead of the Federal Government was the conclusion by the Northern bureaucrats and leaders of thought that war was inevitable. As such a Northern based War Committee under the Military Governor of Northern Region, Colonel Hassan Kastina before the 12 states were created was set up. The role of the committee was to assist in mobilisation and provision of logistical support for the Army. On a comparative note, Madiebo (1980:188) had this to say:

> With limited resources available to it, it was obvious that the Biafran Army could not win a war against Nigeria. One was not even sure whether the Army could put up a meaningful defence. Apart from any additions it may have made since the crisis, the Nigerian Army was a formidable force in comparison with what Biafra had. Nigeria had an Army of six battalions, well equipped by modern standards. In support were two artillery units holding a total of 16x105mm Pack Howitzers in addition two reconnaissance squadrons equipped with ferret and saladine armoured vehicles, not to mention mortars of various calibres. It had a sizeable Navy and Air force that could be made combat ready at short notice.

Biafra had none of these and the prospects of getting them were rather remote.

For the Biafrans' while it did appear that much effect had been exerted to build a Biafran Armed Forces which almost equaled that of Nigeria in strength in men at the outbreak of the War, there was a lot of confusion as to the political and military direction of Biafra as well as sourcing for weapons to prosecute the impending war. This development resulted in the exclusion of the Armed Forces of Baifra in the policy-making processes towards the war because of the fear of personal security by Colonel Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. Whereas returning officers want to be involved in military planning and command, they were not encouraged to do so. This was corroborated by a letter sent to Adewale Ademoyega by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu that he and non- Eastern colleagues were sent away on an indefinite leave and were not allowed to take part in preparing for the war. He said that he was surprised to hear from Nzeogwu that the East was not really preparing for war. He stressed that the noise was much but the military preparation was negligible (Madiebo 1980: Momoh (ed) 2000:55; Ademoyega 1981:143). The pathetic situation of Biafra's preparation for war was demonstrated by Ademoyega after Mid-West fell to Biafra in August 9, 1967 just a month after the declaration of, war. He said after his release from prison at Warri during Biafra's invasion that:

> I spent that day with Chukwuka in Warri. He had instructions to send me to Benin as soon as I was released. But he was yet to gather the arms and ammunition which he was to send with me. There and then, I understood that all kinds of military stores were in short supply in Biafra; rifles, machine guns, ammunition, artillery, amoured vehicles, planes and what not. I was no longer surprised because Nzeogwu had written about it much earlier. We drove to the police station and took possession of all their old mark IV bolt action, single round rifles and all the available ammunition. It all amounted to very little. Then, I remembered that I myself should be in uniform, but I had none whatsoever and my men had none to spare. I rushed to the Headquarters, got hold of Ifeajuna and collected a pair of his own uniform, his only spare (Ademoyega 1981: 145-6)

The foregoing were the level of preparedness by both the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Biafran Armed Forces at the commencement of the Nigerian Civil War. Colonel

Ojukwu declared secession on the 30th of May 1967 and Gowon declared the "Police Action" on July 5, 1967. Thus the two groups of people that formed a coalition from 1959 to the eve of the Federal Elections of 1964 became antagonists as a result of their struggles over political spoils. It was a product also of the dwindling of the regional economic fortunes with the collapse of the world commodity prices after the 1955/56 Korean War booms and the rise of Federal profile with the importance of crude oil. This was the crux of the matter in the seeming irreconcilable antagonisms between the Northern comprador landed/rentier classes and their Eastern Regional counterparts with whom the North formed a coalition against the rest of us. The young military officers from both ends tore the viel of the seeming national unity with the coup and counter coup of 1966, the sliding into war and the mobilisation for the war.

4.4 Police Action and the Limited War

A limited war which the Northern dominated Federal Forces called "Police Action" ensued from July 5, 1967 when it actually came as the Federal side called the shots. It seems that Nigeria saw the impending war as a child's play hence the code name "Police Action" and almost belatedly started military preparations for war which were frantically carried out from June 1967 after the declaration of secession on May 30, 1967. The North blazed the trail as the entire machinery of Northern Regional Government and the Native Authorities had to be involved in mobilising ex-service men (veterans of the Second World War) and Native Authorities' policemen into the Army. The mobilisation came late because the leadership naively"… hoped that there would be a peaceful solution to the crisis and that violence would be avoided (Elaigwu 1985:114; Momoh (ed) 2000:57).

Prior to the commencement of the Civil War, 4 Battalion at Kaduna was deployed at the border of Benue Plateau state with East Central state and South-Eastern state. The operation was codenamed 'UNICORD' which was meant to suggest the joining back broken cord that resulted from national discord between brothers and sisters. Hence the operation was called "Police Action". The battle plan was to approach the secessionists from the North and to secure the sea coast and the Bonny oil terminal to

the South leaving the Mid-West out that had chosen to be neutral in the war. Thus the Northern operation was to focus on rapid advance to capture Nsukka and Enugu, the secessionist capital and perhaps capture the secessionist leader thereby destroying the rebellion, while the southern operation was to seal the sea routes and to secure Bonny oil terminal, the economic livewire of the country (Momoh (ed.) 2000:61-2).

For Biafra, the 7th Battalion was deployed at the northern axis with its headquarters at Nsukka. It's A Company at Okuta was responsible for the defence of the 80 mile stretch between Okuta and Onitsha to the south and the B Company was to defend the 30 miles of frontier between Okuta and Obollo Afor and the C Company was to defend from Obollo Afor to Obollo Eke, 40 miles to the East. In order to facilitate their task a detachment of platoon strength, from C Company was based at Eha-Amufu to take charge of the areas closely. Two companies of the 1st Battalion were to take charge of the entire Ogoja Province almost 200 miles from Nsukka the headquarters of the 7th Battalion under which command they were placed. Madiebo who was the 7th Battalion Commander and under whose command the two companies deployed to Ogoja were placed said that the effective supervision of these two companies was a near impossibility (Madiebo 1980: 99). Thus, the first encounter between Nigerian Northern led troops and the Biafran Forces along Adikpo- Obudu axis on June 10, 1967 left the Biafran Forces in very poor reaction and flee their trenches thereby leaving the only machine gun available to the company (Madiebo 1980; Momoh (ed) 2000:62).

The Biafran 8th Battalion in the south had its headquarters at Port Harcourt; with a company each deployed at Ahoada, Calabar, Oron and a platoon at Bonny. In Madiebo's view the extreme south-western coastline, covering a distance of more than 100 miles, remained undefended due to lack of troops. With more weapons available in May 1967, it was decided by the Biafran authority that two new battalions which were 9th and 14th Battalions be formed. The 1st, 7th and 14th Battalions were then grouped to form the 51 Brigade under the command of Colonel A.A Madiebo, for the defence of the northern sector. The 8th and the 9th Battalions were then grouped to form the 52 Brigade under the Command of Colonel Eze, with the task of defending the southern

sector. However, a third battalion was supposed to be added to Eze's brigade to bring it to strength which never happened before the outbreak of the war. Under this arrangement, the remnants of the 1st Battalion at Enugu moved to Ogoja and 14th Battalion was formed at Abakaliki and the 9th Battalion was doing the same at Calabar (Madiebo 1980:99-100).

In the view of the Nigerian Army publication of 2000, "Judging from the comparative strength of the forces, the operation was generally projected to be a short lived one…: (Momoh (ed.) 2000:63). This view was corroborated by Madiebo (1980:100) who said that: "The Biafran Army had nothing other than old bolt-action rifles made available by government civilian agents. A few machine guns were issued at the rate of about one or two per company. In the way of support weapons only the First Battalion had 6 x 81mm and 6 x 3' mortar barrels, inherited from the Nigerian Army. For these, the bombs available were extremely limited. Other units had to rely entirely on local devices as substitutes for support weapons and then fortified their defences with ditches, mines and armoured vehicle traps".

4.4.1 The Northern and Eastern Dominant Classes at War

The massacres of the Ibos after the coup and counter coup of 1966 only provided an alibi for the Nigerian Civil War initially between the Northern feudal landed aristocracy and the comprador landed dominant class of the East, principally of the Ibo extraction. It was surprising that the Northern feudal aristocracy that dominated the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the Eastern dominant class that dominated the National Council of the Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) that were in coalition against the rest of us, had suddenly turned antagonists and indeed opponents at war. The military fell a victim to the split in the political community because it could not be separated at all from the society and politics that were torn down the middle, between the feudal aristocracy and the comprador landed class. According to Baran (1978:368):

> Thus the nationalist movements, after acquiring power in the newly established national states cannot but enter a process of disintegration. The socially heterogeneous, elements even so tenuously united during the period of the anti-

imperialist struggle, became more or less rapidly polarised and identified with the opposing class forces within the framework of the new society.

The polarisation of the nationalist movement in Nigeria after the gaining of paper independence led to the alignment and the realignment of forces leading to the emergence of the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) prior to the 1964 Federal Elections and the 1965 West Regional Elections which were bitterly contested by the two opposing polarised alliances. We have observed that this polarisation and the Nigerian system of political rewards stung the military like a bee splitting it into two – the populists represented by the January 15, 1966 coupists and the feudal conservative forces represented by the July 29, 1966 coupists. At the opening of the Civil War, the rank of the populists had been depleted and transmuted into the parochial regionalist sectional conservatives away from a national front of populism of the January 15 1966 coup. The lack of depth propaganda by the feudal aristocracy of the North portraying the coup as an Ibo coup and the counter coup of July 29, 1966 putting a seal of approval on the propaganda made the whole thing looked as principally an Ibo or East versus North affair and thus transformed Ojukwu who was anti-January populist coupist into an Ibo and indeed Eastern Regional and later Biafran secessionist populist. Wonders will not seize to happen in History as regards the sudden transformation of Ojukwu from a Nigerian conservative to a Biafran populist.

The foregoing was a tragedy of history. It equally brought the entire reactionary forces of the East and specifically those of the Ibos in the North behind Ojukwu. The July 29, 1966 counter coup and the September/October massacres of the Ibos in the North and the cry for “araba” (secession) by the North made the Ibos feel unaxcepted in Nigeria. The subsequent change of heart by the North from “araba” to maintaining Nigeria sovereignty was not truly fundamental but because as Alli (2001:214) puts it “The 29 July,1966 coup was strictly… designed to restore Northern spirit, meet Northern interests … it was organised by Northern officers for the North. It restored national leadership to it, willy-nilly”. The ascendance of General Aguyi Ironsi and the Ibo coup propaganda that trailed it made the struggle for Nigeria leadership a Northern versus

Eastern affair, that is, between the Northern aristocratic conservative class and the Eastern conservative landed/rentier comprador class. This was epitomized by the initial focus of the war, which was between the Northern and Eastern dominant classes and their military wings which were pitched against each other during period of the “Police Action”

Thus the declaration of the war, that is, the “Police Action” in very clear terms saw the mobilisation of the Northern conservative forces and its 1 Area Command’s Military against the Eastern Region conservative forces and its 3 Area Command’s Military. The emergence of 1 Division was a steady growth of 1 Brigade based in Kaduna of 1 Area Command under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Muhammadu Shuwa after the July 29, 1966 counter coup. The feverish preparations for war brought about the ex-servicemen and police being mobilised during the first half of 1967 which witnessed the rapid expansion of the 1 Area Command. Prior to the outbreak of war, however, only 4 Battalion was under engagement at the Benue-Plateau borders with the East or what became known later as Biafra after the declaration of secession by Colonel Ojukwu. Later 2 Battalion joined on June 10 1967 when it was being planned that a north-south “Police Action” operations was the approach to the Nigerian Civil War. Eventually both the 4 Battalion and 2 Battalion were expanded into 1 Brigade and 2 Brigade and were designated Sectors 1 and 2 respectively at the commencement of the Civil War. Sectors I and 2 were given first operational orders to capture Nsuka and Ogoja respectively. The nucleus of what later became 1 Division shifted its operational Headquarters to Makurdi under Lieutenant Colonel Mohammadu Shuwa as General Officer Commanding (GOC) and the Rear Headquarters was based in Kaduna under Lieutenant Colonel IBM Haruna (Momoh (ed.) 2000:65-60)

The 1 Brigade or Sector 1 established its headquarters at Oturkpo under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel Sule Appolo and was given operational orders to caqpture Nsukka.The Sector 2 or 2 Brigade had its Headquarters at Adikpo and was given operational orders to take charge of Ogoja axis at the outbreak of the war (Momoh (ed.) 2000:65-6). On the Biafran side, the rebel`s 51 Brigade was being created to take

charge of both the Nsukka and the Ogoja axes of the impending war. The 51 Brigade under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Madiebo was to have its Headquarters at Udi but later relocated to Abakaliki when the first shots of the war had been fired (Madiebo 1980: 123, 130). This was the comparative strength of both the Nigerian Army and the Biafran Army deployed to counter each other at the Nsukka and Ogoja axes of the war when it commenced as “Police Action” during the transformation of 1 Area Command to 1 Division before the capture of Enugu.

Prior to the commencement of the shoot out on July 6, 1967, the 3 Battalions of 1 Brigade had its axis of Nsukka designated Sector 1 and was therefore deployed to capture Nsukka. The operation orders were as follows: 4 Battalion was to advance and capture Obolo Afor, consolidate its gains, clear the areas left behind by 21 and 22 Battalions in their push towards Nsukka and to wait for further orders before the next push; the 21 Battlion had to advance through the centre route to Akpanya to Enugu Ezike through to Ibegwa Aka to Nsukka; and 22 Battalion to advance from Idah to Aduru through to Okutu, Okuji to Ibegwa Ani and to converge at Nsukka with 21 Battalion. The 3 Battalions were given definite matching orders to capture their objectives as the “Police Action” commenced on July 6,1967. However, 21 and 4 Battalions encountered enemy resistance at Okuji before its objective Ibegwa Ani. On July 9, however, Ibegwa Ani was captured, thus completing successfully the three initial objectives set for 1 Brigade, Sector 1 preparatory to the advance on Nsukka and to open the way for the push on Enugu (Momoh (ed.) 2000:66).

Apart from the initial calm reported by the second-in-command of Biafra`s 7 Battalion, Major Ben Gbulie at the Nsukka Sector on July 6,1967, the situation was very different just one hour later. According to Lieutenant Colonel A.A. Madiebo, Major Gbulie was on the air telling him at Garkem that the enemy had launched massive attacks on two fronts-Ankpa-Ogugu-Enugu Ezike and Ida-Aduru-Olutu. On both areas, he said, the enemy was shelling massively and advancing with armoured vehicles, despite all attempts by our troops to stop them. Major Gbulie then requested the urgent return of Colonel Madiebo to Nsukka to help them out to which he agreed. Meanwhile operations

equally commenced at Garkem, Ogoja by the Nigerian Army Sector 2 under the 2 Brigade. Lieutenant Colonel Madiebo Commander of Biafra`s 51 Brigade was on visit to the Biafra`s 1 Battalion at Ogoja one of the battalions under his command when fighting commenced on the same July 6, 1967. He said:

> The enemy attacked in Garkem at 0530 hours with two battalions, advancing on two axes right and left of the main Garkem-Afikpo road. His preparatory bombardment using artillery and heavy motars was extremely heavy and sustained. Our own troops, even though they had suffered some casualties, were still firmly in their new dug trenches but with no over-head cover. By 0900 hours the first enemy assault of three ferrets and one saladine-armoured vehicle came in. as the vehicles approached the trenches, our troops were ordered to withdraw to both flanks and advance to make contact with enemy infantry if they could be seen. Thus, by passing the armoured vehicles in the village, our troops soon made contact with the two assaulting enemy infantry battalions which were advancing…..some 400 yards away from the village. Fighting began with each enemy battalion poised against two platoons of Baifran Army. After two hours of intensive exchange of fire, the enemy turned round and broke into a run towards their start line. Though taking aback by the unexpected weight and nature of the attack, they had developed high spirit and morale with the realisation that the enemy soldiers were no better than they were (Madiebo 1980:125-8).

As the battle of Garkem was raging, another front was opened by the Nigerian Forces concurrently at Obudu. Madiebo said that the two-hour bombardment was carried out by Nigerian troops on the Biafran Forces, which lasted from 0600-0800 hours. The enemy puts in a straight forward infantry battalion attack which was quickly haltered and beaten back. He further stressed that the Biafrans followed immediately with a counter attack which according to him was so successful that the Nigerian troops were completely routed and set on the run. As time went on, the situation in Ogoja was deteriorating with mounting enemy pressures particularly on the Garkem front against Biafran Forces. No reinforcements were available and by the time reinforcements for Gakem came, Ogoja was badly threatened and thus the fall of Obudu and Ogoja to Nigerian Forces was imminent. The Biafran Forces put in very spirited attempts to prevent their fall leading to heavy losses on the side of the Nigerian troops and equally heavy rebel loses (Momoh (ed.) 2000:69; Madiebo 1980: 128, 130-1).

The movement for the capture of Nsukka commenced on July 14, 1967 with an all round attack from the secessionist forces and a heavy mortar and ferret bombardment from the 22 Battalion of Sector 1 which silenced the rebel forces and forced them to withdraw to Nsukka for its defence. The defence of Nsukka became highly organised and spirited from the both lines of advance of the 21 and 22 Battalions. The rebel Air Force used helicopters and its B26 aircraft to the maximum to bomb the positions of 21 and 22 Battalions in order to halt Nigeria's advance. Both 21 and 22 Battalions had captured Nsukka on the same day July 14, 1967 but after some casualties had been sustained (Momoh (ed.) 2000:66-7). According to Madiebo (1980: 131);

> …Nsukka town had fallen when I checked with Major Gbulie over the army wireless net. Infact Gbulie had told me that the 7th Battalion was reorganising at Eke with the Brigade Headquarters at Ukehe, 20 miles from Enugu. I had not realised then that the situation was all that bad, so when I opened a map and saw a town called Eke, 15 miles inside Northen Nigeria, I thought that was the one he meant. I was glad but could not understand why the infantry should be moving forward while the Brigade Headquarters was moving back. I rechecked with him and found to my amazement that the Eke he meant was barely 12 miles to Enugu, capital of Biafra.

In order to consolidate and clear Nsukka it took quite sometime. The rebel forces continued to shell the town on daily basis presumably to dislodge the Northern led Federal Forces. Two weeks after the capture of Nsukka, precisely on 28 July, 1967, the rebel forces launched an all round attack on the town. It was on this particular occasion as the Commanding Officer of 21 Battalion, Captain M. Wushishi was not in station and enemy bombings went on throughout the night that Captain A. Shelleng, the Acting Commanding Officer of 22 Battalion took time off his location to see what must have happened as a result of the heavy bombardments that he was told of the demise of Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. He was told that Major Nzeogwu had an encounter at the first road block mounted by soldiers of Wushishi's 21 Battalion just outside the Nsukka Campus and was gunned down there while trying to escape with his land rover (Momoh 2000:67-8).

The death of Major Nzeogwu resulted in a lull on the rebel's determination to recapture

Nsukka, however, they were scattered and equally dominated the areas to the left (east) of Sector 1, that is, the middle of 1 and 2 Sectors covering Obollo Eke, Ikem and Eha Amufu areas on the way to Nkalagu. This area was to be covered by Sector 2 but because of the very wide expanse of land involved, its defence by Sector 2 became impossible, thus it posed a very serious problem to Sector1 as the Sector could be cut off at Nsukka, if the area was not properly secured. This development resulted in the creation of Sector 3 after the capture of Nsukka and Ogoja by 1 Sector and 2 Sector on the 15 and 13 July respectively (Momoh (ed.) 2000: 68). Madiebo (1980:131-144) detailed the co-ordinated harassments of the Northern led Federal troops in the area between Nsukka and Nkalagu and various setbacks the 51 Brigade of the Biafran Army made the Nigerian Army to experience. According to Madiebo (1980:139);

> Enemy reaction to his great loses at Obollo Afor was to create a new third sector of the Nigerian Army independent of his troops at Nsukka. The task of the third sector was primarily to destroy our forces at Obollo Eke. At the beginning of August 1967, all intelligence information pointed to the fact that the enemy new command was forming up very quickly in the area of Orokam. The same very reliable intelligence source also revealed that the attack would come from the right with Obollo Eke as the objective, with a view to completely cutting of Obollo Afor and the two companies up there.

The battles for Obudu took a heavy toll on the Northern led Federal Forces as a result of the heavy resistance against the 20 Battalion of Sector 2 in which the enemy was perceived to be far more superior. Lieutenant Colonel Marthins Adamu, the Sector 2 Commander suggested that the rebels had anticipated the Federal troops advance on this Sector in view of an incident at the border of this Sector on June 10, 1967 prior to the outbreak of war. The rebels having anticipated the Federal troops occupied Observation Posts (OPs) or high grounds, succeeded in neutralising the 20 Battlion mortars. This development forced the withdrawal of 20 Battalion to defend the borders. The 20 Battlion suffered a great deal of casualties, though the secessionist troops equally had the same degree of setback leading to their abandonment of Obudu which because of the serious depletion of the Federal 20 Battlion, it would not also be occupied. This development forced the Brigade Commander Lieutenant Colonial Martin

Adamu (now Major General rtd), who doubled for the Sector Commander to change his plan or strategy of advancing on Ogoja on two fronts and instead had chosen to advance on one front.

However, after the initial problems 2 Brigade moved swiftly clearing Garkem, Obudu and finally taking Ogoja on the 13th day of July 1967. At this stage and most importantly after the capture of Nsukka leading to the dispersal of rebel troops in-between the two Sectors around Obollo Eke and Nkalagu axes, the Federal Forces became bogged down by rebel activities at the rear and the middle. This led to the creation of 3 Sector whose mission was to penetrate from Orokam the central areas in-between the Sectors 1 and 2 and to capture Obollo Afor, through Obollo Eke to Ikem and to Eha Amufu and to get at the road linking Nkalagu and Enugu to the right and Abakaliki to the left. The idea was to cut off Enugu thereby weakening the strength of the rebels. However, the lead battalion, 2 Battalion under the Command of Major Sotomi on advance to its objective got bogged down at Obollo Afor. This was because after the fall of Nsukka and Ogoja the middle grounds from Eha Amufu down to Ikem, Obollo Eke and Obollo Afor became open to rebel exploits. The rebel plan was successful as they halted the advancing 3 Battlion at Obollo Afor routing the Battalion and capturing a number of its officers and soldiers as prisoners of war (Momoh (ed.) 2000:69-70).

It was the battle plan of the Federal Forces that while 3 Battalion was to move on the trunk road through Obollo Afor to Obollo Eke through Ikem to Eha Amufu, 23 Battalion was to detach from 2 Sector at Ogoja and move from Oturkpo through Igumale before advancing on Eha Amufu to link up with 3 Battalion for advance to Nkalagu. As a result of communication gap and unknown to 23 Battalion, 3 Battalion had been routed and thus 23 Battalion found rebel troops entrenched at Eha Amufu as such the rear of 23 Battalion between Obollo Eke and Ikem became open. In a confrontation, 23 Battalion put a failed attack on the rebels and was consequently pushed back and had to withdraw back to Ogoja through the same route it came (Momoh (ed.) 2000-70). The brilliant exploit of the Biafran Army of its 51 Brigade under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel Madiebo corroborates the accounts given by the Nigerian Army Education

Corps publication on the Nigerian Civil War. At Obudu the first attempt by the Nigerian Army 2 Brigade, Sector 2 to capture the town was beaten back and equally too was also the second attempt and Madiebo said "…the day (first day of July 6) at Obudu ended in a stalemate". At Obollo Afor, on the 20th of July, 1967, the rebel forces destroyed several Nigerian Army vehicles and an armoured car, according to Madiebo, though some enemy vehicles and men managed to escape to the North, scarcely any reinforcement got to Obollo Afor. As for Obollo Eke encounter on the 30th of July 1967, Madiebo further stressed that they laid mortars on Ogobido the only suspected enemy concentration on the right flank and then fired off their remaining ten rounds. Their firing, he said, silenced the Nigerian Army shelling completely and as such they were expecting Nigerian infantry assault. But the reverse happened as they sited them in total confusion as such several of them ran into the hands of the Biafran Forces as prisoners of war. At Obollo Eke attack by the Federal Nigerian Forces after small arms fire and later heavy shelling and a return mortar of few rounds by Biafran soliders, the enemy fire died down according to Madiebo and the Nigerian Forces had to withdraw in a disorderly manner with heavy casualties (Madiebo 1980: 123-44; Momoh (ed.) 2000: 70). Thus there was a near stalemate in Sectors 1, 2, and 3 with the Biafran Forces.

The stalemate which developed was described by Lieutenant Colonel Madiebo of the Biafran 51 Brigade in this manner, "Apart from our defeat at Ogoja where we were caught completely on the hop, 51 Brigade was winning all its battles until now, it was difficult to imagine that the enemy could ever again overpower the Brigade in any battle. The happy trend of event soon charged for two reasons-one was the formation of 101 Division and the other, the invasion of Mid-Western Nigeria. Thereafter things began to be difficult for not only 51 Brigade but the whole of the Biafran Army (Madiebo 1980: 144). What Madiebo meant in his conclusion in the foregoing was that the formation of 101 Division and the redeployment of troops from one sector to the other weakened Biafra's fighting forces in the Nsukka, Obollo Afor, Obollo Eke, Eha Amufu and Nkalagu areas and the invasion of Mid-Western Nigeria by the Biafran Army overstretched Biafran defence capabilities in a war they were increasingly loosing in the northern fronts, despite the later stalemate. In addition, the invasion of Mid-Western

Nigeria by Biafran Forces on August 9, 1967 swung the full support of Mid-West, the West and Lagos people and their comprador classes in support of the Northern controlled Federal Forces and their landed aristocracy, the dominant faction in Nigerian politics since the 1950s. This dominant faction in Nigerian politics although under the hegemony of the Northern aristocracy, presents issues in Northern spirit and to meet or keep Northern interests intact. It presented its interest as those of Nigeria after the counter coup of July 29, 1966. According to Balarabe Musa (2001) the difference between the Northern and Southern ethnic hegemonic classes has been that while the Hausa/Fulani aristocracy presents issues pretendingly for the North as whole, the Southern dominant, regional hegemonic classes present issues in their ethnic purity thus alienating the ethnic minorities and their ruling classes. According to him this has been the backbone of the Northern dominant aristocratic class. It is their ingenuity to look at issues from a broader regional perspective and to present their regional interests as national interests. This happened in the NPC/NCNC coalition of 1959 to 1964, when it had served its purpose they broke the rank, the census crisis of 1962, 1966 coup, their itching for “araba” (secession) when it almost suited them to do so and the sudden retracing of their steps for Nigerian unity and how the Biafran invasion of Mid-West, West by August 9, 1967 finally threw the undecided Nigerians, the Mid-West, West and Lagos fully behind the Northern hegemonic class and made the Civil War a truly Federal war against the secessionist Biafran.

The invasion of Mid-West by the Biafran Army on August 9, 1967 and the creation of Biafra’s 101 Division, which overstretched the rebel defence soon began to have its toll on the rebel army. The 5 Battalion of Nigerian Army, which was at the rear came to recapture Obollo Afor. The Battalion was however to be scattered by enemy shell at its assembly area at Obollo Eke. Nevertheless, a reorganised 5 Battalion was later to capture Obollo Eke. A later operational linkage between 23 Battalion and 5 Battalion at Obollo Eke led to the successful advance on Ikem and finally the capture of Eha Amufu on August 14, 1967. At Eha Amufu, 23 Battalion was almost dislodged again by the rebels “Red Divils” (modified World War II tank) described by Nigerian soldiers as “impenetrable by bullets”. However, this was destroyed by an anti-tank rifle rocket fired

by Sergeant Dauda Usman (later Captain Dauda Usman of 1976 Dimka-led abortive coup). This same rifle was used to destroy a helicopter on bombing mission on Federal troops at Eha Amufu (Momoh (ed.) 2000-71). Thus ending the first phase of the battle between the Northern comprador class landed/rentier and their Eastern or Biafran opponents, precisely between the aristocracy of the Northern Nigeria and the comprador class of the East.

4.4.2 The Battle for Enugu.

As the northern frontier from Ogoja to Nsukka was firmly in the hands of the Northern led Federal Nigerian Forces, the training and the retraining of troops for the advance on Enugu and all logistical preparations were on top gear by Sector 1 to launch an attack on this objective from the Nsukka Sector in August 1967. As the preparation were going on, however, the rebels in a dramatic move, suddenly invaded the “neutral” Mid-West on August 9, 1967 in a lightening operation that took them up to Ore on their push to take Lagos. This forced the Federal Government to open a new theatre of war in the Mid-West and hurriedly knocked together the 2 Division to man this new front. It equally forced the Federal Government to declare total war as against “Police Action”. Meanwhile prior to Sector 1 advance on Enugu there was a change of command in 1 Brigade as Lieutenant Colonel Sule Apollo was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Danjuma which change brought new dynamism and spirit to a brigade that was spoiling for an advance on Enugu to finish up with the rebellion. However, it became necessary as a result of the overstretched nature of troops against the rebel forces at the Nsukka Sector that reinforcement was needed before the movement on Enugu could commence. A brigade was thus detached from Sector 3 to enable it achieve the objective of the war (Momoh (ed.) 2000:71).

The advance of the Nigerian Army, 1 Brigade on Enugu commenced on September 12, 1967 when the war had transited from a “Police Action” to a full scale war and from a war between the Northern feudal aristocracy and the Eastern comprador class to truly Nigerian Civil War as a result of the rebel invasion of Mid-West and the whipping of the

hitherto undecided Mid-West and Western Nigeria landed class into line. The 22 Battalion was billed to advance to Eke and when it reached Eke along its route, it came under rebel attack which was quickly repelled and they were pushed up to Abor the objective set for 5 Battalion in 1 Brigade advance to Enugu. It was the guiding hands of providence that prevented 22 and 5 Battalions from shooting at each other. However, the two Battalions were ordered by the Sector Commander to advance to Mile 9 Corner from Abor, as it became very unnecessary for 22 Battalion to go through its original route to arrive at its original objective. That notwithstanding, Eke was ordered to be shelled from Abor instead. The movement towards Enugu became accelerated and its fall to Federal Forces happened on October 4, 1967 and it was cleared of enemy resistance and thus consolidating Federal victory. This feat was by no means a classical military success given the precision with which the plan was carried out to the letter (Momoh (ed.) 2000:73).

It should be noted that the Federal Forces movements from the Nsukka Sector to Enugu and that of Sector 2 to Ikom and Obubra had been largely devoid of much serious battles and casualties. However, there was very slow progress at the area of the newly created Sector 3 as Federal Forces advance was seriously bogged down, hance it took Sector 3 to advance through Obollo Eke, Ikem and arriving at Nkalagu about three months after Sector 1 had captured Enugu and its operations were had with much difficulties. This was probably as a result of the switch of rebel attention to Obollo Eke after it had inflicted heavy causalities on the Federal troops at Obollo Afor in its efforts to retake Nsukka, cut off the Federal thrust to Enugu and drive them to the border. Nevertheless, Sector 3 puts the much needed pressures on the Biafra Forces to provide some relief to 1 Sector which later advanced and captured Enugu with very little resistance (Momoh (ed.) 2000:73-4). According to Madiebo (1980:171);

> The enemy was still pushing the Brigade down to Enugu together with its new Commander Ude. The Brigade has taken a good hiding over a long period without a break and could not be regarded as a fighting force at the time. There was nothing anyone could do for them for no troops existed anywhere to be sent up as reinforcement. From Ekwugbe, the enemy led by his apparently ubiquitous armored vehicles surged on, on Umunko and Ikolo axes and converged on

> Ukehe. We counter attacked from the flank to take the village of Udi behind Ukehe but initial successes were soon reversed when the armored vehicles again joined in the battle. As the days passed our defensive and offensive effort dwindled rapidly thereby making it possible for the enemy to take the villages to Enugu one after the other. Okpatu fell, then Ohum and finally Abor less than four miles to Enugu as the crow files. The situation was then too desperate and hopeless to be adequately described.

The fall of Enugu came at a time when Biafran 53 Brigade assigned to defend the capital was seriously drained of its strength to accomplish its task and there was no reinforcement to be mobilised. The Federal Forces fire power advantage, particularly the presence of armoured vehicles and MIG fighters, made the rebel capital an easy target for the Federal troops to take. Prior to the fall of Enugu, the secessionist leader, Odumegwu Ojukwu had ordered all provinces to send all able-bodied men to defend Enugu and 10,000 finally turned up for the task. However, their logistic support and administration became a battle in itself and so was their feeding. The game plan was to arm the 10,000 men with machets and dane guns which only a few had and to move them through Eke and from there, swam the enemy at Abor on two axes singing war songs and matcheting all enemies in sight. In the view of Colonel Madiebo, the new head of the Biafran Army, the plan was not feasible and as things turned when federal troops commenced advance into Enugu backed with heavy shelling, the plan collapsed and the 10,000 reinforcement inadequately armed fell into disarray as the warriors dispersed in fright (Momoh (ed.) 2000:74, Madiebo 1980: 173-4; Kirk-Greene 1971).

With the capture of Enugu, there was a lull in 1 Division operations as many including Federal troops thought that the war was over. There were no much military activities recorded by the Division except in defence of Enugu, which the rebels on several occasions attempted to recapture. However, some sources say that the reason for the bull was to allow 3 Marine Commando and 2 Division accomplish their missions of taking Port Harcourt and Onitsha respectively. There was no justification whatsoever for the long delays as sustained pressures from 1 Division towards 2 Division and 3 Marine Commando area of operation would have weakened the rebel forces and made the mission of these Divisions much easier. This would have equally shortened the

duration of the war. The long delays on the part of 1 Division, after the capture of Enugu, made 1 Division remained largely on the defensive in and around Enugu while 2 Division and 3 Marine Commando were carrying out operations in Mid-West and in the south, precisely, the South East of the Niger Delta respectively (Momoh (ed.) 2000:75).

The problem of co-ordination between the Divisions during war operations was attested to by Major General Abdullahi Shelleng who recalled that the General Officer Commanding 3 Marine Commando made a request to Army Headquarters that his battalion, Jet 22 Battalion be airlifted to assist him in the capturing of Port Harcourt but the Divisional Commander flatly refused though he (Capt. Shelleng) was interested in the venture most importantly as a result of the reputation his battalion, Jet 22 had acquired in its jet-like rapid movement for the capture of Enugu. Perhaps the refusal by the General Officer Commanding 1 Division to release Jet 22 Battalion was a result of the mounted effort by the Biafra's "5" Brigade, 34 Battalion of 51 Brigade and two battalions of militia men to retake Enugu. Shelleng recalls that the attack to reverse the Federal capture of Enugu by the rebel forces was massive and consolidated from all directions and his battalion was almost cut off (Momoh (ed.) 2000:76; Madiebo 1980:182). The Biafran operation to retake Enugu was launched on the 19th of November 1967 and Madiebo said that their first objectives were achieved by both the regular Biafran Army and their militia. By mid-day, he remarked, it appeared as if Enugu was going to be cleared and rumour to the effect were already circulated even at Umuahia (Madiebo 1980:186).

The reversal of Biafra's fortune on the 19th November attempt to recapture Enugu happened when the Second Battalion of the "5" Brigade suddenly withdrew from all grounds they had captured on a protest of accusation of sabotage against their Brigade Commander and a majority of their Second Battalion officers. The sabotage accusation was hinged on the inability of the "5" Brigade Commander and the Second Battalion officers to provide the necessary ammunitions as they were running short of supplies. By the time they were persuaded to move black, Federal Forces had re-occupied their

positions taken from them by the “5” Brigade Second Battalion. All efforts put up to retake the lost grounds proved abortive as there were no ammunitions to aid these efforts (Madiebo 1980:186-7). And Madiebo (1980: 187) lamented:

> Thus we had thrown away Enugu for good as a result of stupid but perfectly innocent ignorance on the part of the Second Battalion “5” Brigade. We had come so close to a major military victory, which could have had tremendous political by-products in our favour. We had learnt, I hope many lessons despite the failure. One was that ammunition and communications are vital for a successful military operation, no matter how determined one is, for determination will not make a soldier bullet proof.

After Enugu and Nkalagu, 1 Division had to take a rest except for minor exploits leading to the capture of such insignificant objectives and villages as River Nyiiba, Eziko, Nyime, Udi, Uzalla, Agbani and Itiku in January 1968 and Nibo and Adani in February. In April, the village of Ohe was taken. The 3 Marine Commando Division was relieved of Obubra and Ikom in May 1968 and later Afikpo in June all by Sector 2 of 1 Division. In the same month of Jun, 1 Division in an offensive to recapture Enugu Agu which it lost to the rebels after it was captured on 18 May, the 22 Battalion of Sector 1 of 1 Division was given the task to capture Awgu preparatory to pushing on the next major objective of 1 Diviaion, Okigwe. The 22 Battalion moved from Oji River through Achi to Agwu which it captured in June 1968, after the capture of Agwu, the 21 Battalion under the command of Major Mamman Vatsa, 22 Battalion under Major Abdullahi Shelleng and 44 Battalion under Major Ibrahim Babangida were assigned to capture Obilagu air strip. The advance was had without much resistance except for three or four bridges blown up by the rebels along the route and also other obstacles which were created on the way to slow down advancing Federal Forces. However, the engineers became of much assistance during the first crossing. The difficulties in getting supplies and evaluation of casualties were assuaged by the mini-mug, a light vehicle procured which was lifted by soldiers across to ensure uninterrupted evacuations of casualties and supplies until such obstacles were cleared or rebuilt (Momoh (ed.) 2000:77).

The three battalions, which were 21,22 and 44, had to wait at Obilagu until Sector 2 started their advance towards Okigwe from Afikpo where it relieved 3 Marine

Commando Division. A part of the troops of Sector 1 at Awgu advanced and captured Okigwe on 20 September, 1968, after which their activities slowed down characteristic of 1 Division. However, Ihube was added onto 1 Division exploits on the 28th September. After the capture of Okigwe the next target would have been Umuahia but 3 Marine Commando had a plan to capture the town including Owerri and Aba which the Division intended to present as a gift to Gowon as Independence Anniversary gift on 1 October 1969. This plan had a serious setback with the fall of Owerri back into rebel hands on 25th April, 1969 as 16 Brigade under Major Etuk withdrew from the town. After the fall of Okigwe, 1 Division was given the task of creating Sector 4 to take over Onitsha from 2 Division which was unable to fulfill its objective of taking effective control of this commercial town across the Niger from Mid-West. The Sector 4 was to move from 9th Mile Corner through Udi, Oji River, to Awka-Abagana and finally to Onisha. The main area of operation of Sector 4 was Awka-Abagana-Onitsha axes which were not secured and were subject to rebel infiltration after the fall of Onitsha. The 4 Sector had to put about a brigade strength to secure Oji River-Abagana-Onitsha in which it suffered a lot of casualties which according to Major General Mohammadu Buhari, who at a point was the Acting Sector Commander said the loss numbered over 500 soldiers in the link-up efforts. The rebels that became desperate as a result of the strategic nature of the Anambra Basin for most of their food requirements also suffered a great deal of casualties largely because they were also cut off by Sector 1 that was pushing towards Okigwe (Momoh (ed.) 77-8).

In a long-drawn attempts to link Awka with Onitsha, 1 and 2 Sectors were equally directed to commence a push towards Umuahia after an abortive attempt by 3 Marine Commando to capture it. In the final link-up between Awka and Onitsha, three battalions were involved which were 20 Battalion commanded by Captain Bello Khaliel and other two battalions commanded by Lieutenants Ashe and Iweze. The 72 Battalion under Lieutenant Ashe of Sector 5 had to go through Okene from Onitsha to link-up with sector 4 on the Akwa-Abagana sector of the route. A battalion under Captain Ndakosu held Abagana to prevent infiltrations and to further stem the cutting off of the route. However, it was not until the eve of Christmas of 1969 that the link up finally

succeeded and all routes in that direction were cleared. Prior to the push for the link-up, a brigade strength of 2 Division in Onitsha was added to 1 Division to form Sector 5 under Lieutenant Colonel Wushishi which in concert with Sector 4 held the security of Onisha and made attempts towards the taking of Nnewi by the time secession collapsed in January 1970 (Momoh (ed.) 2000:78).

The preparation for and the link-up exercise of Awka with Onitsha by Sector 4 also coincided with Sectors 1 and 2 final order to push from Okigwe and Obilagu to capture Umuahia and Bende respectively. The plan by Sector 1 of 1 Division to take Umuahia took into account two major roads; the main road from Okigwe across River Imo at Umuna and near Osa to Umuahia; and a second trunk road which passed from Ezi Achi to Orun through Agu to Umuahia. However, the Federal troops suspecting that the rebel forces were expecting them through these routes, but deceptively made them believe that they would take these routes however when the advance commenced, a minor route which was suspected in the least was used instead. This track passed from Uturu juction through Isikwuato, Ovim to Ahaba, a stretch of about twenty-nine kilomitres. Five battalions were involed in the push to take Umuahia and one of the Battalion Commanders, Major Ado Mohammed was killed at the start line while addressing his troops. The five battalions that moved on Umuahia were 4 Battalion commanded by Major Ado Mohammed but whose sudden death from a snipper bullet brought about his replacement by young Lieutenant Samaila Yombe from 44 Battalion, 21 Battalion commanded by Major Y.Y Kure, 25 Battalion Commanded by Major I.B Babangida, 82 Battalion under Major Ibrahim Bako and 44 Battalion. The demoralising effect on 4 Battalion by Major Ado Mohammed's death resulted in its replacement as the lead battalion by 44 Battalion in 1 Sector's match to its objective Umuahia passing through the bush and across obstacles to arrive Uturu junction losing one Saladin and a Ferret to landmines. The advance took the rebel forces by surprise as a number of towns fell-including Ovim; and Ahaba was threatened. The Federal Forces recovered two prisoners of war at Ovim taken by the rebel forces a year earlier at Onitsha. After the fall of Ovim, 82 Battalion took over the lead also 28 Battalion of Sector 2 advancing to Bende hit the trunk road at Umuna to Joint Hospital from Obilagu airstrip. This added

the surprise on the rebels as the next objective, Ozuakoli which had one of the worst battle areas of the entire war (Momoh (ed.) 2000:79).

The rebels were thus prepared to defend Umuahia with their last sweat of blood aided with the French armoured car, the Panchard which devastated the Federal troops many of whom naively demonstrated a lot of physical courage which was however no match for the armour. It was at this period that Major Mamman Vatsa adopted the tactics of "Alallaba" (Hausa world for 'sneaking'), which was used to incapacitate, and destroy some of the Biafra armoured vehicles. Also the anti-tank weapons of 21 Battalion were called in aid of the advancing lead 82 Battalion. They knocked off the Panchards and Uzuakoli fell. The advance on Ngu commenced a day after the fall of Ozuakoli, April 1, 1969 and 25 Battalion inexperienced took the lead but soon faced the rebel forces backed by the Panchard with anti-tank weapons. The 25 Battalion Saracens and Ferrets became cheap targets of the rebel's anti-tank weapons operated by the Panchards. This resulted in 25 Battalion losing a large number of its soldiers and officers forcing what remained of the battalion to pull back losing some five kilometers and further beat a retreat to Ngu. With continuous harassments at Ngu and losing most of their field commissioned offers (Senior NCOS were commissioned on the field to take over command from wounded officers), at the end the battalion had to change position by force. The situation was such that while 21 and 44 Battalions were dug in at Uzuakoli preparing to advance to Umuahia, the misfortunes of the 25 Battalion forced 44 Battalion to be sent to hold Ngu and 25 Battalion was withdrawn to reorganise. However, two days later 21 and 44 Battalions made their final push into Umuahia which fell on 22 April 1969. About the same time, Sector 2 which was to divert the rebel's attention from Sector 1 had equally taken Bende, their objective. The fall of Umuahia, technically marked the end of 1 Division operations, as the Division did not carry out any other operations until the end of the war, excepting minor operations that kept the rebels away from Umuahia, Bende and Onitsha. The command of 1 Division changed from Colonel Mohammadu Shuwa to Colonial Iliya Bisalla on 16 May 1969 (Momoh (ed.) 2000:79-80).

4.5 Summary

The various structural contradictions of the world capitalist economy have been woven into the Nigerian economy thus causing a lot of instabilities. These crises of economic instabilities are always woven into the people's psyche in the form of ethnic and sectional irredentism and metamorphose in the political sphere and acquire a seeming life of their own. The intensification of this crisis led to the collapse of the first democratic experiment in Nigeria. These crises where not product of ethnic and sectional irredentism, but that of the collapse of the prices of Nigeria's primary export commodities in the world market. It was a product of Nigeria's dependent capitalist social formation. The gradual dwindling of fortune of agricultural export products sliding the precipice as the main stay of the economy from about 75% in 1964, 57.7% in 1968 and 32% in 1972 was the case in point (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986). All Western democracies thrive on roburst economic bases as a result of constant revolution in technology, which was not the case in Nigeria in the First Republic and even now. Thus Nigeria was roped by imperialism into dangerous strands of contradictions between metropolitan monopoly capitalist classes and the Nigerian comprador rentier/landed classes in the accumulation process. The contradictions of the law of uneven and spasmodic development created the differences in the Nigerian Federation resulting in the contradictions between the regionalised comprador classes. It resulted in the transformation of secondary geo-ethnic contradictions into prominent contradictions while subsuming primary economy contradictions into non-prominent contradictions. It extended the colonial policy of divide-and-rule and hence the intensification of sectional crises which gave birth to the 1966 coup and counter coup leading to the death of prominent Nigerias outside the ethnic domain of the participants in the coups. Thus they were tagged ethnic and sectional coups.

In the face of political crisis the military tends to split along the same lines as the political community, along class lines and sometimes ethnic (Nkrumah 1973). This was the great danger that Nigeria fell into and hence inhuman post-coup tragedies that befell Nigeria and finally dragged her into a devastating Civil War that lasted for 30 months. Thus Nafziger (1983) said that the stress resulting from regional and

communal competition for share of the economic pie was transmitted to the military and had politicised its officers' corps. No one has been able to hit the nail at the read than Alli (2000) who said that the July 29, 1967 coup was a revenge coup by Northern officers. Its aftermath as we know sent the nation prostrate and indeed to its total collapse and secession. The brutality and indeed pogrom that followed the July 29 coup made it impossible for reconciliation to take root. It led to an Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference, the Aburi Accord and so on which could not stem the drift to anarchy and indeed the Civil War. The rapid succession of events resulted in the declaration of secession and the declaration of war on July 6, 1967. It dragged Nigeria into a bitter 30 months Civil War that was very devastating in terms of lives and material resources.

The tragic events of January 15 coup and the July 29 counter coup brought the two post independence coalition partners, the North and East into conflict and indeed a shooting war. Thus the initial stage of the war was between the Northern comprador aristocratic landed/rentier classes and their Eastern counterparts. This was through the period of the so-called "Police Action" declared by General Yakubu Gowon. The shooting war which began on July 6, 1967 was limited in scale and participation at first. It was strictly between the Northern landed aristocratic classes and those of the East. Only the northern front leading to Enugu was created and 1 Division principally made up of Northern elements of the Nigerian Army participated. However, the pressure by the Northern forces of the landed/rentier classes on Enugu made the secessionists to stage a gamble into Mid-West. This singular strategic gambling transformed the war and rallied the rest of Nigerian comprador classes against their Eastern and indeed Biafran counterparts. Thus the Civil War was transformed into a truly Nigeria Civil War. This process of transformation was earlier started with the creation of twelve states by Gowon on May 27, 1967 which rallied the Eastern minorities to the side of the Northern landed/feudal elements. This political masterstroke was decisive in mobilising elements of the Eastern minority comprador classes in the Bonny sea assault on July 25, 1967. The fall of Enugu to Federal Forces in October 1967 was the climax of the operations of 1 Division under the command of Colonel Mohammed Shuwa.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPERIALISM, THE DEPENDENT LANDED ARISTOCRACY/COMPRADOR BOURGEOISIE, OIL AND THE CIVIL WAR

5.0 Introduction

From the inception of the Civil War, it was a war that developed between the Northern landed aristocracy/comprador classes and their Eastern comprador class. The nature of classes determines the nature of class struggles, whether the class struggle is for the transformation of society or for its common ruins (Engels 1983). When such struggles are not products of advancing material development and culture, but attenuated by sectional agoism or chauvinism, such antagonism develops into a common ruin of both classes (the exploiters and exploited) and indeed of society as a whole. The crises that developed into the Nigerian Civil War were products of underdeveloped capitalism, a capitalism that had no hope, a capitalism whose milking by imperialism is not reckoned by its victims, and a capitalism of capitalist who think that the sorcerer is its healer. We have noted earlier in this research how the collapse of world commodity prices after the Korean War of 1952/ 53 led to the collapse of the regional economies in Nigeria and how the struggles became intensified for Federal power as a result of rising Federal economic profile. That this historical event was transformed by Nigerian regionalists into ideology of sectionalism and indeed sectional identity led to the regional and ethnic animosity of the First Republic, the 1966 coup and counter coup and the near ruination of Nigeria. In this respect therefore, the fervent ethnic hatred, a product of the limitations resulting from the stagnation of the *nationality question* drove a wedge in the attempt at the resolution of the *national question* or *national integration* hence the class struggles took on ethnic or sectional ideological hue.

In the words of Cabral (1979: 57) imperialism prevented the creation of an economically viable dominant class and since nature abhors vacuum, there emerged a stratum in the service of imperialism which have learnt how to manipulate the apparatus of the state, the only stratum capable of controlling or even utilising the instruments the colonialist

used against our people. Marx (1978: 9) said that although men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under given circumstances directly encountered and inherited from the past. The tradition of all the generations of the dead weights like a nightmare on the brains of the living. Thus colonial impact on the post-colonial situation, that is, ethnic politics, the massacres of the Ibos in the North in the post-July 29, 1966 counter coup took their toll on the Mid-Western state. It indeed tore the state down the middle and exposed the contradictions that were inherent in the post-July 29th counter coup in Mid-Western Nigeria. Despite the acrobatic balancing of the forces by the Military Governor, David Ejoor, he came to discover too late that the task was an uphill one. The invasion by the Biafran Forces on August 9, 1967 cut short Governor Ejoor's hope of balancing the forces within and without the Mid-Western state.

However, the August 9 invasion by the Biafran Forces also brought to the fore, the realignment of forces. The invasion shook both the Mid-Western and Western states' comprador/landed classes from their lethargy. It rallied all the forces of the other parts of the federation behind General Yakubu Gowon and the Northern landed aristocratic classes. As a participant observer, the Biafran invasion of Mid-Western state made many Mid-Western people enlist en-mass to fight on the side of the Federal Forces. Thus the Mid-Western people, as Karl Max would say, made history not as they wished but as circumstances thrusted it on them. **Our second proposition holds here which states thus: The rebel invasion of Mid-West and its threats on the Western state including Lagos led to the realignment and coalescence of other ruling class factions of the dominant class forces against their Biafran counterparts.**

During the Industrial Revolution of late 18th and early 19th centuries, palm oil was encouraged as export to Europe and North America prior to the discovery of crude oil in 1859 in Texas for the lubrication of the entire fabric of the Industrial Revolution. Petroleum is also being encouraged in the demands of advanced industrial capitalism as a dominant source of energy without which its survival is put to question (Nore and Turner (ed) 1980:1). The petroleum industry in Nigeria and other Third World countries

did not come into being for the interests of the host countries but rather to serve the demand of modern industrial capitalism in the prevailing world division of labour of the 20th and 21st centuries. Hence apart from the collection of rents, taxes and royalties, little or nothing could be shown for most of the Third World countries in their oil industries. In actual fact, most of these states operate a rentier political economy under the control of imperialism and the rentier/landed classes in a rentier state (Lenin 1983:94–6). Nigeria is among this category of states that operate a rentier political economy (Ibrahim in Jega (ed.) 2003). A rentier political economy produces three sets of major contradictions. These are:

a. The contradiction between international capitalist bourgeoisie and their locally created comprador landed/rentier classes;
b. The contradiction between the different factions of the unproductive landed/rentier comprador classes, especially, in an ethnically segmented society like Nigeria;
c. There is also the contradiction between the combined forces of imperialism (the dominant faction of international bourgeoisie) in league with the comprador rentier/landed classes, on the one hand against the proletariat and indeed the toiling people of these rentier states on the other hand.

The first two contradictions are intra-class struggles. The first one is the intra-class struggle between the metropolitan capitalist bourgeoisie and their comprador/rentier/landed bourgeoisie in the dependencies. The second is the intra–class struggles between the various factions of the comprador/landed/rentier classes in the backward societies like Nigeria. The third contradiction is inter-class struggle between the entire bourgeoisie both local and foreign versus the working or toiling people. These struggles are products of the contradictions of the accumulation processes and their redistributions, which generate instabilities, wars and Civil Wars. Sufficient accounts of this have been given in chapter four and shall further be stressed in this chapter.

The emergence of the oil industry in Nigeria has led to a process of the production of a

“state patrimonial bourgeoisie (Medard 1982:33). However, the rudiments of it were already created in the First Republic with the rentier character of the Nigerian state. The rentier nature of the Nigerian state like every other is that the state relies on substantial external rents. In such a situation, the rentier state or government becomes the main recipient of external rent. In a rentier political economy, production efficiency is relegated to the background and… at best there is a tenuous work link between individual income and activity. In this respect, therefore, getting access to the rent circuit becomes a greater pre-occupation than attaining production efficiency (Beblawai and Laciani, 1987:13 cited by Ibrahim in Jega (ed.) 2003: 52–3). Therefore the struggles for surpluses and their redistribution become the dynamics of the rentier state and indeed the comprador rentier/landed classes. These struggles we have noted earlier characterised the Nigerian state and indeed the regionalised comprador/landed/rentier classes in the immediate post-independence civil rule that was terminated by the January 15, 1966 coup. The post-independence democratic experiment failed because of the accelerating ethnic polarisation that culminated in the Civil War, which were the processes of class formation and class action.

Nigeria has a rentier political economy which is an economy based on rents, taxes and royalties and a state lacking productive organisational ability. In the beginning of 1954 and particularly since 1958, government of the regions had become increasingly concerned with reserving employment opportunities and trade in their regions of jurisdiction to the local population. By 1960, therefore, it was becoming obvious that if the demand of the population in the East were to be met, more employment opportunities within the region had to be sought. By 1963, for example, urban unemployment in the East was roughly one in three, higher than “any other region apart from Lagos”. But as against this, much Federal finance for planning requirements was expected to come from the export of petroleum, the East produced two third at the time of the total Nigerian production of crude oil. In 1959, cocoa, palm oil, palm kernels and groundnuts (including groundnut oil and cake) Nigeria’s traditional exports contributed about 70 percent of the total value of exports while petroleum accounted for only 1.7 percent. By 1965, however, the share of petroleum had risen to 25.9 percent while that

for the traditional exports had fallen to 51.6 percent (Onitiri 1971 cited by Dudley 1973:67). From 5,000 barrels per day production figures of 1958 (= 0.25 million tons per year), output had risen, before the outbreak of Civil War in 1967, to 50,000 barrels per day (=25 million tons per year) but for the disruptions brought about by the war, it was expected to have risen to 35 million tons in 1969, 50 million tons in 1970 and 80 million tons in 1973 when, from the accumulative output from 1969-73, the Federal Government would have earned in revenues, a total sum of £650 million (Dudley 1973:67).

The increasing importance of crude oil in the deepening configuration of the emergent Nigerian rentier state and its comprador rentier/landed bourgeoisie and feudal aristocracy prior to the Civil War cannot be down played. Equally crude oil as the cheapest form of energy is of paramount importance to advance capital of Western Europe, North America and Japan. Christie (1980:15) said "…capital increasingly needs energy as it uses more machinery to protect its ownership of property… to control workers; to control production; to speed up transport… In all, energy powers the ongoing technological revolution whereby capital has been winning the class struggle. We can thus state our third proposition here. It states that "**The importance of crude oil to the comprador landed/rentier classes and imperialism resulted in the intensification of the war in oil producing areas"**. This proposition can be properly comprehended with full view of the collapsed world commodity prices of Nigeria's traditional export economy from 1955/56 post-Korean War collapse of these commodities and the steady rise in the profile of crude oil in the nation's economy. For imperialism, especially, for British imperialism, crude oil as the cheapest form of energy, and the embargo placed by the Arab world and the closure of the Suez Canal created a sad situation for Britain. Equally French interest in crude oil in this region could be seen as fueling her tacit support for Biafra and thus the war of attrition in oil producing areas.

5.1 The Rebel Invasion of Mid-West

The continuous pressure of the Northern forces on Enugu combined with the mass refugee movements towards the secessionist capital took a turn for the worse. In the first month of the war, the strategic objectives of each side seemed in focus. Gowon never wavered in his “Police Action” calculations but aiming at swift-advancing military operations, from carefully mapped out points backed with economic blockade in order to bring the secession to a quick end. He was sure the creation of states for the Eastern minorities would also play a strategically added political role. Ojukwu on his part had the strategic aim which was to preserve the territory of the Biafran Republic suggesting a defensive operation while hoping to win outside recognition for the supposedly new state. He was also hoping that the West would actively oppose, or at worst passively defy the Federal Government. Both side’s strategic calculations suggested a limited war but the reverse was the case (St Jorre 1977:151). The Continuous pressures from the Northern landed/comprador class forces made the secessionist forces to seek a way out. The calculations of the rebel army was the invasion of the Mid-Western state in order to divert the attention of the weight of Northern landed/aristocratic class forces’ pressures on Enugu.

The fact that pressures on Enugu from the Northern Nigerian forces were tightening the noose on secessionist choicest target was not the total issue. The nature and composition of the security forces in the Mid-Western state that were principally officered by the Mid-Western Ibo extraction was equally a case in point. The army in the Mid-West was top heavy and ethnically unbalanced. It had eight colonels who were all Mid-Western Ibos including the Area Commander, Colonel Conrad Nwawo (St Jorre 1977:128). In the words of Nelson Ottah “The curious position of the Nigeria Army unit in the Mid-West at this time was not only that it was entirely composed of Mid-Westerners but that its officer corps had a preponderance of Ibo speaking personnel. Out of a total of forty-two officers in the Mid-West, 4 Area Command, including the Military Governor David Ejoor, there were twenty- eight Igbo speaking officers, and out of nine senior and policy making officers, Military Governor Ejoor was the only non-Igbo

speaking person among them. The preponderance of officers of Igbo origin in the Federal Army unit in Benin was not off-set by a similar condition in the Mid-West police. The police force then in the Mid-West had also a preponderance of Igbo speaking officers and men. To still complicate the situation further and make the Mid-West state a ripe apple that would with only a push tall into Ojukwu's hands, about forty percent of the personnel in the state's civil service and government corporations also came from the states Igbo speaking areas (Ottah 1980: 10- 11)

The issue in the Mid-Western state's security is an issue of the *national question* or mal-national integration. What prevailed at the national level prevailed equally at the state level, especially in a state which John de St Jorre said "…in pre-Civil War Nigeria proudly proved a very successful experiment of unity in diversity" or the resolution of the *national question* or overcoming the problematic of *national integration*. With the July 29, 1966 counter coup and the massacre of the Ibos, this unity in diversity crumbled like a park of cards in the entire Nigerian state and indeed in what St Jorre said was"…… the fervently and consistently 'federal' in outlook, of all the former four regions throughout the civil crisis. Cabral (1980:57) said that issue of petty bourgeoisie in power after national liberation from colonialism demands that we take precaution in analysing the position of that petty bourgeoisie in power during the struggle; … examine its nature, see how it works, see what instruments it used and see whether this petty bourgeoisie committed itself with the left to carry out a revolution, before the national liberation. The Nigerian military has not been a military that has the tradition of revolutionary tendency (Ademoyega 1981). In this respect, therefore, the reactionary tendency exhibited by the preponderantly Igbo-speaking officers of the Mid-Western unit of the Nigerian Army was understandable. It was not surprising since the issue of identity ossified along the *nationality* or ethnicity which tore the Nigerian society down the middle and equally had the same effect on the military hence the Fourth Area Command officered principally by the predominantly Igbo speaking officers never acted to expectations.

The whole Nigerian crisis which had to repeat itself in the intrigues to the Mid-Western invasion by the secessionist forces was a confirmation of the very low nationalism in the Nigerian military, the supposedly citadel of national security. Otegbeye (1991:15) said of the leadership crisis in Nigeria thus "… events of the struggle for nationhood in Nigeria led to the abandonment of the centre by Zik so that at eve of independence, Nigeria had three leaders all tied to their regions, if not to their tribes (sic). Nigeria lacked the myth of a national leader… The events leading to the Civil War and the creation of Biafra are symptoms of this centrifugal force of seperatedness." Tunji Otegbeye brought out the fact that stronger federations and indeed states in the world where products of very strong leadership but he failed to take note of the fact that strong leadership is not an esoteric thing, it is not a product of prayers in Churches and Mosques, but a product of material development. The dialectics of leadership follows that a leadership can only be strong as his nation is. Kennedy (1989. xxiv) posited that "… The power position of nations closely paralleled their relative economic positions over the past five centuries." Tedheke (1998:4) said "In order to maintain their positions of power, states have revolutionised their developmental processes. This is being done in the classical capitalist nations of the world and the South East Asian countries are following after their heels today". Halloran (1996: 4) said of the Asian Tigers that "A lively nationalism, born of an anti-colonial struggles and post-colonial achievement is a driving force in Asia."

The fact that John de St Jorre said the Mid-Western Region was the most cohesive, the general contradictions in the Nigerian state was equally working out itself within the state despite the façade of the unity that it appeared to have had. It only took the secessionist incursion of August 9, 1967 to reveal the internal contradictions to hoax the so-called cohesiveness of the Mid-Western state prior to the Civil War. Fedoseyev et. al. (1977: 50) noted that "The main properties determining the national identity of people are national ties, whose essence is shaped chiefly by social factors. But ethnic factors, too which appeared even in earlier history than social ones (the stage of tribe or *nationality*) must be taken into account. They are very tenacious and people preserve them for a long time even after they have become separated from the main

body of their people. Consequently, the *nationality* of persons is often determined by their self-identification, and hence very subjectively on the basis of, say family, traditions or origin (Italians in United States, Ukrainians in Canada etc). Objectively, however, people's national identity is in many ways, and sometimes entirely, determined by the social, economic and political ties shaped over the years, rather than by language or territory and ethnic features of culture, customs and traditions or by ethnic self identification. In stating how populations of different and separate provinces in some states merged into one nation, Marx and Engels (1968: 397 cited by Fedoseyev et. al. 1977: 51) stressed that national bonds appear on a social rather than ethnic basis in the form of common interests, moral standards and views.

Engels in Marx and Engels (1977: 343) defined the national identity of segregated parts of nations and nationalities as "by nationality, language and predilection". By "nationality" he meant national self-awareness, which is the individual's own perception of his national bonds, where social factors play the decisive role. He also drew attention to the fact that these splinters of a large nation (i.e. nations in diaspora-my emphasis) "…having been separated from its national life, have in great measures integrated in the national life of some other people" (Engels in Marx and Engels 1968:157 cited by Fedoseyev et. al. 1977:51). Engels saw language, therefore, as an ethnic property and pointed out that it "… cannot serve as a criterion in settling the question of nationality", that is, identity with the nation (Marx and Engels 1968:596 cited by Fedoseyev 1977:51). Fedoseyev et al (1977:52) said:

> … the origin of people is not always of equal importance in establishing national identity. Living in the midst of one's own nation and participating in all its activity, the individual determines his nationality by his social and national bonds and national self-awareness, while his origin and ethnic properties fade into the background. When separated from his nation, national or ethnic group, however, it is precisely origin that for a long time determines their nationality… here the main part belongs to ethnic factors-the language, ethnic self-awareness, affection for the cultural values of one's people, customs and traditions.

In Fedoseyev et. al. (1977: 52) "...determining people's national identity exclusive by ethnic criteria is theoretically incorrect. It was also entirely wrong in the practical political sense. Nationalists deliberately confuse the concept *nation* as *nationality*, and thus include in their nation all people who may have at one time in the recent or distant past, had ties with it but live in other territories, even in other states. Besides, if national identity were determined solely by ethnic properties, then in the case of multi-ethnic societies and populations of large countries, the accent would be one of the factors that distinguish people rather than bring them together. The dialectical materialist view of national relations takes into account the whole set of factors which determine their content and forms-economy, politics, law, consciousness, culture, morality and psychology (Fedoseyev et. al. 1977:53). In the Marxian sense, therefore, national relations are based on relations of production, distribution, exchange and consumption. In this respect, therefore, both content and forms of national relations depend on the material basis of the peoples, on the level of their productive forces. Hence Marx and Engels (*The German ideology*: 32 cited by Fedoseyev et. al. 1977:54) stressed that "… the relations of different nations among themselves depend upon the extent to which has developed its productive forces, the division of labour and internal intercourse". Like other aspects of human life, national relations are in a state of continuous change depending on changes in the mode of production, on the impact of the policy and ideology of classes and class relations, on the international situation and other factors (Fedoseyev 1977: 54)

In working out their theory of national relations, the founders of Marxism called attention to the fact that truly friendly relations among peoples are not simply a guarantee of peaceful and neighbourly cohabitation but also one of the main conditions of progress. Hence Marx (1980:20) emphasised thus: "One nation can and should learn from others". Lenin (1977: 386) stressed the importance of mutual confidence among peoples of different nationalities forming a nation. He said that without confidence between peoples speaking different languages "…there absolutely cannot be peaceful relations between peoples or anything like a successful development of anything that is of value in present day civilisation". We have discussed extensively the enclave

economies of the various regions in the First Republic that sealed off the regions into virtual empires of their own providing very limited economic intercourse (Nnoli 1978). We have demonstrated in chapter three how technological development and indeed industrialisation was the basis of building united France, Britain, Germany and indeed the emergence of the giant-Untied States. Zorro (2004: 28) said that prophetic Nigerians like Sir Adetokumbo Ademola foretold decades ago how joint businesses development would unite Nigeria. “They foresaw”, according to him, ‘not only the rampaging match of capitalism and its over-run of our national institutions, but had predicted the emergence of a patriotic bourgeoisie with capacity to forge unity within Nigeria’s dissatisfied ethnic population”: The emergence of dependent capitalist country-wide enterprises in the post-1999 Nigeria which includes the telecommunications giants, the down-stream petroleum products distribution sectors, sugar, cement and so on, that have given birth to business giants and are increasingly bestriding the nation are the envies of Sani Zorro and his prophetic agents of national unity as predicted by Sir Adetokumbo Ademola to Alhaji Iro Dan Musa in the 1960s. The limitedness of national unity that this dependent capitalist development would foster notwithstanding, the truth is that it points to the universal dynamics of modern business and industry which were almost completely absent in the First Republic which added to the isolation of each region from the other.

The rebel invasion of Mid-Western state on August 9, 1967 has a complex political economy of its own. It presents itself as would not have been possible without an ethnic agenda of the Igbo-speaking people of the then Mid-Western state. However, it can be seen as the failure of a dependent capitalism to develop capitalist infrastructures of *national integration* or the resolution of the *national question.* It is a capitalism that nurtures the comprador state’s/landed/rentier classes and its prebendal politics or politics of clientage (Josephs 1999). The invading troops of the rebel army led by Lieutenant Colonel Victor Banjo made a dart across Mid-Western state in no time on the day of the incursion. In the words of Ottah (1980:15) “With the overt and covert assistance of many of the Igbo-speaking officers and men of the Mid-West Federal Army unit, they had firmly occupied the whole of the Mid-West and in obedience to

strategic demands, driven without much opposition to as far as Ore. This rebel thrust through the Mid-West sent Governor Ejoor on the run, made him a fugitive at the Benin Catholic Mission and later disappeared from Benin, and made his famous bicycle ride into safety (Ottah 1980: 16- 20; Ademoyega 1981: 147)

5.1.1 Rebel Invasion of Mid-West and Character Transformation of the War.

Prior to the rebel invasion of the Mid-Western state on August 9, 1967, the comprador classes both of Mid-West and Western states were sitting on the fence. The after effect of the invasion threw Lagos into confusion, the city bombed on the day of the invasion and the authorities in Lagos were caught off balance as the bulk of its army were based in the North. Its military resources were stretched far and wide for almost 1, 800 kilometres from Ogoja to Bonny. Lagos and the West were lightly defended with only the Brigade of Guards and a few others. The West was shaken off its stupor finally as it showed signs of severe shock induced by fear and ironically called urgently for the very troops of the Northern landed/aristocratic classes that it had been trying to rid itself off for the past one year. Awolowo, despite his appointment as the Vice Chairman of the Federal Executive Council remained on the fence until the invasion forced him to declare that he was irrevocably committed to Nigerian unity. He said that the Yoruba had constantly stood for national unity and they must be ready now to resist any attempt by the rebel forces from the East and Mid-West to violate their territory and subjugate them (West Africa 19, August 1967 cited by St Jorre 1977:156).

The invasion of Mid-West by the rebels not only woke up the Western state and perhaps the entire Yorubas from their stupor but it engendered further positive developments in favour of Lagos which were antithetical to Enugu and indeed the rebel course. It entirely changed the character of the Civil War from a Northern landed/ aristocratic class versus Eastern dominant class at war to a truly Nigerian Civil War as it drew the comprador classes of the Mid-Western, Western and Lagos states, the very old West into the mainstream of the war. It brought about the coalescence of forces and a strategic victory for the Northern landed/aristocratic classes. Two days after the

invasion, Gowon ordered a 'Total War' against the Biafrans. He said it was in retaliation against the bombing of civilians in Lagos and in other places. The Nigerian Airforce thus bombed Onitsha and Enugu the next day. Nigerian troops were sent to secure the West/ Mid-West border and in addition a small force landed on the island of Escravos in the estuary leading to Warri. The war blockade on Biafra or the rebellious East was extended to Mid-West. Later on, an inner war cabinet was formed to prosecute the war more vigorously (St Jorre 1977; Ottah 1980: 21).

As the situation cleared in Benin, the invasion was seen as having had the full support of the Mid-Western Igbo officers who had through a carefully-calculated preparation allowed their ethnic nationality easy access to Mid-Western state by opening the closed Niger Bridge at the Asaba end of it. This explains partly, the lack of opposition to the invading forces of Biafra throughout the state and their lightening spread in which the rebel forces taking over the state was perhaps seen as resulting from assistance from inside the state as a part of the Igbo nationality. About half a million Ibos, who lived west of the Niger had always sympathised with the Biafran cause. It was not surprising that the Biafran Forces of Banjo's Liberation Army swept through the state in such a break-neck speed and advanced beyond its borders to Ore in the Western state, just about 200 kilometres on the main road to Lagos (Cronje 1972:35; St Jorre 1977; Ottah 1980:9). If this momentum had been seized upon which was lost after entering Benin on August 9, 1967 the rebel forces would have taken Ibadan and perhaps Lagos with much ease. However, the politics of the invasion of Mid-Western state made the continuous lightening movement into the Western and Lagos states impossible. Thus the momentum or steam was taken off the Biafran initiative because of a sharp disagreement between Banjo and Ojukwu on who to appoint as the Military Administrator of Mid-West. Ademoyega (1981: 147) said:

> … we were ready to drive off towards Ibadan, if at any moment, the order was given. But why was the order delayed. The order was delayed because of a sharp disagreement between the Commander-in-Chief of the Biafran Army, Lieutenant Colonel Ojukwu and the commander of the Liberation Army of

> Nigeria, the newly promoted Brigadier Banjo. The latter wanted to secure Benin in good hands before proceeding to Ibadan, so that he was not suddenly cut off from Biafra. He preferred to name an Itsekiri or Benin, not an Ibo as the military Administrator of the Mid-West.

We have noted earlier that the ossification into *nationality* or ethnicity is the inability of the centripetal forces to mould a nation out of contending nationalities and thereby strengthening the forces of centrifugal tendencies. The colonial enterprise in Nigeria and indeed the neo-colonial social formation did not have the rudimentary economic undertone to allow for the resolution of the *national question* but rather the Nigerian society as is evidenced stagnated along centrifugal forces of nationalities. Thus Ojukwu's appointment of Major Albert Okonkwo as the Military Administrator of Mid-West was not calculated to reassure the other Mid-Western non-Ibos who were the majority in the state (St Jorre 1977). The fact that the momentum was lost by the Biafrans in the Mid-West invasion was not the lone issue, the issue of *nationality* or ethnic politics prevailed against the rebel forces because of the betrayal by the Mid-Western Ibo officers of the 4th Area Command and the politiking in the appointment of the Administrator of Mid-West. The Biafran occupation of the Mid-West lasted about two months. A civil servant in Benin cited by St Jorre (1977: 162) said "…we are becoming very adaptable; we have had three governments here in six weeks after the taking back of Mid-West". Although not explicity but implicity referring to problem of the *national question,* St Jorre (1977: 163) said:

> As all territories which are suddenly converted into battle fields, adaptability became the key note for life and survival in Mid-West during the Biafran occupation. But what made things doubly difficult in the Nigerian context, was the closeness of tribal (sic) animosities to the surface, even in the Mid-West which had hitherto been regarded as a model example of the nation's slogan 'unity in diversity'

The *nationality* or ethnic issue in the invasion of Mid-West and perhaps the re-enactment of the fears of the invisible hands of Ibo domination made the coalescence of other comprador landed/rentier class forces against Biafra possible. The invasion of Mid-West by the Biafran Forces called the "Liberation Army" though under the

command of a Yoruba man, Lieutenant Colonel Victor Banjo did not rule out the fears of others, especially, the comprador bourgeoisie of Mid-Western, Western and Lagos states and indeed the old West. It changed the character of the war from a Northern versus the Eastern dominant classes at war to a truly Nigerian Civil War. We have noted earlier that Awolowo and his Western dominant classes that had resisted the stationing of Northern loyalist troops, suddenly changed their minds and called urgently for the very Northern led Nigerian Army they had been trying to rid itself off for the past year. Awolowo went on to say that "…he was irrevocably committed to Nigerian unity". He went further to say that the Yoruba people had constantly supported unity and they must now be ready to resist any attempt by the rebel forces from the East and the Mid-West to violate their territory and subjugate them" (St Jorre 1977: 156).

The invasion of the Mid-West by the rebel forces and its threats on Western and Lagos states resulted in the birth of the grand alliance of the regionalised dominant classes of the Northern, Western, Mid-Western and Lagos states (in addition to the Eastern minorities whose loyalty was swayed on the side of the Northern landed/rentier classes because of states creation) against the predominantly Ibo dominated comprador landed/rentier classes. Earlier on and prior to the declaration of Biafra as a sovereign state and republic on May 27, 1967, Gowon pre-empting the outcome of the Eastern Consultative Assembly had announced the promulgation of Decree No 14 which divided the country into twelve states, six in the North and six in the South. Gowon appealed to the people to take the newly created states, as the ultimate panacea for the rivalries, fears of domination, and instabilities that had plagued the country since the early fifties. By this singular act, Gowon had no doubt pressed the button that united the country behind him, especially the Northern and Southern minorities that had been agitating for their separate regions since in the fifties.

This singular act that led to the emergence of the South-Eastern and Rivers states made it possible for the Eastern minorities' identification with Gowon and his loyalists (Ademoyega 1981:136). This master stroke took the wind off the secessionist, and presented the first semblance of a Nigerian Civil War. With the invasion of Mid-West

and threats on Western and Lagos states, the war became transformed from its partial nature into a Nigerian Civil War and from now on it became a war between the federalists and the secessionist Biafra, especially as Mid-Western Region (state) that was the only region that stood for the federal cause joined the war on the side of the Northern aristocratic class. Two days after the invasion of Mid-West by Biafra, the Gowon's Administration in Lagos declared a "Total War" on the secessionists. Thus the war became transformed in two major dimensions. First from a Northern versus Eastern dominant classes at war to a truly Nigerian Civil War and secondly from a "Police Action" or a limited war to a "Total War" (St Jorre 1977:156; Ottah 1980:21). As a result the character of the Nigerian Civil War became changed and this was to be the situation throughout the remaining part of the war till January 1970 when it came to an end.

5.1.2 The Birth of Two Division and the Mid-West Federal Counter Offensive

The invasion of the Mid-West state by the rebel forces that was aimed to ease the pressures on Enugu, the secessionist capital, from Nsukka as we noted earlier, had not only run into a determined opposition at the outskirts of Ore but had equally boomeranged against the Biafran Forces and indeed secession. It had actually turned the phase and character of the Nigerian Civil War as the worse had happened to the invading forces as the fortunes of the war turned irreversibly and markedly against them. The failures of the Biafra's invading troops to assert themselves at Ore led to the crumbling of the little moral boosting the invasion had earlier bestowed on the Biafran fighting force both within Biafra and in the Mid-West. Madiebo (1980:157) admitted prior to the Mid-West invasion that he was delighted about the planned operation in that region/ state which was perhaps the only way the Biafrans could score a much needed victory and restore confidence and moral badly shaken within the rank and file of the rebel forces as a result of series of setbacks at the Nsukka and Ogoja sectors.

The taking of Ore by the rebel forces created a stir in Lagos and panic measures were adopted to contain the situation. The Lagos Garrison which was boosted with police and ex-service men recruited from the North to join the formation of 3 Marine

Commando was constituted into 7 Battalion, commanded by Captain Ejiga. These troops were placed under Second Area Command, Ibadan of which a company each was deployed to selected areas, including Okitipupa and the West/ Mid-West border at Ofusu. With the mounting threat on Ore, a company of Federal Guards was also quickly moved to defend Owo-Ijebu Ode axis pending the arrival of 2 Division that was being hurriedly knocked together to assuage the threats posed by the incredible rebels' advance towards Lagos and Ibadan. In order to contain the rebels' menace 1 Division had earlier sent a company under the command of Captain Joradam to assist the Second Area Command. It was the remnant of 3 Battalion that entered the war and got destroyed at Obolo Afor encounter which put an end to its participation in 1 Division operations (Momoh 2000: 85-6). Prior to the proper constitution of 2 Division and its full entering into the counter attack against the rebel forces at Ore, 9 Battalion of the Federal Forces was able to make a move right of Ore from the Lagos approach to cut off the rebel invading forces, using a route that was normally taken by lorries ferrying logs from the forest. There a Biafran tank an old-fashioned World War II type got stucked and was destroyed by one Sergeant Ibrahim who used petrol to set the tank ablaze. The efforts made to halt the rebel advances in this stage were quite successful but it was trailed by problems of communication (Momoh 2000: 86).

The emergence of 2 Division was a child of circumstance but it came at a time when the character of the Civil War was to be transformed from a North versus East dominant classes at war to a Nigerian Civil War. Lieutenant Colonel Murtala Mohammed who was appointed the General Officer Commanding the 2 Division soon embarked on the mobilisation of every available troops around 6 Battalion commanded by Major G. S. Jalo which was diverted to Lagos after successfully taking Bonny to form the nucleus of the division. The spirited desperation with which the 2 Division was knocked together could be imagined as Mohammed commandeered everything he could in Lagos to make up his divisional formation. He took control of officers sent from 1 Division to collect newly arrived reccee vehicles which he seized with the vehicles. He equally seized an officer sent by Lieutenant Colonel Adekunle to Lagos to take the logistics of the nascent 3 Division in the making. Colonel Mohammed also

commandeered 84 trailers for the operation to enable him to push Biafra from Ore and the Mid-West and to stall their further advance. The formation of 2 Division saw Lieutenant Colonel Olusegun Obasanjo as the Rear Commander and Major G. S. Jalo as his Second in Command. The mobilisation for the counter offensive took into strength all natures of serving soldiers such as batmen, clerks, cooks and other services soldiers. Mohammed formed 2 Division comprising three brigades which were 6 Brigade commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Alani Akirinade, 7 Brigade commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Godwin Ally and 8 Brigade commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Francis Aisida. The advance battalion sent to halt the rebel advance at Ore which was the 9 Battalion under Captain Ejiga and elements of Federal Guards were reorganised into 7 Brigade placed under Lieutenant Colonel Godwin Ally who was tasked with the defence of Ore axis to enable the other two brigades and the Division Headquarters to go round through Okene to start a systematic reprisal attack on the rebels (Jega cited by Momoh 2000:86; Maidebo 1980: 158; St Jorre 1977).

As 7 Brigade was assigned to halt enemy advance at Ore axis, 6 Brigade was deployed to lead the counter offensive through Okene-Igarra-Auchi-Erua-Ehor-Benin. The Divisional Headquarters which accompanied 6 Brigade and 8 Brigade with Headquarters at Ondo was to follow at the rear to serve as a reserve force (Momoh 2000:87). In the words of Madiebo (1980:159) “The enemy was now fully organised and had started their massive counter attack on all three axes”. These were the Ore, Okitipupa and the north of Mid-West axes. It was through the northern axis that Madiebo (1980) said the enemy, which is the Nigerian Forces took Auchi and Ubiaja and threatened Agbor from both the north and south, thereby forcing our own troops (Biafran Forces), still at the outskirts of Benin, to withdraw further back to behind Agbor bridge which they immediately blew up. After Benin was captured on the 20th of September, 6 Brigade continued their advance to take Abudu and Agbor and 7 Brigade that was meant to halt the rebels at Ore pushed through to join 6 Brigade at Agbor. From Agbor, the two brigades advanced to capture Asaba (Momoh 2000:87) thus ending the ill-fated Biafran invasion of Mid-Western state that began on August 9, 1967 and lasted for about six weeks before the rebel forces were completely routed.

As 6 and 7 Brigades took Asaba, 8 Brigade was ordered to advance through Ubiaja to Ilushin and to link up with 6 and 7 Brigades already at Asaba from where it was asked to cross to Onitsha. The rebels in their retreat blew up bridges and vandalised roads leading to Benin-City and from Benin to Asaba. This encumbered 2 Division that had to grapple with quick repairs and reconstructions of roads and bridges to aid its advance. The rebel forces unable to defend Agbor from Abudu blew up the bridge which was rebuilt before Agbor was taken. In the Southern flank, the 3 Marine Commando helped 2 Division by combing the Delta area of Mid-West during this offensive. Madiebo (1980:160) said:

> …the enemy in the meantime, seizing full advantages of the utter confusion existing within the Biafran ranks, made a move from Warri through Abraka to Umutu where we had removed the bridge from the river there. Our troops at the bridge were able to hold the enemy for 48 hour bloody battle before we exhausted our supplies and began to pull back. By then the administrative set-up of the 101 Division had virtually collapsed. The network of roads in that area made any attempt at a defensive battle completely futile exercise because the attacking side could easily run small rings round the defender. Our troops therefore continued to move back until the enemy got to Umunede on the main Benin-Asaba road. Our troops were now stationed at Ogwashiuku and Otutu. From the north, the enemy had pushed into the town of Isele-Uku. Finally the enemy pushing through Ogwashiuku and Otutu entered Asaba on the 8th of October 1967. Our troops fell back into Onitsha town and blew up the brigade.

With the taking of Asaba by 6 Brigade and 8 Brigade joining it, both brigades were immediately given the task of crossing into Onitsha by Colonel Mohammed, the 2 Divisional Commander. The entire operation up to Asaba took a duration of about five weeks from 31 August to 5 October to accomplish. Benin was freed by the Federal Forces on September 20, 1967. The speed with which the Mid-West operations were conducted was attributed to the mercurial character of the 2 Divisional Commander who was said to be full of dynamism and tirelessness. He was said to always move directly behind the advancing brigade with his Headquarters. With his Divisional Headquarters behind the advancing troops, the GOC forces them to move to the next target when once a place is captured and therefore the Division was always on the

move throughout its operations in Mid-West (Momoh 2000: 87). In addition to the foregoing qualities of Colonel Murtala Mohammed, the fact that the Mid-West state stood firmer than any other region/state in the immediate pre-Civil War period for one Nigeria and other factors also aided the rapid advance by the 2 Division through Mid-West state. These factors and forces we would now discuss to get at why the invading rebel forces collapsed so easily in their occupation of Mid-West.

5.2 Partial Resolution of the National Question, Rebel Invasion of Mid-West and the Strategic Character Transformation of the Civil War

The invasion by the rebel forces of Mid-West on August 9, 1967 really turned the face or character of the Civil War from a war between the Northern landed aristocracy and the Eastern comprador bourgeoisie to that of the entire Nigerian dominant classes versus the Eastern comprador classes. We have noted earlier that with the creation of states on the 27th of May, 1967, Gowon with a political master-stroke was able to rally the minority ethnic groups to his side. The most critical case against the secessionist Biafra was the creation of two states for the Eastern minorities, the Rivers and Southern-Eastern states, that were under the hegemonic dominance of the Ibo ethnic nationality and both made frantic attempts in Colonial Nigeria for a Cross-River-Ogoja-River State/Region creation which was denied by the colonial government's Willinks Commission (Ezera 1964:252; Igbuzor & Bamidele 2002:67). Thus their creation by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon (later General) hit at the under-belly of the secessionist state of Biafra. It equally rallied the Eastern minorities to the side of the Northern dominant class prior to the actual shoot-out between the two protagonists in the Civil War.

This critical issue of the resolution of the *minority question* or the *ethnic minority nationality question* had been on the agenda prior to independence. If it had been implemented by the British under the Willink Commission, it would perhaps have averted the tragedy of the Nigerian Civil War. As we have noted earlier the creation of regions which would have been for the minorities under the Willink Commission was averted by the conspiracy of the British for their own interest of controlling Nigeria with

a lopsided federation under Northern hegemonic rule (Ademoyega 1981:191). The British studded civil service in the North in the 1950s had advised against the creation of regions or states for the regional minorities. Mackintosh (1966 cited by Cronje 1972:7) cited Sir Bryan Sharwood-Smith who warned against separatist tendencies in the south of the region-the Middle Belt. In May 1957, Sir Sharwood-Smith wrote that "...in my considered opinion the greatest danger to the North is fragmentation". If pressures for a multiplicity of regions were to succeed in the Mid-West and Delta areas, "…the case for regionalisation would disappear and Nigeria would inevitably return to a unitary form of government on the effects of which on the North it is unnecessary to comment." Sir Sharwood-Smith further remarked that "...the utterly irresponsible behaviour of a relatively small handful of people has transformed the self-seeking demands of a few dispersed groups, each with its own axe to grind, into the beginnings of a widely spread movement covering in some degree all the riverain provinces" (Mackintosh 1966 cited by Cronje 1972:8). Thus Ezera (1964:250) noted that "…the British official attitude which, in its formalist concern for the unity of Nigerian, had hitherto been strongly opposed to what it regarded as the 'fragmentation' of the country-a view which had been held and re-stated by successive colonial secretaries."

In reality, therefore, when Sir Alan Lennox- Boyd, who was the Colonial Secretary at the time, appointed the Sir Henry Willink's Commission on the minority question and to allay their fears, the Commission terms of reference did not give much scope for recommending change. The creation of new states/ regions should only be considered as a last resort, and even when such a solution was considered, not more than one new state in each region should be created (Report of the Commission 1958 cited by Cronje 1972: 8). However the strongest demands for the state creation was from the Middle Belt but when the commission arrived in the North, it was presented with evidence that have been carefully prepared with the assistance of civil servants in the region. It was long ago pointed out by Sir Rex Niven that a Middle Belt state will be like a worm across Nigeria, quite hopeless administratively. To cut this worm in half was of course, impossible: the Commission was not empowered to recommend more than one state. The Commission recommended that no further state be created, though it

suggested constitutional safeguards for minority groups. In the words of Cronje (1972: 8):

> When the constitutional conferences resumed in 1958, Lennox-Boyd announced that the demand for new states was incompatible with the request for independence in 1960-a date to which Nigeria's leaders were firmly committed.

Ezera (1964:) recalled that Lexnnox-Boyd "…elaborated this by intimating that if any party persistently pursued a policy of creating more states before independence, and actually won the 1959 Federal elections on that plank , then it might become necessary for the United Kingdom Government to call for a further constitutional conference of the same composition as the present to review the situation". With this master-stroke of the Colonial Secretary, the view of the minorities if they prevail in 1959 by some outside chance was not the case, the constitution would still be sacrosanct, a-no-go-area with those advocating change, but with the leaders with whom the Colonial Secretary chose to confer about Nigeria's future. As a result, the Middle Belt and other minorities were automatically excluded as political leaders in their own right. The Nigerian delegates had to accept this position because it would be political suicide if the Nigerian nationalist had postponed independence beyond 1960, when Ghana had got hers in 1957. Thus Northern Nigeria retained its gigantic size as one region as such the federation at independence was a constitutional monstrosity (Cronje 1972:9)

The fact that the foregoing or the Northern Region by size and population had amounted to this "constitutional monstrosity" and the British being insensitive to this serious imbalances in the Nigerian federation is at issue in the crisis of the First Republic. However "…Britain, herself, not under a federal government and therefore little used to the mechanics of federal constitutions, has nevertheless successfully experimented with federal constitutions in many of her dependent territories. Yet the fact that she has not only a unitary but also a parliamentary form of government leads her to incorporate in the federal constitutions which she approves for her dependent territories certain elements which cause them to deviate from the federal principles

"(Ezera 1964: x-xi). Chinweizu (1978:162) said that the British imperlist powers and those of France, during Africa's anti-colonial struggles, found ready lackeys through which they bribed to submission and therefore the status quo was willingly accepted. We have noted earlier that the creation of states rallied the minority ethnic groups to the side of the Northern landed/comprador classes Federal Forces. It was the first attempt by Colonel Yakubu Gowon to remove the breath off the secessionists in the East which was a tactical victory for the Nigerian side (Ademoyega 1981).

The initial transformation of the character of the Civil War was the state creation that drew most of the minority nationalities to the side of the Northern landed/comprador classes. Of the six states in the South created by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon two Eastern states for Southern minorities were created: namely Rivers state (present day Rivers and Bayelsa states) and South Eastern state (present day Cross River and Akwa Ibom states). Other Southern states were East Central state (present day South East states Ibo area made up of Enugu, Anambra, Ebonyi, Imo, Abia states). And the Western and Lagos states in the West and Mid-West state that simply remained single and a symbol of minority struggles in Nigeria which by omission or commission had its own minority region calved out, the fall out of the conspiracy by NPC/NCNC coalition against AG in Western Region in 1962/63. In the North equally six states were created by Gowon on 27th May, 1967 out of which were Kwara state (present day Kwara, Kainji or Borgu part of Niger state and western part of present Kogi state), Benue/Plateau state (present day Plateau, Nasarawa and Benue states), North Eastern state (made up today of Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Bornu, Yobe and Taraba states). The others were Kano state (made up today of Kano and Jigawa states), North Central state (made up today of Kaduna and Katsina states) and North Western state (made up today of Niger state with Kainji, Borgu excised from Kwara state, Sokoto state, Zamfara state and Kebbi state). The import of this state creation by Gowon was its impact on the minorities support for the Northern landed/comprador classes, especially, the Southern minorities since the reaction of the Northern minorities against the Ibos prior to the creation of states was a very clear indication of the side they belonged or supported. This partial resolution of the minority or nationality question swung the support of the

Southern minorities, especially those of the East under the governorships of Lieutenant Colonel UJ Esuene of South Eastern state and Lieutenant Commander Alfred Diete-Spiff of River state to the side of the Gowon headed Federal Government of the Northern landed/comprador classes.

Providence would push issues further in favour of the Northern landed/comprador classes and indeed Gowon's Federal Military Government which was its spearhead. The invasion of Mid-Western state was the case in point. This rebel gamble as it could be termed further swung the support of the fence sitting Western and Mid-Western states behind the forces of the Northern landed/comprador classes. In the words of St Jorre (1977:270) "…the Biafran government hopelessly misjudged the reaction of the non-Ibo peoples of the Mid-West and the West, revealing a political blindness that was too often repeated to be just a chance phenomenon. It is likely that the Mid-Western Ibo officers gave Ojukwu a much too rosy picture of feelings in the state and it is possible that if Banjo had got to Lagos …there might have been some support for him though the reaction of the Yorubas at the Ore incursion was overwhelmingly hostile". The invasion of Mid-West converted the non-Ibo areas of the Mid-West from worried but reasonably sympathetic onlookers into an implacable and deeply committed antagonist. The incursion also effectively pushed the West head-long into the war where all Gowon's blandishments and diplomacy failed (St Jorre 1977:172). It is very important to note that Awolowo made his first categorical pro-Nigerian speech on 12th August 1967, well before the Biafrans had penetrated into the West. He said on that day, precisely three days after the Biafran Army had crossed the Niger that, "All Yoruba people must lose no time and spare no effort in giving every conceivable support to the Federal troops in defence of their homeland, and of the father land" (West Africa 26 August 1967 cited by St Jorre 1977:172).

The rebel invasion of Mid-West on 9th August 1967 and its push to Ore about a week later shook the onlooking Mid-West and indeed the Western comprador classes from their complacency. It led to the massive recruitment of Yorubas and non-Ibo Mid-

Westerners into the Federal Army. In actual fact, the mass recruitment of other ranks of Mid-West origin and indeed of Yorubas of Western state and Lagos began from this time on (St. Jorre 1977: 173). John de St Jorre said the new Governor of Mid-West, Major Samuel Osaigbovo Ogbemudia told him after the war that: “The Biafrans had been talking endlessly about fighting for survival, but after their attack we realised that we, too, had to fight to survive. It did a lot of harm to our state but a lot of good to Nigeria” (St Jorre 1977). The invasion although did much damage to the sympathy perhaps of Mid-West and West for Biafra but its politics, especially, the politics of appointment of the Biafran Mid-West Administrator, Major Albert Okonkwo, did not help matters. It helped in no small measures to strengthen the fears of Ibo domination. This appointment which was politically insensitive could not be assuaged by the earlier appointment of Banjo, a Yoruba as head of the Biafra’s Liberation Army. The political assessment of the invasion which was envisaged to draw complete sympathy for Biafra and tilt the balance of forces in favour of the invading rebel forces and indeed Biafra did not infact, materialise. It did not bring out a desire to be involved in the war on behalf of Biafra and was thus a political mis-calculation (St Jorre 1977:172). In the final analysis the Mid-West invasion thoroughly swung the sympathy of the entire Southern comprador rentier/landed classes, excluding those of the Ibos, against the Biafrans. It transformed the character of the war from a Civil War between the Northern and Eastern landed/comprador classes to a truly Nigerian Civil War between the entire Nigerian Forces against the secessionist forces of Biafra made up principally of the Ibos. The invasion was to seriously call to question Enugu’s claim that the East merely wanted the defence of the original boundaries of Biafra and protect the lives and property of Ibos (St. Jorre 1977:173).

Other character transformation of the war was that “The invasion greatly extended the war; henceforth no holds were barred, no territory sacrosanct. It slowed it down, turning the struggle into a war of attrition which in the long run, was to the greater disadvantage of the smaller, weaker, blockaded Biafra. By invading the Mid-West, the Biafrans opened up a new front and brought the Nigerians on to their western doorstep. They

lost the valuable loophole which Ejoor's Mid-West, despite its leanings towards Lagos, had provided in the Federal blockade. The immediate military effects were bad, too. Biafra's small army could hardly cope with the existing threats, let alone take on new commitments outside the country" (St Jorre 1977:172). The very rapid nature of the push through Mid-West by the rebel forces weakened the strength of the rebel forces to defend Biafra, especially its northern frontier and it led to the early fall of Enugu to the Federal Forces as the final retreat was taking place from Mid-West (St Jorre 1977). The end of the Mid-West campaign marked the beginning of the war of attrition and from a "Police Action" to a "Total War". By late October 1967 it seemed that, Biafra was on its last legs as Enugu fell on 4th October about the same time Asaba at the western Niger bridgehead fell also (St Jorre 1977:173; Ottah 1980:22-3).

The strategic gain on the federal side in the entry of Mid-West and Western states into the Nigerian Civil War was the isolation of Biafra both politically and strategically. Since it drew the Mid-West unwavered completely on the side of the Federal Government and the Western state in a like manner, politically, therefore, the isolation and the encirclement of the Republic of Biafra was on the agenda and closing on very fast. The rapid advance of the 2 Division through Mid-West was aided by the rudiments of the 3 Marine Commando under the command of Colonel Benjamin Adekunle which had to clear the riverine areas of the state with another sea-borne operation like what happened in Bonny earlier (St Jorre 1977: 162). Although the Bonny operation which took place at the very early phase of the war had the inkling of a possible emergence of a 3 Marine Commando Division that would take on the entire coastal areas of Biafra, the Biafra's incursion into the Mid-West made its formation come rapidly on the heels. The very rapid occupation of Mid-West by the rebel forces had forewarned the Federal Government and its forces not to take anything at their face value since the tragedy of the Mid-West occurred. We have noted earlier that since the invasion of Mid-West by Biafran Forces, the complacency of both the Mid-West and Western states comprador/landed classes had evaporated leading to massive recruitments of personnel into the Nigerian Armed Forces from the riverine areas. It was the nucleus of

the birth of the famous 3 Marine Commando Division under the command of Colonel Benjamin Adekunle (Black Scorpion).

With the fall of Benin to the Federal Forces on the 20th September, 1967 and the progressive freeing of the state from rebel forces, the deep hatred against the Ibos boiled into the open and invited Biafran reaction. Thus the oppression and atrocity syndrome of an enemy occupation had started. The stagnation of the Mid-West economy as a result of the bloackade by the Federal Government brought about rising prices which enflamed the general discontent during the rebel brief occupation. There was no uprising but hostility against the Ibos grew which forced the Biafran Forces to withdraw often several days before the Federal troops arrived. In Warri, for example, there was a three day interregnum when Biafran Forces withdrew and when the Federal Forces arrived. That was when the anti-Ibo sentiments boiled into the open and their killings began. Those who were affected were mainly the stranded Ibos who felt that the local people would protect them but that was not to be. What was happening in Warri against the Ibos equally happened in Sepele, Benin and in other non-Ibo Mid-West towns. These massacres were perpetrated mainly by non-Ibo civilians though sometimes Federal soldiers would join when the victims had been pointed out to them. Signs like 'Urhobo man lives here', 'Benin man's shop' or 'One Nigeria' suddenly appeared on peoples' doors and inevitably, many old scores were settled before law and order returned (St. Jorre 1977:164).

Against the foregoing background, massive pouring in of recruits into the Nigerian Army and indeed the formation of the 3 Division as a Marine Commando Division became a fore gone conclusion since this area is made up of riverine people of the Niger Delta. The historical development of 3 Marine Commando that later became a Division was a product of the very brilliant landing in Bonny of 7 Infantry Battalion in an amphibious operation on 25 July, 1967 which exercise was led by Colonel Benjamin Adekunle to take this strategic oil terminal. The rebel invasion of the Mid-West state and its spill over to the West led to the rapid build-up of the nucleus unit through official reinforcements and illegal recruitments into a Division designated 3 Marine Commando

(Momoh 2000:146). We have noted earlier that the creation of states which swung the minorities on the side of the Federal Government was the political master stroke that presented the first inkling of the war as a Nigeria Civil War but the turning of the full circle was the Biafran invasion of Mid-West and its threat on Western and Lagos states. A commentator (West Africa 26 August 1967) called it the "Benin boomerang" which was a major turning point in the war. It had immense political, military, economic and psychological repercussions. It can be seen to have played a major role in sealing the fate of Biafra and isolating the secessionist Republic.

Prior to the declaration of Biafra's secessionist bid, an earlier secession of the Niger Delta, especially the Ijaw area as the Republic of Yenagoa was declared by Isaac Adaka Boro, an Ijaw police undergraduate of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. His rag-tag 'revolutionary' army though was crushed under Major General JTU Aguiyi Ironsi resulting in the detention of Adaka Boro and his colleagues for treason by the Ironsi administraton, the creation of states and indeed the Rivers state (now Rivers and Bayelsa states) served their aspirations right. The same was the case of the South Eastern state (now Akwa Ibom and Cross River states). This lent their youth to massive recruitment into the Nigerian Army and indeed the very rapid knocking together of 2 Division and also 3 Marine Commando, the fall out of the rebel invasion of Mid-West. It was not therefore surprising that whole battalions were made up of principally the Niger Delta people. This was equally a fall out of the coalescence of forces against the rebel forces that were at this time being increasingly isolated militarily and politically. The gallantry of the 3 Marine Commando in their landing operations and the complete sweeping of the rebel forces off the coastline of Mid-West and secessionist Biafra were not just act of gallantry but gallantry backed by the collaborative locals that constituted the bulk of the soldiers in the Marine Division. Some of the locals who were officers and commanded operations died in these operations such as Lieutenant Colonel Phillip Afiegbe who is hardly remembered but died in the Calabar operation and Major Isaac Adaka Boro who died at Okrika waterside in the battle for Port Harcourt.

However, the point at issue is that the rebel invasion of Mid-West brought out a

strategic victory for the Federal Government. Instead of easing up pressures on Enugu which happened temporarily, it hastened the fall of Enugu on October 4, 1967. It brought the Mid-West and Western states completely on the side of the Federal Government and mobilised their comprador/landed class forces on the side of the Northern landed/rentier forces. Colonel Adekunle, fresh from his victories in the Mid-West captured Calabar with a sea-borne assault on 18 October, 1967. With the clearing of the coastline by Colonel Adekunle's Marine Division, the rebel forces became sealed off from the coastline. After the taking of Calabar, Black Scorpion's forces slowly moved north and later linked up with 1 Division at Ikom thus equally sealing off the Cameroon border and completing the encirclement of Biafra. It led to the total liberation of the minority states of the then South-Eastern and Rivers states. It completely isolated the rebellion to the mainland Ibo areas excluding Enugu which fell to the Federal Forces on October 4, 1967.

5.2.1 Failed Landings at Onisha, Overland Operations, Capture of Onisha and Abagana Tragedy

It was under night cover that 2 Division was said to have landed two battalions from Ilushin, in its first assault crossing from Asaba to Onisha, one commanded by Major Ejiga and the other by Captain Aremu, an Education Officer who also crossed on 8 October, 1967. The first crossing was with the General Officer Commanding, Colonel Murtala Mohammed which landed safely close to a ferry point near the Onitsha market. He was there with them throughout the night and had to return early in the morning to arrange reinforcement of men and materials. An added battalion was crossed successfully making it three after the return of the GOC to Asaba before dawn (Momoh 2000:89). Nigerian Army account had it that the Biafrans were taken by surprise contrary to the view canvassed by Alexander Madiebo that there was bombardments of Onitsha from October 4 prior to the landing on the 8 October. This account noted that they expected that Federal troops had the capacity to cross the river soon as Asaba was taken. The Biafran Forces, therefore, took flight in the face of the landed troops at the river line on Onitsha soil in the same manner as their flight from the Mid-West.

Unfortunately for the crossing Federal Forces, the ferry coming with reinforcement for 8 Brigade from 7 Brigade and 66 Battalion of 6 Brigade as well as the necessary logistics got stucked when the ferry driver got killed with a sniper fire shot. It was at this time that the scared Biafran Forces opened fire on the ferry as it was already daylight and as such the element of surprise achieved was over (Momoh 2000: 89-90).

With the elements of surprise over, Biafrans maintained very intense firing at Federal troops on the ferry uninterruptedly leading to many of the Nigerian Forces being killed. This caused a pandemonium among the troops being ferried for reinforcement midstream with the already wounded being evacuated by canoes by those who could paddle and those who could swim to safety did so, but with many casualties. The plan to bring in reinforcements in men and weapons with the canoes ferrying back the injured failed because the troops on standby seeing many casualties being brought back refused to join the canoes while some took to their heels. For two days troops caught up in this tragedy were gradually dying either as a result of injuries or as a result of outright death from rebel fire. The same thing that has been happening in the midstream was also happening in the Onitsha town where the three battalions earlier crossed and deployed in some areas in the town started to encounter very intense rebel fire. As there were no reinforcements in terms of men, logistics and ammunition, Federal Forces were routed.The Nigerian troops were as a mater of fact cut off. A much needed reinforcement that was attempted through a ferry to take a Panchard, armoured vehicle to give a succour to the three battalions cut off at Onitsha got stucked when the ferry pilot who was a civilian panicked (Momoh 2000: 90: Madiebo 1980: 200 – 1). The state of the situation was summed up by Madiebo (1980:202) thus, “Enemy losses were so much that rather than quote casualty figures, it is sufficient to say that the invading Nigeria’s Second Division was almost destroyed”.

Despite the tragedy of the first landing at Onitsha, two more attempts were made by Colonel Murtala Mohammed to cross the River Niger to Onitsha. In the words of Momoh (2000:92) “Having failed at first attempt at crossing, Mohammed could not be deterred from making other attempts, two of which also ended in failure. The boats

procured for one of the operations were attacked midstream, some were hit and the rest raced back. This was in spite of heavy air, artillery and mortar bombardments that preceded the attempts. The rebels were clearly dug in on the river line anticipating and ready to repel the attacks. The account of the second attempt was given by Madiebo (1980:203) who said, "On the morning of the 20th October, the Nigerian Amada of approximately ten boats was again sighted sailing down the Niger from Asaba in exactly the same fashion as in the first invasion. The soldiers were… ordered to take up their positions and as soon as the boats were in midstream, we opened up with all we had. After two hours of battle, six boats had been destroyed or put off action and the rest were sailing home to Asaba the fastest they could, having suffered more casualties than in their first attempt". In the words of Alli (2001:43) "It is now history that the second attempt to take the strategic town of Onitsha from across the River Niger also failed".

The fact that the operations of the 2 Division were done in most cases without much surveillance attested to the fact that the capacity of the rebel forces at Onitsha was not really known and their ability to regroup after the elements of surprise was not equally taken into consideration. The 2 Division especially the GOC believed in adventurism which was not bad if all things that could aid easy victory were taken into consideration. However, that was not the case in all the attempts made to take Onitsha from Asaba. The state of the Nigerian Forces and indeed 2 Division in surveillance was stated by Alli (2001:51) thus, on the Onono Island, "Sub-units had to be re-positioned and re-organised to subsequent objectives and reoriented to further missions. The shoreline consolidated, the next stage was the identification of who the Biafran unit occupying the area was, their strength, their main location. We had to assess their force level". The preliminary aspect of this surveillance should have been done before crossing into Onono Island on the River Niger overlooking the Onitsha Bridge but it was not the case. It was rather the case of putting the cart before the horse.

With the failed landing attempts to take Onitsha it became dawn on 2 Division that its preparedness in assault crossing was quite inadequate and therefore the need to take

Onitsha by land became the only viable option. Colonel Murtala Mohammed, the 2 Divisional Commander had to swallow his pride and went through Idah in the North to go through 1 Division Area in a characteristic manner with full force, encountering and clearing heavy rebel resistances until he arrived at Udi. He fought his way through bush tracks on the Nsukka axis to Ozalla and linked up with 1 Division on Ozalla-Emene road along Enugu-Awka main road. Consequently, Enugu became linked and the rebels were pushed south towards Oji River. In its movement to take Onitsha by land 2 Division avoided major routes as such the Division was able to bypass mines and major Biafran defenses along the main routes. This tactical move made the Division to take the rebels unawares leading to the fall of Oji River (Momoh (ed) 2000:93 cited Madiebo 1980:266). As Oji River fell to the Nigerian Forces in January 1968, the 2 Division moving on Aguobu-Obinofia axis now engaged Biafra's 54 Brigade that held against 2 Division's failed amphibious assaults on Onitsha from Asaba. Since the Division consistently fought its way into Ugwoba, this forced the Biafran Forces to destroy the bridge, over river Mamu. The Federal Forces soon linked up Ugwoba and Oji (Madiebo 1980:216-7)

The bridge over river Mamu was blown up, it became a major obstacle for the taking of Onitsha on the Enugu-Onitsha road. Alexander Madiebo said that he was confident that the Biafran Forces would tie down the Nigerian Forces there indefinitely, provided that his men would have just enough ammunition to prevent the Federal Forces from repairing the bridge which was not feasible. However, there was some stalemate because of the Mamu bridge that was destroyed by the Biafran Forces. This evaporated on the 17 October, 1968 when the rebel forces pulled out because of heavy bombardment and on alleged gas fired which Madiebo (1980: 217) said was choking. This allegation has not been proved to be true which the Biafran Army Commander said "…I was definitely not in a position to form an opinion on the matter" (Madiebo 1980: 217-8). Thus the vital Mamu bridge was lost and as such, there was no obstacle of substance along that route to stop 2 Division taking Onitsha (Momoh (ed) 2000:93). With this obstacle out of the way Awka fell to 2 Division without much resistance. The Baifran Forces nevertheless fought desperately to prevent the entry into Onitsha by

Federal Forces of 2 Division. That notwithstanding, 2 Division eventually edged its way and took Onitsha on 21 March 1968 thus realising the dreams harboured by the Division in its first amphibious landing which failed on the 12 of September, 1967 (Momoh (ed) 2000).

The 2 Division through all its routes of advance to Onitsha failed to secure them living its rear exposed to rebel attacks. Some of the operations in the rear of the Division by the rebel forces badly slowed down the movement of the Nigerian Forces. Madiebo (1980:222) said “A special force, under Major Emmanuel Okeke, an Engineer officer were dispatched with local rockets, mines and grenades, to the rear of the enemy. Their task was to locate and destroy enemy armoured vehicles in their parking base at night. The attack was successful and the ‘tank hunters’ reported two armoured vehicles destroyed”. As a result of the insecured rear of the Division, the rebel, therefore, had the opportunity to deploy behind Federal troops between Onitsha and Abagana. Just about ten days after 2 Division had captured Onitsha, the Divisional Headquarters with a convoy of 96 vehicles carrying supplies and soldiers led by Saladin and Ferret armoured vehicles was hit by a rebel mortar at the middle of the convoy thus setting ablaze a lot of vehicles. The General Officer Commanding was in the convoy. According to a Nigerian Army account, the bulk of the vehicles, nevertheless, made their way to Onitsha with the General Officer Commanding himself. An estimated 30 vehicles were lost to fire resulting in a stampede and lives of many Federal troops were also lost in the process (Momoh 2000: 93-4; Madiebo 1980:224-8)

However, in Alexander Madiebo’s account, all the vehicles got burnt apart from very few that were able to escape. Only a few that were left were salvaged of their military stores. As the vehicles were burning, the Federal troops organised a counter attack of a company strong led by two Ferret armoured cars from Abagana which was beaten back by the rebel forces. In the words of Madiebo (1980:225), After one hour of very desperate battle, the enemy company was virtually destroyed together with one of the armoured vehicles. The rest fled back in the direction of Abagana town. The enemy counter attack had come and gone and we were now faced with the task of trying to put

out the fire so that we could salvage some ammunition and stores. At that stage only six lorries had not burnt, and the amount of ammunition recovered from them was more than the Biafran Army got in any period of two months". In the Abagana tragedy, the rebel forces had not done with the Federal Forces yet. In Madiebo's account "… the advance party of the convoy, consisting of two armoured vehicles and three soft-skin vehicles, were bull-dozing their way to Onitsha. Colonel Udeaja was however at Ogidi with a company of soldiers to receive them. Again the armoured cars which were going as fast as they could were allowed to pass and then the other three vehicles were attacked. The first vehicle was hit but managed to escape, but other two vehicles were halted. The armoured vehicles did not even attempt to turn round to help, but rather accelerated forward. We recovered the valuable ammunition and other military stores in the vehicles and then set them ablaze. In the end, besides two armoured vehicles and a lorry, the entire enemy Second Division force, estimated at a brigade strength, which set out for Onitsha on that memorable day was completely destroyed" (Madiebo 1980: 225-8).

5.3 Imperialism and the Changing Feature of the Landed/Comprador Political Economy

As non-organisers of the productive forces, the rentier/landed classes depend on where the wind of imperialism carries them in the prevailing world division of labour. For some time now, Africa has been dependent in so many cases on mineral production and export for much of their revenue. Thus most Africa governments, therefore, tended to give priority to maintaining or increasing their production and exports of minerals (Lannning and Mueller 1979:94; Ocholi 1975). Minerals have displaced agricultural products as the main exports from Africa to the industrialised world, especially, the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe, North America and Japan. As we have noted earlier the rentier/landed classes involved in accumulation without production or to be precise, without classical organisation of production, dominate the Nigerian political economy. This is in part a reflection of the specific articulation of the mode of production in society, resulting from the history of incorporation of our economy into the world capitalist system. The very strong position of the rentier/landed

classes and indeed the commercial elements has as its corollary the present very low level of industrialisation, especially given the unwillingness of imperialism to encourage such when profits from imports are still good, and when market access is readily available (Tedheke 1984:145).

The predominance of commerce in Nigeria's political economy is a product of a distinct historical development. This can be properly understood when one examines Nigeria's position in the international division of labour from two dynamics. First, Nigeria is a massive consumer of goods and materials produced elsewhere. In this sense, Nigeria is very essential to sections of international capital in the realisation of *surplus value* via commerce (Ekekwe and Turner 1984:3). Second, Nigeria has been a producer of key and strategic commodities for the world capitalist economic system over the past five hundred years, since the inception of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 15th century. The first major strategic commodity was labour power in the form of slaves in the primitive accumulation of capital. This type of commerce dominated economic transactions between Nigeria's coastal frontiers and the Americas and Europe from mid-1400 to the late 1800 (Rodney 1972; Williams 1975). Then came the era of the so-called legitimate commerce in trade when the strategic important export was palm oil and palm kernel which played strategic role in lubricating and lightening the Industrial Revolution in Europe and glycerine used in explosives for strategic defence and colonisation of Africa. From this same oil rivers whence came palm oil and kernel now comes petroleum for the advanced stage of Western industrialisation (Tedheke 1984:146).

As a result of the strategic role Nigeria is playing from time in the international division of labour and in the development of metropolitan capitalism for the past 500 years, there has emerged an extremely well-entrenched local rentier/landed comprador classes in the form of traders/commercial middlemen later comprador bourgeoisie who wield overwhelming influence in society and the state. Indeed, the social relations are structured by and for the purpose of trade and the Nigerian state has become the focal point of the rentier political economy, especially, with the transition from agricultural

exports to crude oil (Tedheke 1984:146-7). We have stated emphatically earlier that Nigeria, like other Third World oil-exporting countries is an organised “rentier state” or a governing complex which functions from income in the form of “rents” paid by oil companies and oil buyers for ownership of non-renewable, wasting resource, petroleum. The rentier state thrives on these rent payments which are generated in a highly capital-intensive production operation involving relatively few workers (Ekekwe and Turner 1984:4). In the colonial period and in the First Republic, at least Nigeria organised through the various marketing boards; export crops production through the peasant political economy. It was at these periods that Nigerians had the pride of place as an enviable cash and food crops producer. This hope has been dashed because of the comprador/rentier state and its lack of dynamism in the development of the productive forces and organisation of production on the one hand and the very speedy changes in the international division of labour on the other. The murderous exploitation of the peasantry, their retrogressive degeneration arising from the existing oppressive global production relations have led to increasing rebellion of the peasantry against their immiserisation and pauperisation. This created the economic crisis that led to the collapse of the first foundation of the rentier/comprador dependent state in Nigeria (Tedheke 1984: 147-8).

As a result of the unproductive nature of the neo-colonial comprador/rentier bourgeoisie the import of petroleum has become increasingly dominant in the displaced agricultural exports political economy. The dominance of petroleum in the Nigerian economy has killed the incentives in agricultural development because of the cheap money it generates, cheap in the sense that the Nigerian state and its rentier/comprador class have little or no hands in its generation. Dependent on the dictates of metropolitan capitals and their ever changing and pressing needs, the Nigerian economy has constantly been moving from one monoculture economy to the other-from cash export crops to petroleum, undiversified which is the second foundation of the Nigerian comprador/rentier state and classes. It is this dependence from one primary export product to another in its trade that is the major problem of the Nigerian political economy and indeed the rentier state, economy and its class (Tedheke 1984:148-9).

The import of this state of economy and how it sank into the inner recesses of the rentier/landed bourgeois classes was innocently let out by two leading Federal Ministers, Zanna Buka Dipcharima (Trade) and Waziri Ibrahim (Economic Development) in the November 1961 House of Representatives debate on Government proposals for the 1962-68 National Development Plan. Osoba (1978:64-9) cited them as stating that their government was not interested in very quick economic changes because they feared it would instigate imperialism into reaction as they have got various means to defend their monopolies such as newspapers, televisions and even going to the extent of telling lies. The two ministers feared that if their government want to really set about improving the economy of Nigeria in a particular way, they were afraid they could be called communists or, make Nigerians suspect every of their move. If they do not succeed by false propaganda through name-calling, if they fail to make the members of the government unpopular to win their case they could arrange assassinations. As a result of this fear of their skin, the Balewa Government, therefore, preferred the status quo to be maintained.

5.3.1 Importance of Crude Oil to the Landed Aristocracy/Comprador Bourgeoisie in the First Republic

The status quo was the primary export economy only changing with the changing demands of Euro-American including Japanese imperialism. This time around, in the First Republic, it was the increasing importance of crude oil to their economy. The changing fortune of the Nigerian situation to crude oil as becoming dominant in the Nigerian political economy and indeed its impact on the behavioural pattern of the NCNC and Eastern Region was observed by the Sardauna as making the East to develop cold feet towards the federation. The Sardauna said:

> Since the discovery of crude oil in the East, the NCNC had been getting steadily colder in its relations with other parts of Nigeria, trying to make themselves so intolerable that other Nigerians will take the initiative of getting Eastern Nigeria outside the federation and thereby winning sympathy for the NCNC in the world at large (West Africa, 2 January 1965:3 cited by Diamond 1988:218*)*

The raising of hopes of the Nigerian rentier/landed/comprador classes could be seen from the rising profile of crude oil exports from the period the Sardauna of Sokoto and the Premier of Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello spoke of the importance of crude oil to the changed behaviour of NCNC and the East. With the 1962–68 Nigerian Development Plan's allocations on projects throughout the Federation, no region including the North was free of having an eye on the pie from crude oil rentier political economy. The rise from insignificance in 1958 crude oil exports was becoming very prominent in the rentier economy, the comment on NCNC and the East by the Sardauna was not therefore, neutral especially with the collapse of agricultural commodity prices in the world market from 1955/56 till the January 15, 1966 coup.

Table 5.1 Crude Oil Exports of Nigeria

Year	Quantity in M. Tons	Value in £ N m.
1958	0.244	0.978
1960	0.827	4.408
1962	3.367	16.738
1964	5.782	32.056
1966	18.945	91.972

Source: L, Schawtz, *Petroleum in Nigeria* (Ibadan: NISER) cited by Dudley (1978:67).

Table 5.2 Balance of Trade 1966 £ N m.

Domestic Exports	Value
Cocoa	28.3
Groundnuts	40.8
Crude Petroleum	91.9
Raw Cotton	3.4
Palm Products	33.3
Rubber	11.5
Tin and Columbite	16.6
Timber	5.8
Others	46.1
Total	**277.7**

Re-exports	5.4
Total	283.1
Imports	256.3
Balance of Trade	+ 26.8

Source: *Nigerian Economic Indicators* cited by Dudley (1978:68)

The increasing importance of petroleum in the finances of the Federation can be understood from another dimension by comparing the net inflow of private capital into oil and non–oil sectors of the economy. In 1964, the proportion of this net inflow of private capital into oil and non-oil sectors stood at (in £ N m.) 18.1:44.9. By 1965, this has changed to 17.4:19.6 and in 1966, the year before the outbreak of the Civil War, the comparable figures were 28.9:6.0 (Onitiri: 1971 cited by Dudley 1975:68). Table 5.3 summarises the impact of petroleum on Nigerian balance of payment for the year 1964–66.

Table 5.3 Nigerian Balance of Payment 1964-66 (in £ N m)

	1964	1965	1966
Crude Oil Exports	32.0	68.1	99.9
Oil Companies Visible Imports	-11.7	-13.5	-19.5
Net contribution to balance of Visible Trade	20.3	54.6	72.4
Net contribution to balance Of Total Trade	-1.0	18.2	14.5
Net contribution to the inflow Of Foreign Capital	18.1	17.4	28.9
Net contribution to balance of Payment on current and capital Account	25.1	35.6	43.4

Source*: Central Bank of Nigeria, Lagos. Abstracted from Table 10 of HMA Onitiri by B. Dudley (1975:68)*

The fact that petroleum had become of much importance to all especially at the Federal level was becoming a reality. It was becoming evidenced that NCNC, a partner in the NPC/NCNC coalition was feeling worse off, was indicated in a statement issued in 1964 by its government in Eastern Nigeria that, NPC was misusing the power and privilege that the coalition had given it by siting most of the major projects in the North in the 1962-68 National Development Plan, which were in all four major projects amounting to about £262 million. The complaint of the Eastern Government was that the money for the projects would come from crude oil sales (Dudley 1978: 69 cited Mackintosh 1966:557–58). This detailed presentation of the facts on the emerging rentier/landed bourgeoisie is to bring out the importance of the petroleum industry to this comprador class. Despite the fact that the Northern ruling landed class saw the East and NCNC as becoming unruly because of the crude oil as it was producing two-third of the total Nigerian production then, it was equally true that the North had an eye on the pie. It was equally true that the idea to occupy Bonny in August 1967 was motivated by the interest of the Federal Government in crude oil.

5.3.2 Importance of Crude Oil to Monopoly Capital or Imperialism

Capitalism in its initial stage of industrialisation had the coal as its first source of energy. However the coal energy is very labour intensive and was seriously prone to negatively affecting the profitability of capital. It equally negatively affects the class struggle between capital and labour giving into the expansion of necessary labour to the detriment of capital's surplus value (profits, dividends and rents). The struggle by the imperialists to have control over world oil industry is as a result of the struggle between capital and labour in the advance capitalist nations of today (Tedheke 1984:56). A part of this has been the provision of social goods to alleviate the pains of capitalism on the masses. The revolution in technology has been occasioned by petroleum energy that plays a good and formidable role in this struggle between capital and labour. In the words of Macpherson (1973:11) "… the capitalist economy has turned out to need a lot of regulation and control to keep it on even keel. This is so for technical economic reason which has nothing to do with democratic franchise, reasons which were only fully appreciated by economists and governments after the great

depression of the 1930s. Equally, the extensive provision of social services would have come from the sheer need of governments to allay working–class discontents that were dangerous to the stability of the state and avoid revolution". Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu (1986:194) said, "… the triumph of social democracy rests on the ability of capitalism to maintain uninterrupted growth. Since social democrats rely on the ability of the capitalist class to provide part of the surplus that will be used to mount the social welfare programmes, every inducement is given to this class to enable it overcome the economic crisis so that social welfare would be reactivated".

It view of the foregoing, the switch from coal to oil was initiated by the United States not because "mother nature" willed it but because it was more profitable in view of the virtually free, easily transportable, high quality oil in some poor countries such as Venezuela, Iran and Iraq which helped companies to reap lightening super profit (Heinecken 1980:3 cited Tanzer 1980:18). A serious threat to the advance capitalist nations may be that energy costs will limit production well before known mineral reserves run out. As lower and lower grades of ore are mined, greater and greater quantities of power are required to crush, process and smelt the small amounts of metal (Lanning and Mueller 1979:114). The overall cost of production of those metals, a significant factor of which labour is a part has been the major reason why the United States turned to oil as from the 1940s because the extraction was much less labour intensive (Heinecke 1980:6). Table 5.4 shows how much coal equivalent was needed in 1972 to produce a pound of some common metals, assuming average grades. It thus proved the continuous need for petroleum to beat down the cost of production and reap super profit. This has been the pre–occupation of capital since in the 1930s hence capital's change over from coal to crude oil or petroleum.

Table 5.4 The Energy Cost of Metal Production, 1972

Energy required (measured in lb of Coal)			
To make 1.lb of	From Ore	From Recycled Material	
Steel	1.11 lb	0.22	lb
Aluminium (a)	6.09 lb	0.17 0.26	lb

Copper	1.98 lb	0.11	lb

Note (a) assumes that bauxite is reduced to alumina by hydroelectric power. If the whole process used coal then it would take 8.32 lb of coal to produce 1 lb of aluminium. Producers argue that the lightweight and structural strength of aluminium produce great energy savings when in use, which counteract the high energy-cost of aluminium production.

Source*: Fortune* October 1972:110 cited by Lanning and Mueller *Africa Undermined*, (1979:114)

When Greg Lanning and Marti Mueller published their work in 1979 most countries of advance capital recycle very little of the metal that they manufacture and if costs dictate it, those countries would be able to recycle a lot more of their scrap metals.

The increasing use of energy for capitalist production also signifies the increasing rise in the *organic composition of capital*. The rising *organic composition of capital* is a product of the *concentration* and *centralisation of capital,* a development from competitive, non-monopoly capital to the emergence of monopoly or oligopoly capital or imperialism. The capitalist has two ways of increasing his *surplus value* (profit, dividend and rent) with which he can increase his *organic composition of capital* or enlargement of his production. First, he lengthens the working day so that more time can be spent to produce for the capitalist. Such increased *surplus value* is called *absolute surplus value*. Second, the capitalist also increases his *surplus value* by having the worker produce more in less and less time, usually by the use of machines, so that the *socially necessary labour time* (time that covers his wages and salaries) is diminished and relatively more time is spent working for the capitalist. Increased *surplus value* obtained by this method is called *relative surplus value*.

It is in creation of *relative surplus value*, using machinery, that the capitalist is most revolutionary (Christie 1980:15). Marx (1974:477) cited by Christie (1980:15) said, “the production of *absolute surplus value* turns exclusively upon the length of the working day; the production of *relative surplus value* revolutionises out and out the technical processes of labour and the composition of society”. Fundamentally, by using

machinery, the capitalists tend to increase the *organic composition of capital*, $^{c}/_{v}$ (constant over variable capitals i.e. reduction of the content of labour or *necessary labour time* to that of *absolute surplus value*) in order that *relative surplus value* (time used to produce for the capitalist) may be expanded and in order that relative overpopulation, that is, unemployment, may increase (Christie 1980). Capital thus needs machinery to expand the accumulation of *surplus value* in order to control workers in the *class struggle* hence capital needs energy. Above all, energy powers the ongoing technological revolution whereby capital has been winning the class struggle (Christie 1980:16).

5.3.3 Oil and the Grand Strategic Calculation

We have to move from the general dynamics of capital and oil to the specifics at the 1967 Nigerian historical juncture. When secession was declared on 30 May, 1967, by Colonel Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, Cronje (1972:23) cited Herbert Bowden, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth in the House of Commons who said that "…there was some association between the British representative in Enugu and the authorities there'. However he stressed, '…at this stage there can be no recognition of the Eastern Region by us, nor has any other country recognised it" (Commons Official Report, 6 June 1967 cited by Cronje 1972). Later on in the same month of June, Lord Walston said, "We have been watching carefully-indeed anxiously-what has been happening in Nigeria, and we have done so for many reasons… we have a vast trade with Nigeria… there are of course, the relatively new discovered oil deposits which are being exploited now with such enormous success…" (Lords Official Report, 20 June 1967 cited by Cronje 1972). Suzanne Cronje emphasised that the apparent lack of concern by the British in this unfolding Nigerian tragic scenario was largely due to Britain's preoccupation with the Middle East crisis after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

The foregoing preoccupation was of much concern to the Birtish Government in two ways. First, was the traditional fears of being cut off from its source of oil and secondly, the closure of the Suez Canal which threatened to affect Britain's desperate attempts to achieve a balance of payment surplus (Cronje 1972). The then British Prime Minister,

Harold Wilson recalled that:

> … in the spring of 1967 we were almost within sight of balancing our overseas trade and payments when the Middle East War and the closure of the Suez Canal inflicted great damage on us–a major factor in forcing devaluation upon us later in the year (Wilson 1971 cited by Cronje 1972)

On the 6 June, Egypt blocked the Suez Canal, and the following day George Brown, the Foreign Secretary, said that urgent measures were being taken to readjust the pattern of oil supplies to Britain. By the end of June, Britain began to feel the oil shortage. The loss resulting from the Middle East situation as a whole was about £10 million a month from July to September and doubled that level for the rest of the year (Commons Official Report 27 February 1968 cited by Cronje 1972:23–4). Thus importance of oil to the British was captioned by the Economist in headline "Oil Will Decide" in a reaction to Biafra's secession (the Economist 3 June, 1967 cited by Cronje 1972:24). The biggest oil-producing company in Nigeria was Shell–B.P, and the British Government had a 49 percent share in B.P–British Petroleum (Cronje 1972). Before the Nigerian Civil War Britain had imported 10 percent of her oil needs from Nigeria (Cronje 1972:145) and the Middle East Crisis occasioned the need for more of it.

A left-wing Labour member of the Tribune Group, Mr. Eric Heffer on the partisan nature of Britain said: "…we were told that the Government's real endeavours in this matter were directed to trying to mediate, trying to solve this question and bring it to a conclusion at the earliest possible moment. We were told this on numerous occasions, but the truth is that the Government is on the side of Federal Nigeria. It would have been much more honest, and better for people like me (for the Government) to say from the start, "We have interests in Nigeria which we will defend by continuing to supply arms to Nigeria; we will defend our oil interests and Uniliver will defend their interests in this way. We would then have known where we were and would have been able to make up our minds…" (Commons Official Report, 13 March,1969 cited by Cronje 1972:119). It would therefore not be surprising that Britain was neck deep in the Nigerian crisis despite initial feet dragging. No less than the British High Commissioner

to Nigeria at the time, Sir David Hunt said that Britain supplied the warships which made the Federal blockade of Biafra possible. The Nigerian Navy was assisted by ex-Royal Navy Officers on contract to the Federal Government. Britain went on supplying the Nigerian Navy Warships in 1967 and 1968 (Cronje 1972:27-8). It was under this scenario that Nigeria undertook a sea assault on Bonny on 25 July, 1967. The Biafrans were suspicious that the British were in collision in the attack. This was corroborated later that year when Sir David Hunt reminded the Federal side that "…the successful and expedient operation carried out by the Nigerian Navy leading to the capture of Bonny was a result of the warship supplied by Britain (Cronje 1972:30 cited BBC Monitor Report, Kaduna Radio 24 November 1967). Suzanne Cronje noted that Britain's preoccupation with oil, a result of the Middle East crisis was of paramount importance in the reasoning of British siding with Federal Nigeria.

The old rivalry between Britain and France in Africa was to resurrect in the Nigerian/Biafran feud. The French in the name of humanitarianism supported Biafra. But beyond humanitarianism, it seems the French, to be precise, a French bank linked with Pompidou, had an eye on the pie of oil in Nigeria, especially in the East. This was indicated in "A fascinating document, dated July 1967, showing the sale of Biafra's oil and other minerals to the Rothschild Bank in Paris for £6 million, produced as evidence" (St Jorre 1977:214). The authenticity of this document though in doubt but it brought out the always deadly intra-imperialist struggles that led to devasting wars in the history of the 20th century. According to Cronje (1972:198) the conservative fears of Britain were played upon by suggestions that the French were out to gain for themselves areas of Britain's traditional interest. Reports based on spurious evidence that Rothschild, the French banking house, had done a deal with Ojukwu involving oil concessions, were advanced and was underlined that Georges Pompidou was a former director of the bank.

The fact is not the authenticity or veracity of the document but the always–deadly intra–imperialist struggles for spheres of influence and indeed division and re–division of the rest of the world, their struggle for markets to solve the realisation problem (Lenin

1978) and the control of strategic minerals (Lanning and Mueller 1979). Since the commencement of the Nigerian Civil War, the French were naturally accused of being principally interested in Nigeria's oil. Thus the Ojukwu–Rothschild deal so obviously suspect that it was not taken seriously in British Government and Oil Company circles (Cronje 1972:201). It was equally alleged by Lagos that Biafra had received some fifteen million dollars from the *Compagnie Francaise du Petrole*; the French Government had 40 percent voting rights in this company (West Africa, 2 March, 1968 cited by Cronje 1972:201). According to Cronje (1972:201-2) there was equally no evidence to prove the foregoing. If there were, France's existing interest in Nigerian oil would have been jeopardised by the acquisition of any Biafran concessions. SATRAP a subsidiary of the state-owned French company, ERAP had valuable oil fields on both sides of the war and had suspended all operations in Biafra as well as on the Federal side. The French were indeed seriously involved on the side of secessionist Biafra. However, the oil politics and the diplomatic war between Nigeria and France could be seen as attempts by Nigeria to court British un-alloyed support in this very crucial hour of needs, hence the grand strategic calculation, the Bonny sea borne assault was a testimony to this fact of serving the British and indeed Nigerian interest on crude oil.

5.4 The Birth of 3 Marine Commando

The rudimentary form up of 3 Marine Commando Division began with the preparation for the capture of Bonny, the Nigerian strategic crude oil export terminal. At the beginning of the Nigerian Civil War the operations were north–south bound between 1 Division and the secessionist forces in the northern borders of Biafra stretching from Nsukka to Ogoja (Momoh ed 2000:97; Madiebo 1980). However, the blockade of the Nigerian continental shelf to prevent the secessionists from getting the much needed supplies to sustain their war efforts and to secure Nigeria's oil installations and shipping activities was one of the strategies of the Nigerian Government. The importance of the Bonny operation cannot be over emphasised. The southern operations objective or aim was to block the sea routes and to secure Bonny oil terminal, the economic live line of the country (Momoh 2000: 62, 69). Strategically speaking, Bonny was of very serious military importance in the southern coastal belt

not only because of its access to Port Harcourt but also because of the numerous rivulets and creeks that encompassed the island town. The foregoing strategic location of the island in relation to other parts of the sea coast and with heavy concentration of oil installations around the area made Bonny the most attractive first staging post for troops' landing and commencement of battles in the Southern Sector (Momoh ed. 2000:97-8).

The decision to have a sea borne assault on Bonny led to the massive expansion of what was left of 6 Battalion created from the non–Easterners of 1 Battalion that was moved to Lagos through Kaduna after the July 29 counter coup. In addition, two battalions were also created from ex-servicemen, Native Authority policemen and volunteers. In order to carry out the Bonny operation the three battalions were made into a brigade under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Adekunle, the "Black Scorpion", known for his ruthlessness and daring exploits during the war. Colonel Adekunle was the first Commanding Officer of the remnant of 1 Battalion reconstituted into post-July 29, 1966 6 Battalion now transformed into three battalions. Three Commanding Officers were appointed for the newly constituted battalions which were Major G.S Jalo, 6 Battalion, Major A. Abubakar, 7 Battalion and Major Anthony Ochefu, 8 Battalion (Momoh 2000:98). Thus the nucleus of the 3 Marine Commando Division was laid preparatory to the sea borne assault on Bonny in order to open up a Southern Front in the Nigerian Civil War in an encirclement strategy by the Northern led landed/comprador bourgeois class forces. We have noted earlier how the creation of twelve states by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, the Head of the Federal Military Government cornered the support of the Eastern minorities and indeed their comprador classes on the side of *One Nigeria* against secession which partially turned the war into a truly Nigerian Civil War.

However, the rebel invasion of Mid-Western state on 9 August, 1967 was the great turning point that, as we have noted earlier, turned the war not only from "Police Action" to a "Total War" but made it a truly Nigerian Civil War. The troops for the sea assault on Bonny were the nucleus of the 3 Marine Commando Division, its historical

origin. That notwithstanding, the rebel invasion of the Mid-Western state was the second factor that made the Marine Commandos metamorphosed into a Division to take full charge of the coastal fronts. Within two weeks after the fall of Benin to the Federal Forces, Colonel Adekunle pulled some of his troops temporarily from Bonny to clear the riverine areas of the Mid-West state with another sea–borne landing (St. Jorre 1972: 162; Momoh 2000:100). Like 2 Division that was a child of the Mid-Western rebel invasion and benefited from the expansion of the war, 3 Marine Commando also benefited from the aftermath of that secessionist misadventure into the supposedly neutral Mid-Western state. The Biafran invasion of the Mid-West was a boomerang and a major turning point in the war. It had immense political, military, economic and psychological repercussions. It could be seen to have played a significant part in sealing the fate of Biafra (St. Jorre 1972:165). The invasion did not only throw just the moral support of the other landed/rentier/comprador classes behind those of the North against their Eastern counterparts but it concretised it with massive recruitment into the Federal Forces. In the words of St. Jorre (1972:172-3), "The invasion shook Nigerians out of their complacency. Massive recruiting of Yorubas and non-Ibo Mid-Westerners into the Federal Armies dates from this time". It equally expanded the Marine Commandos into a full Division.

5.4.1 The Bonny Sea-borne Assault-Beginning of Encirclement Strategy

We have stated earlier that Bonny strategically speaking was the most important town at the seacoast because it harbours heavy concentration of oil installations and very strategic point midway between neutral Mid-West and the Eastern sea board towns of Oron and Calabar (Momoh 2000:97-8). In terms of strategic importance Cronje (1972:30) said Bonny was not of much effect but in terms of political and psychological effects, it had some importance. The divergent views of the foregoing between both Momoh and Cronje would only be settled when one looks at the emerging importance of crude oil to the Nigerian economy, its landed/rentier/comprador classes and British oil interest in Nigeria. The strategic importance of Bonny to Nigeria and indeed British interest in terms of alternative security strategy cannot therefore be down-played more so since the oil embargo by the Arabs and the closure of the Suez Canal by Egypt after

the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 (Cronje 1972: 23-4). At the time, the biggest oil-producing company in Nigeria was Shell-BP and the British Government had a 49 percent share in BP and Bonny was the only oil exporting terminal in Nigeria. In the light of the foregoing, the assertion by Suzanne Cronje that Bonny was of a little strategic importance but only in political and psychological, whatever that means, cannot hold water in the face of available evidence.

In the face of the very serious negative impact of the Middle East situation and the closure of the Suez Canal on the British and other Western imperialist nations backing Israel, the strategic importance of Nigerian oil and its only oil terminal rank very high. On June 6, 1967 Egypt blocked the Suez Canal, and the following day Geoerge Brown, the British Foreign Secretary said that urgent steps were being taken to readjust the pattern of oil supplies to Britain. By the end of June, Britain began to feel the oil shortage. The loss resulting from the Middle East situation as a whole was about £10 million a month from July to September and doubled that level for the rest of the year (Cronje 1972:23-4 cited Commons Official Report 27 February 1967). Thus the British Government of Prime Minister Harold Wilson in 1967 regarded safeguarding Britain's oil supplies as a priority (Cronje 1972:26). On the side of Nigeria, Bonny was important for three strategic reasons:

i. To prevent Biafra from having access to export of crude oil;
ii. To prepare Nigeria to access export of crude oil; and
iii. For strategic military reasons.

In order to get the situation under control, Nigeria ordered all oil tankers going to Bonny to call first at Lagos for clearance. On the 21 June, 1967, the Nigerian Navy was reported to have fired warning shots at a Norwegian oil tanker that had failed to respond to signals. On the same day, Ojukwu issued a decree, ordering oil companies to pay royalties and their taxes to his government on the date they were due (Cronje 1972:26).

The imposition of a blockade on Bonny by Lagos to prevent oil exportation by the

secessionist Biafra became a key strategic calculation by the Lagos Government. The British Government was against the blockade that it was wrong in international law, whatever that means. This did not deter Lagos as the blockade remained effective. One of the major strategic reasons for the blockade, the Nigerian Federal attack and later the sea-borne assault on Bonny was the news that Shell-BP had promised to make a token payment of £250,000 to Biafra (Cronje 1972:27). The fact that Britain considered the blockade as against international law could be seen from the point of view that Britain was in dire need of oil, which was a pointer to the ambivalent position of the Shell-BP in making overtures to both Lagos and Enugu, especially in the token payment promised Biafra. The point of disagreement between the Nigerian Government and the British Government did not prevent Britain from supplying the warships that made the blockade possible; the Nigerian Navy was assisted by ex-Royal Navy Officers on contract with the Federal Government. Britain went on supplying the Nigerian Navy with warships in 1967 and 1968. Under such circumstances and in view of the pressure on Britain's oil supplies from the Middle East, it would not have been impossible to impress Nigerian Federal authorities with the fact that it might be to everybody's advantage if British oil tankers were allowed to pass (Cronje 1972:28).

In order to put in place a more effective control over the oil tap, the Nigerian Government therefore planned a sea–borne operation to take Bonny. According to Jega (in Momoh (ed.) 2000) a deliberate deceptive propaganda was put in place in order to divert the attention of the secessionist forces from the proposed objective of the Federal Forces. The deception was that the Federal troops were going to be landed in the riverine areas of Mid-West as part of the overall plan to capture the oil producing areas. We have stated that before the plan to take Bonny and open up a southern front materialised three battalions were constituted into a brigade under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Adekunle and three Commanding Officers were appointed. Since the entire operation was to be sea-borne, the Navy was given the task for the strategic movement of troops and materials to the assault area. As a result, the Naval Commander for the operations, Captain (NN) Nelson Soroh was

made the overall commander assisted by Commander Michael Adelanwa, up to the time the troops landed and occupied Bonny Island (Momoh 2000:98). The Bonny operation had eleven ships at its disposal to accomplish its mission. They were, one landing ship, *NNS Nigeria*, an all-purpose frigate; one Gun Boat *NNS Ogoja;* four seaward defence boats which were, *NNS Kaduna, Sapele, Benin* and *Bonny;* one survey Boat, *NNS Penelope;* the landing craft *NNS Lokoja;* and two Merchant Ships, *Herbert Macaulay* and *Bode Thomas* (Momoh 2000:98-9)

The Nigerian Army and Navy carried out many rehearsals for this very strategic operation individually and jointly. The lead battalion for the landing was 6 Battalion, which had Major G S Jalo as the Commanding Officer. It was issued the Operation Orders and provided with relevant maps and sketches showing the difficult swampy terrain with mangrooves. The Operational Orders of 6 Battalion provided for not only the landing and occupation of Bonny Island but also for its exploit up to Peterside and Wallis Point. Other Commanding Officers for the operation were Major A. Abubakar, 7 Battalion and Major Anthony Ochefu, 8 Battalion. The time for the rendezvous for the operation was in the night of 24 July, 1967 as the Nigerian Naval and Merchant Ships assembled for the operation. The lead battalion had as Company Commanders Lieutenant Mahmud Sani, Captain M. D. Jega and Lieutenant Zamani Lekwot for A, B and C companies respectively boarded *NNS Nigeria* while 7 and 8 Battalions boarded the two merchant ships. As a result of differing speed, the timing and order of movement were such that the ships would meet up on the high seas on 25 July, 1967 preparatory to the landing. With the foregoing achieved, the stage was set for the landing on the approach to Bonny in the high seas. The landing ship, *NNS Lokoja* commanded by Lieutenant Commander Hussaini Abdullahi, sailed to the position of *NNS Nigeria* for the historic disembarkation and assault landing of 6 Battalion. As preparatory for the landing assault was going on, the apex Seaward Defence Boat, *NNS Ogoja* commanded by Lieutenant Commander Akin Aduwo, sighted *NNS Ibadan*, and the Seaward Boat NNS Ogoja gave it a hot pursuit towards the creeks (Momoh 2000:99).

The plan for the landing was originally slated to take place under night cover to achieve element of surprise under darkness but the sudden change of weather and heavy rain that followed led to a decision to alter the plan. It was suddenly decided that under the cover of the heavy rains was what was more than needed to achieve a quick and surprise landing. Thus plans were put out to land the troops quickly and urgently. The *NNS Ogoja* now chasing Biafra's naval ship *NNS Ibadan* successfully blocked the approach from Port Harcourt, thus giving the landing craft, NNS Lokoja, the leeway to sail to the coast and gradually piloted to the landing area. The landing ship opened fire towards the direction of the enemy and the troops were landed on the 26 July, 1967 before the twilight. On the following day, by 1400 hours of 27 July, 1967 the whole Bonny Island had been taken and cleared. In the same way both the 7 and 8 Battalions were landed by the landing craft. During the period of the assault *NNS Ogoja* succeeded in knocking off and sinking *NNS Ibadan* with many of the rebels killed and some taken prisoners (Momoh 2000:99-100). John de St. Jorre said in pursuing his strategy of strangulation Gowon's forces captured Bonny Island on the Biafran coast in the first Sea-borne assault of the war. This was a blow for the Biafrans for a number of reasons. It gave the Nigerians a toe-hold on the coastline; enabled them to enforce the blockade more effectively especially against the oil for which Bonny was the only sea terminal. There were about 3 million barrels of crude oil in the tank farm at the time. It equally brought the Northern led Nigerian landed forces within thirty-five miles off Port Harcourt, Biafra's major port and important commercial city (St. Jorre 1972: 151-2).

The success of this strategic operation in the assault on the Bonny Island was partly a product of the cooperation of the local community. This cooperation of the local population continued throughout the war and so also in all the minority areas of the South Eastern state. It largely accounted for the success of 3 Marine Commando under Colonel Benjamin Adekunle-just as was the case with Murtala Mohammed in the Mid-West before the Asaba area. It was when 3 Marine Commando moved towards Ibo core area that the Division like 2 Division began to have its worst battle experiences as well as its heaviest casualties (Momoh 2000). Equally the success of the assault on Bonny Island was a product of British supplies of warships to Nigeria, which first of all

made the blockade possible. Secondly the Nigerian Navy was assisted by ex-Royal Navy Officers on contract to the Federal Government. Britain went on supplying the Nigerian Navy with warships in 1967 and 1968 (Cronje 1972 27-8). Sir David Haunt, the British High Commissioner to Nigeria at the time was said to have reminded the Federal side that "… the successful and expedient operation carried out by the Nigerian Navy leading to the capture of Bonny was a result of warships supplied by Britain" (Cronje 1972:30). The place of British imperialism and oil must have made that country, Nigeria's ex-colonial power to have aided the first sea-borne assault by the Northern led Nigerian Armed Forces landing in Bonny Island on the 26 July, 1967.

5.4.2 The Calabar Assault – Expanding the Encirclement Campaign

After the capture of Bonny Islands and its environment, the battalions were being organised. At this time 3 Marine Commando was witnessing rapid expansion with more men being recruited and more battalions being created. At this juncture, when 6, 31 and 33 Battalions were training for another sea-assault on Calabar, the Mid-West rebel invasion occurred on 9 August, 1967. It became expedient to move troops from the nascent 3 Marine Commando to assist the nascent 2 Division, a child of circumstance of the Mid-West invasion. So 6 Battalion was immediately moved to join a battalion that had already been deployed at Ore. The assemblage included also the elements of Federal Guards and remnants of 3 Battalion which came from 1 Division to form 2 Division (Momoh 2000: 100-1). The temporary pull back by Colonel Benjamin Adekunle with some of his troops from Bonny was to aid 2 Division clear the riverine areas of the Mid-West state with another sea-borne landing (St. Jorre 1972:162). Thus there was a lull on the preparatory plan for the sea-assault on Calabar as all attention became diverted to the Delta areas of Mid-West in collaboration with the Navy. By September 4, elements of 3 Marine had taken Urhonigbe and Owa Udima. It captured Patani, Bomadi and Burutu between 6 to 8 September, 1967 and Koko fell on 20 September. This streak of victories saw the fall of Sapele, Ajagbodudu, Warri, Effurun, Ughelli, Orerokpe on 22 September and then Utugba-Ogbe and Utagba-Uno fell on 28 September, 1967 (Oluleye 1985 cited in Momoh (ed) 2000:101). The effectiveness of the 3 Marine Commando in riverine Mid-West gave 2 Division the leverage to continue

its operations through northern and central Mid-West to Asaba.

With the completion of the Mid-West operations, 3 Marine Commando resumed planning for the sea-borne landing operation in Calabar. Heavy naval support aided the landing of Nigerian Federal Forces in Calabar on 18 October, 1967. As always characteristic of the minority areas, the people collaborated and cooperated with Federal troops (Momoh (ed) 2000:101). Concrete evidence of mercenaries killed by Federal Forces was first spotted in Calabar (Aliyu 1971:46 cited in Momoh 2000). In order to complete the encirclement of the secessionist enclave, the initial task of 12 Brigade was to capture Ugep which it did on 27 February, 1968 and it proceeded to take Afikpo the same day. It did hand over Afikpo to advancing troops of Sector 2 of 1 Division. The 14 Brigade which took Calabar also liberated the whole of Western Calabar. The 13 Brigade captured Ikot Okara and Calabar-Membe road and joined up for an amphibious assault on Itu which fell in March 1968 with Ikorofiong, Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Ifiayong and Etinam (Aliyu 1971:47 cited in Momoh (ed.) 2000).

The link up with 1 Division by 12 Commando Brigade with the capture of Afikpo and its handover to Sector 1, 1 Division made the complete encirclement of the rebel enclave possible. The encirclement strategy of the Nigerian Federal Forces was thus being carried out to its logical conclusion (Momoh ed. 2000:101). In this bottling up process, the Northern landed/ comprador bourgeois classes and indeed those of the West and Mid-West that coalesced into the formidable force against Biafran comprador rentier/landed bourgeois classes had encircled Biafra and hedged the enclave in from all directions. The fact that the Federal Forces of 3 Marine Commando Division on capturing Ikot Ekpene, the closest point to Aba and Ummahia but diverted to Ikot Abasi (then mainland Opobo) and then went through the very difficult Imo River delta to land at Ogoni was a proof of the oil connection. In order to disconnect Biafra from the oil producing areas, and to take advantage of the support of the minority ethnic groups in the East or Biafra was of strategic importance to Nigeria.

5.5 Assault Crossing on Oron and the March to Port Harcourt

The noose of the encirclement campaign was tightening against the secessionist forces. The 13 Marine Commando Brigade joined up for an amphibious assault on Itu, which was liberated by March 1968. The streak of victories saw the fall of Ikorofiong, Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Ifiayong and Etinam (Aliyu 1971: 47 cited in Momoh (ed.) 2001:101). On 19 March 1968, a combined amphibious assault by 17 and 18 Commando Brigades took Oron a distance of 15 nautical miles from Calabar. In pursuance of their objectives Orun, Ebunu, Okobo and Eket also fell to the Federal Forces during this operation. The rapid advance by both 16 and 17 Commando Brigades between March and April towards Opobo (Ikot Abasi) led to its capture on 29 March, 1968 (Aliyu 1971 cited in Momoh (ed.) 2000). The two amphibious landings from Calabar at Itu and Oron at the western side of what was then South Eastern state by the 3 Marine Commando Brigades continued the tightening of the encirclement strategy of the coalesced forces of the Nigerian landed/rentier forces on Biafra. The very commendable amphibious operation by the 3 Marine Commando Division from Bonny to Calabar, Oron and Itu and the last one before the capture of Port Harcourt, the crossing into Ogoni land were the products of the changed phase and character of the Nigerian Civil War since the rebel incursion into the Mid-West 9 August 1967. It was equally to get grips of the oil producing areas of the minority Eastern ethnic groups.

The partial resolution of the *national question* by the creation of 12 states by Yakubu Gowon on May 27, 1967 rallied the minorities of the East made up of the then Rivers and Cross River states behind the Federal efforts hence the unalloyed support and cooperation by the minorities through the Bonny operation and now throughout the South Eastern state. According to John de St. Jorre, the 3 Marine Division was an amorphous mixture of old and new soldiers from practically every tribe (sic) in the Federation but with a large contingent of Yoruba (St. Jorre 1977:277). He however failed to point out the fact that the minorities played major roles as soldiers, especially with recruitments and training at the war fronts. The resounding achievements of 3 Marine Commando Division in the very difficult terrains of the Cross River and Niger Delta would have been impossible or near impossibility to achieve. This could only be

appreciated by the pervasive acknowledgements by the Army publication on the Nigerian Civil-War by the positive role played by the minorities from Mid-West through Cross River to Rivers states on the side of the Federal Forces (Momoh (ed.) 2000). The double roles played by the minorities as guides to the advancing Federal Forces and as combatants saw the meteoric achievements of the initial stage of 2 Division and indeed the new positive results of 3 Marine Commando Division in the difficult terrains of the Niger and Cross River Deltas. Thus the foot holds across the Cross River at Oron and Itu paved the way for the rapid advance through western part of South Eastern state and a push towards Port Harcourt.

5.5.1 The Coastline Operations

The rapid and meteoric movement by the regular units of 3 Marine Commando Division while progressing a pace in the minority areas of the south, Major Isaac Adaka Boro an ex-rebel of the Niger Delta rebellion of 1966 after the January coup was exploiting the riverine areas of Calabar towards the Nigerian-Cameroon border. Major Boro was recruited into the 3 Marine Commando Division by Colonel Benjamin Adekunle in recognition of his potentials to operate in the very difficult terrain of the coastline. In this respect, therefore, Isaac Boro's emergence as a field commissioned Major by Colonel Benjamin Adekunle witnessed the rapid progression of Federal Forces along the coastal frontline of the Eastern minorities' areas. Boro and his army called 'sea school boys' took most of the coastal settlements one after the other starting from Calabar at the Nigerian-Cameroon border towards the Rivers state. As Boro was combing the coastal front along Imo River area south of Opobo (Ikot Abasi) capturing all towns and hamlets south of Opobo, he technically enhanced further successes of 3 Marine Commando's regular units. Thus the ground was prepared for the liberation of Opobo, Andoni, Obodo, Opolonn, Dianga, Queens Town, Ebuguna and many other areas around the eastern parts of the tributaries of the Niger by both 16 and 17 Commando Brigades (Aliyu 1971 cited in Momoh (ed.) 2000:102). Major Boro played his role creditably well and was undoubtedly instrumental to the lightening successes of 3 Marine Commando Division between Calabar and Port Harcourt.. However, he met his death at Okrika Waterside from a rebel sniper bullet as it was reported.

5.5.2 3 Marine Commando's Reverses Prior to the Fall of Port Harcourt.

Most of the initial operations of the 3 Marine Commado Division were quite successful except for the reverse it suffered at Bonny from October 1967 to January 1968. The Division equally faced other crises at Onne, Arochukwu, Esukpin and Aletu. These disasters were, however, no match for what it went through in its advance towards Ibo heartland after the fall of Port-Harcourt on 19 May, 1968. It however, suffices to say that the Division became a household word with its liberation of Mid-West, Delta areas and the southern coastal belt and the capture of Port Harcourt. While the other brigades were on the move in parts of South Eastern state, Bonny became threatened as early as October 1967. By December, the crisis was getting out of hand as 15 Brigade that was stationed in the Island had been pushed to about 300-400 yards to the beach. The Division was on the verge of loosing Bonny Island and the estruary (Oluleye 1985 cited by Momoh (ed.) 2000: 102-3). Cronje (1972:30) said that the fighting for Bonny was to continue, off and on, for many months, we have disputed earlier the statement by Suzanne Cronje that Bonny was of little strategic importance, that its possession did not change the actual oil situation. However, she accepted the fact that the loss of Bonny by Biafra had important political and psychological effects (Cronje 1972).

The counter attacks by Biafra to retake Bonny were a pointer to the fact of the strategic importance of this island town to both Biafra and Nigeria. Cronje (1972) said why the possession of Bonny was of strategic importance was because under the blockade, its control by Biafra did not afford the brake away state neither the opportunity to produce nor export crude oil. Equally Biafra's control of the oil fields, pipelines and oil installations did not make Nigeria's possession of Bonny have access to oil. However, Nigeria's occupation of Bonny Islands did affect Biafra's bargaining strength. Despite the blockade and the non-exportation of crude oil St. Jorre (1972, 1977:138) saw oil as very strategic and the struggles by Nigeria and Biafra over the lucrative revenues from crude oil. The two main protagonists used every trick in the game resulting in the Biafra's arrest and detention of Shell's Chief Executive because of the recalcitrance of Shell-BP to pay oil revenue that fell due for payment in July 1967. At issue were the oil

revenues for the first half of 1967, estimated at roughly £7 million and due to be paid to the Federal Government in late July. The company Shell-BP was by far the largest in operation in Nigeria and was the only company that was immediately involved in this royalties' payment politics. The French company SAFRAP was also producing in Biafra but its payments was not due until later in the year. The American Gulf Oil Company was producing exclusively in the Mid-West. Biafra's main concern was foreign exchange and the degree-indefinable but important of international recognition that payment of the royalties would bring. One of the accepted attributes of sovereignty is the ability to collect revenue and taxes. The Federal government's aim was to deny Biafrans both the revenue in royalties and the implied recognition its payment to Biafra would bring (St. Jorre 1972: 138-9)

In the view of John de St. Jorre other considerations, however, presented themselves. One of these was that virtually all the Mid-West's oil, a third but a growing proportion of total production, was shipped out through the Bonny terminal in the East via the Trans-Niger pipeline. The second was that the Federation's only oil refinery, near Port Harcourt, was also under Biafran control. In this respect, therefore, any sanction imposed by the Nigerian government against Biafra was bound to boomerang on Lagos. This helps to explain why oil shipments were exempted from the general blockade of Biafra during the month of June while Shell-BP was trying to work its way out of the very ugly situation it found itself (St. Jorre 1972:139). The oil companies' principal interest was to keep the oil flowing, protect their multi-million-pound installations, pay their dues and offend neither side. The British Government became prominent in the picture because, rightly or wrongly, both sides saw her as the power behind Shell-BP. Indeed, with its forty-nine percent shareholding in British Petroleum (BP), the Government could hardly not be involved. Britain had a strategic interest in Nigeria's excellent, almost sulphur free oil which then met ten percent of her needs. The closure of the Suez Canal abruptly as a result of the Six-Day War in the Middle East and at the height of the crisis, this increased significantly the importance of the Nigerian source (St. Jorre 1972).

However, a compromise was arrived at out of a meeting which took place in New York close to the end of June 1967. The Biafrans put forward a suggestion that 57.5 percent of the revenues deriving from operations in the East should be paid to the Biafran Government by Ojukwu's deadline of 1st July. The rest should fall into a suspense account pending a political settlement. The companies agreed but the Nigerian Government flatly rejected it. Lagos went further to state that any attempt by companies to deny the Federal Government its normal revenues would be countered with an extension of the blockade to the tankers and the terminal at Bonny. The industry, the Nigerian government warned, would be grinded to a halt. With a promise by Shell-B.P to pay £250,000 as a token to Biafra, the Federal Government implemented its threat and cracked a blockade down on the tankers on 2nd July 1967, thus completing the process begun a month before of sealing off Biafra's coastline. This action brought about a sudden flurry of diplomatic activity. Diverse pressures on Shell-BP mounted to pay less, to pay more or, to pay nothing at all. Biafrans were determined to get the full £7 million pounds though, even if their argument was accepted of a *de facto* sovereignty, the maximum they could claim as to the revenues due to them since the breakaway of Biafra was a little over £1 million pounds. However, fighting broke out on 6 July, 1967 and on 25th July, 1967, Bonny and its oil terminal were captured by a Federal sea-borne assault (St. Jorre 1972: 140-1). The foregoing details were re-enacted to give a glimpse of the strategic importance of Bonny to the Federal Government, the Biafran Government, the oil companies and the British Government. The import of Biafra's attempts to retake Bonny, therefore, as its capture by Federal Forces weakened her strategically can only be understood in its dynamics.

The interest of all the parties could only be properly understood in the oil politics. The struggles and the ding-dung battles in the oil producing areas of the East between the Federal landed classes and their Eastern counterparts was the consummation of the intra-class struggles on both sides working with imperialist interests. This was why the Nigerian Civil War was not a progressive war. We shall come to the details of this in Chapter 6 of this dissertation. However, the rebels counter offensive to retake Bonny is of importance here. The reverses suffered by 15 Commando Brigade was due to

decline in logistics provided its 7 Battalion holding Bonny and the problem of command as the battalion lost its new Commanding Officer, Major Onifade, immediately he was in to take over the command. Also the MIG fighters sent from Calabar to help the Nigerian Forces ended up bombing the Brigade Headquarters. Communication equipment was destroyed thus severing the communication line between the brigade and the Divisional Headquarters. However, the fact that the brigade officers were out with Lieutenant Colonel James Oluleye, the visiting General Staff Officer Grade One (GSO1) who was in charge of operations at the Army Headquarters averted a looming disaster. The intervention by Army Headquarters made it possible for a company of Federal Guards to be sent to the island in January 1968 and the timely visit by the GSO1 operations Army Headquarters that helped to restore Federal control over Bonny. From then on Bonny was held firmly by Federal Forces and the rebel's grim determination to open up the channel which was an important supply route to them ceased (Momoh (ed) 2000: 103).

After recording some successes, 15 Commando Brigade, later ran into ambush at Onne but not until it had captured Dawse Island, James Town, Abiaka and Tomshot Point. The Onne disaster came as a result of the failure of the GOC to heed the warning of Army Headquarters on his plan to capture Port Harcourt through Onne which had been mined according to intelligence sources (Aliyu 1971 cited in Momoh (ed.) 2000). As soon as 15 Brigade passed Dawse Island, the rebels that were dug in at the island sprang surprise attack and cut the brigade off in a blockade and a fierce battle ensued. The brigade fought back to repel the attack but because of failure to get replenishments as a result of the blockade of the Dawse Island by the rebels, thus leading to unmitigated disaster on 3 April, 1968. The brigade was routed leading to the loss of two field guns and six mortars. Many of the soldiers lost their lives and the survivors were mainly Ijaws who could swim and who were familiar with the terrain (Momoh (ed.) 2000:103). The Onne disaster was reproduced at Arochukwu barely four days later when a brigade made up of young and inexperienced soldiers under the command of Major Ignatius Obeya was ordered by the GOC to take Arochukwu. As soon as the brigade crossed, the rebels pounced on them and the brigade was

destroyed although its commander managed to escape. The troops that were captured by the rebel forces and their weapons were paraded by the rebels before the international press which the Nigerian Army Headquarters in Lagos had to issue a denial (Oluleye 1985:122).

5.5.3 The Battle for and the Capture of Port Harcourt

The first abortive attempt to move on Port Harcourt was the attempted by 15 Commando Brigade to capture Onne. On 2 April, 1968, the Federal Forces successfully slipped through the Bonny channel without detection by the Biafran Forces and landed a brigade at Onne waterside. The Biafran 52 Brigade with sparse defence of the area had to mobilise in conjunction with their Navy and Airforce all they could muster from Port Harcourt. A pitched battle ensued all day with both sides weakened which gave a sign of a stalemate. It was at this stage that a mercenary was said to have turned up with a company of men and a locally made armoured car and offered to reverse the situation. The mercenary by name George with his force fought so well that at the end of a four–hour battle, Nigerian defences began to give way. This resulted in the Onne disaster one of the reverses of the 3 Marine Commando Division which we mentioned earlier. The 3 April rout of the Federal Forces at Onne resulted in the abandonment of large quantity of stores at the waterside where 15 Commando Brigade landed. In the battle that raged to reverse the situation, mercenary George was killed. The Nigerian brigade was almost totally destroyed. This feat by the Biafrans in clearing Onne of the Federal Forces foiled the Federals first attempt to go through this axis to take Port Harcourt within days if Onne was successfully held (Madiebo 1980: 244-5; Momoh (ed) 2000). Despite the fact that the tremendous successes recorded by the 3 Marine Commando Division were mared by some major reverses which includes the Onne disaster, the Division pressed on from Opobo front on its next objective, the capture of Port Harcourt.

In the second push towards Port Harcourt, the Federal Forces had an amphibious operation across the Imo River in two places and succeeded in landing troops from Opobo (Ikot Abasi) at Kono and Obete further north (Madiebo 1980:246). The emerging

scenario in these areas or approaches to Port Harcourt was a dug-in-war between the forces of both sides. The crossing from Opobo to Ogoni land was softened by Major Boro's Army of "sea school boys" in their operations along the coastline, the numerous creeks, rivulets and the mangrove swamps, very difficult terrains down from old Calabar Division. The softening of the coastline was made possible principally by the Eastern minorities who were very familiar with their difficult terrain. This spared the Nigerian Forces, especially its Northern elements the agonies of these very difficult terrains. We have noted earlier that one of the major factors that mobilised the ethnic minorities in the East and their bourgeoisie behind the Northern landed/comprador bourgeois classes was Gowon's political masterstroke of 12 state's creation in which the ethnic minorities benefited. In the word of Ademoyega (1981) this masterstroke took the wind off the declaration of secession later the same day states were created by Gowon. The very sweet victories of the 3 Marine Commando Division along the Eastern minority areas and along the coastline which is their major terrain right from Calabar to Port Harcourt were the fruits.

Momoh (ed) (2000: 104) confirmed the foregoing as having aided the much successes of the 3 Marine Commando Division. The indications were loud and clear that throughout most of the Southern operations in the minority areas, the story was that of cooperation and support. As a result 3 Marine Commando Division recruited thousands of the people of the minority areas into the Army and formed a large proportion of its later force. The Federal Forces encirclement strategy of capturing Enugu, closing all Biafran outlets to the outside world and taking of the oil producing areas (Momoh (ed.) 2000:122) materialised more easily because of the cooperations of the ethnic minorities right from the Mid-West to those of the East. The crossing from Opobo (Ikot Abasi) into Ogoniland at Kono and Obete by the Federal Forces in the battle towards the capturing of Port Harcourt, the Rivers state capital succeeded because the minorities were fighting for their vital interest or self determination or the resolution of the *national question*. Their comprador classes fell behind the Northern landed aristocratic class forces because new centers for the sharing of political spoils had been carved out for them with the advent of state creation by Gowon in which two states, Cross River and

Rivers states were brought into being for the Eastern minorities. For the masses, however, it was an issue of self-determination, the partial resolution of the *minority question* from the oppressive relations of the erstwhile regional overlords in the East and North. This informed the unalloyed cooperation of the Eastern minorities with the Northern landed aristocratic class forces against the secessionist Biafran comprador bourgeois forces.

The landing of the Nigerian Forces at Kono and Obete in Ogoniland from Opobo across Imo River was a major success by 3 Marine Commando Division in its battle for Port Harcourt. According to Madiebo (1980:246) the following morning, the Nigerian Forces had taken Buan three miles from Kono and the counter attack by the successionist forces only inflicted heavy casualties but was not strong enough to dislodge the 3 Marine elements. However, a two pronged counter attack on Obete from Okpantu and Sime Luchen succeeded in pushing Nigerian Forces out of Obete back across the river. This was reversed by the Federal Forces with a combined air and ground assault which success led to advance by the Nigeria Forces on Okpantu. After fierce fighting, Federal Forces edged their way into Kwawa in south and Okpantu in the north of Obete. On the fifth day after crossing the Imo River into Ogoniland of the newly created River state, armoured vehicles and heavy artillery guns were crossed by Federal Forces and the battle situation changed drastically against the Biafran Forces. Equally the disparity in strength widened in favour of the Nigerian Forces of 3 Marine Commando Division. Thus Biafran chances of success further diminished when the Federals fielded their armoured vehicles, artillery and mortars to preserve its infantry. The situation thus deteriorated slowly until the Federal Forces of 3 Marine Commando occupied Kani Babbe in Ogoni south and Maribu in the north. It was this bad situation that led to the change of command by the Biafrans in this sector and Major Joe Achuzia took over command of Port Harcourt war zone from Lieutenant Colonel Ogbugo Kalu (Madiebo 1980:247; Achuzia 1993; 174).

The deterioration of the Biafran situation towards the Port Harcourt objective of the 3 Marine Commando Division mounted. Achuzia properly briefed on the worsening

situation set out immediately onto the southern axis where the Federal Forces were fighting to take Wiyakara. The struggle by the Biafran Forces to curtail the opposing 3 Marine Commando after a bitter fight could not prevent them from getting into the town before nightfall. From Wiyakana, Achuzia went to the northern axis and while he was there Maribu fell. Thus the rebel forces were losing grounds fast and in the words of Madiebo (1980:248) Achuzia came back that night a very tired, frustrated and disgusted man. However, plans were put up for an operation with two fresh battalions made up of a battalion from 11 Biafran Division from Onitsha Sector and the second one formed locally with militiamen. The battle plan was for the 11 Division Battalion to move on the southern axis through Bori and Zakpong to clear Kani Babbe at the rear of the Federal Forces. On the successful completion of that task, the battalion while ignoring the 3 Marine elements at Wiyakara, but ensuring the safety of their rear, would move fast to retake Kono waterside, thus cutting the Federal line of communications in the south.

In order to ensure a successful operation on Kono, the Biafran Forces already on the ground were expected to attack Wiyakara using the Bori road to ensure that the rebel forces moving to Kono were not taken from the rear by the Commando elements at Wiyakara. On the nortern axis, the militia battalion was expected to move through Umuaba to the areas of Banori and Ka Lori and from there clear Maribu and Okpantu and then move back to Obete waterside. The rebel forces already on the ground at Umuabayi were expected to assist in the clearing of Maribu. These plans by the Biafran Army Chief Madiebo, meant to push Federal Forces back across Imo River were not adhered to according to the Chief himself by Achuzia the Zonal Commander. On the following day, the day of the operation, the first report was that the Federal Commando Forces were pushing to Azuago in the north and Notem in the south. Before the Biafran Forces could be reorganised to contain the thrust of the Commando elements, Bori in the south and Umuabayi in the north fell to Federal Forces (Madiebo 1980:248-9)
In desperation, the Biafran Army Commander Madiebo withdrew 14 Biafran Battalion from its location at Agbani and put it on the northern axis. In order to possibly curtail the Federal advances in the south, the Bomu oil fields were set ablaze. These plans

worked well for some days but thereafter, the elements of 3 Marine Commando broke through the south at Bori and began to advance towards Yehe. In the north after several days of fighting, Federal Forces broke through at Umuabayi and moved up to Obiakpu, while in the north they had reached Deyor Chara. Thus the threat on Port Harcourt was now real. Equally, the loss of Afam Power House which supplied electricity to most of Biafra was almost a certainty. Of importance also was the oil refinery at Okrika/Elesa Eleme which supplied all fuel required for fighting the war, was now ten miles away from the frontline (Madiebo 1980:250-1). In the midst of the clear certainty on the threats on Port Harcourt, some heads of government departments and corporations were briefed on the situation. The Biafran Army Chief thus advised that while trying to contain the Federal Forces hoping to push them back, all essential stores and equipment in Port Harcourt, required for the continuation of the war should be evacuated at once. In order to drive the point home, he told them how much Biafra had already lost in such places as Enugu, Calabar and Onitsha. They all agreed on the foregoing purpose but failed to implement it because they were afraid of possible hostile public reaction (Madiebo 1980: 151). The order to evacuate by the Biafran Army Chief was countered by another order by Achuzia that he was instructed by the Biafran Head of State not to evacuate Port Harcourt (Achuzia 1993:200-1; Madiebo 1980:251).

The pressure from the Nigerian Forces mounted and the push towards their objective continued leading to the loss of Wakama in the south. This forced Madiebo to move his tactical headquarters from Okrika to Umuchitta on the Port Harcourt Aba main road. On the same day, Federal Forces took Obunku to the north. The increasing deteriorating situation forced the Biafran Army Chief on information that Nigerian troops were already moving on their right flank along a road that would bring them to Okoloma and to avoid possible falling into Federal hands, he had to change direction to a safe point back to Abiama. Shortly after Afam fell and Colonel Obiora who decided to stay was not seen or heard of again (Madiebo 1980: 252; Achuzia 1993:191). The 3 Marine Commando under the able command of Colonel Benjamin Adekunle mounted pressures on its next key objective of Port Harcourt. This saw the fall of Okrika, Elesa Eleme and Afam power station after Kwali had been captured. The battle for Afam was a fierce one

leading to its capture and loss several times which finally fell to the Federal Forces on 30 May, 1968. With the tightening of the noose of encirclement on the Rivers state capital, smaller towns around Port Harcourt fell to the Commando Division between 13 to 18 May, 1968. Port Harcourt fell on 19 May, 1968 to the Nigerian Forces just after Obigbo had been taken.

The fall of Okrika and Elesa Eleme resulted in the Biafran loss of the Oil Refinery there and it completely exposed Port Harcourt prior to its fall to Federal Forces. After the fall of Port Harcourt, Igrita to the north west of the city, some fifteen kilometers away fell much later. The loss of Port Harcourt was one of the biggest set backs of the war for Biafra. Apart from its adverse effects on Biafra regarding the *Kampala Peace Talks,* it equally had its administrative and military disaster on the secessionist Biafra. With its loss both the Biafran Navy and Airforce ceased to be operational for quite sometime. The Biafran militia ceased to be effective. The science group lost the bulk of their stores and equipment so vital for the production of their war products which had kept the Biafran War efforts going. The loss of the refinery and most of the oil wells sealed the fate of Biafran fuel needs. The loss of Afam as the Federals pressed for Port Harcourt, there was to be no more electricity for Biafra. This tells why Afam was captured and lost severally before it finally rested with the Commandos on 30 May, 1968. The taking of Port Harcourt was equally critical for Biafra because it finally sealed of what remained of the rebel territory's air linkage with the outside world and communication required to continue the war could not come in for several days before Uli Airport was commissioned (Madiebo 1980:255). Alexander A. Madiebo said that the most revealing thing captured by the Biafran troops during the battle for Port Harcourt was operational orders captured at Onne. Those orders stated very clearly that the aim of the Nigeria-Biafra war was purely to capture the entire oil industry in Biafra and place it under Lagos (Madiebo 1980:255). Whether exaggerated or not, the place of the oil industry in the Nigeria-Biafra war was not in doubt, especially in a rentier political economy with its landed/rentier bourgeois classes. We shall further stress the foregoing in our further analysis.

5.5.4 Importance of Oil, Port Harcourt and Rebel Resistance

The fall of Port Harcourt and its environs was actually a big blow to Biafra in terms of her fuel needs to prosecute the war. Biafra's fuel directorate took complete control of the supply and issue of petrol and diesel on quota basis. The distributive system finally led to fuel crisis which nearly halted the Biafran War efforts until the secret of petroleum refining became generally known, thus leading to the reduction in the difficulty over fuel acquisition as each unit freely embarked on building its own refinery. Before the act of refining became a general knowledge, certain operational movements of troops had to be abandoned because of shortage of fuel (Achuzia 1993:178). For the British defence outfits, the importance of crude oil was realised precisely in 1899 and by 1900, the first sea Lord, Admiral Fisher, was convinced and determined that oil must be found promptly for the Birtish Navy (Turner 1978:23). Lord Curzon, a member of the British War Cabinet said at the close of World War I that: "The Allies floated to victory on the wave of oil. An oil shortage had been averted by the narrowest of margins and only by the immense contribution of the American Petroleum Industry" (Jacoby 1974:24). The reliance of modern war machines on hydrocarbon cannot be down-played. It tells of the strategic importance of oil which the city of Port Harcourt and its environs entailed for Biafra during the war. The fall of Port Harcourt into the hands of 3 Marine Commando Division and being the headquarters of most of the Eastern operations of the oil industry was a very devastating loss to Biafra and a strategic gain to Nigeria of very immense proportion. The immense crisis that the fall of Port Harcourt had on Biafra's War efforts with loss of the refinery and most of the oil wells was of strategic damage to the Biafran War efforts.

On the side of the Federal Forces, the capture of Port Harcourt and the oil industry from the grips of the secessionist Biafra was of paramount strategic importance. It placed the entire oil industry in Federal hands and it satisfied the yearnings of the Nigerian landed/rentier comprador classes in general and that of the Rivers state in particular. The strategic linkage between oil and the war as the pre-war emerging dominant source of Federal revenue base had been realised with the fall of Port Harcourt and the freeing of the crude oil producing areas of the East from the hands of the rebel forces.

Thus May 19, 1968 the day Port Harcourt fell to the Federal Forces was quite an important day for Nigeria and the clearing of Port Harcourt environs of rebel forces added to this strategic importance, especially, in Federal control of most of the oil fields in the East outside Uwaza oil fields across Imo River from Chokocho. This Federal victory was also of importance to Shell-BP whose Eastern operational Headquarters had been in Port Harcourt right from the inception of the Petroleum Industry in Nigeria. Despite the fact that Bonny fell to forces of Nigeria on July 25, 1967 and despite the fact that the taking of that very strategic outpost ensured Nigeria the complete seal over the oil taps, the taking of Port Harcourt completed the process of Nigeria's control over all crude oil producing areas of the East. As Alexander A. Madiebo rightly pointed out, the loss of Port Harcourt was one of the biggest blows or setbacks of the war for Biafra, especially, the crude oil as a bargaining weapon. The fact that the capture of Bonny earlier did keep the seal on the oil taps to prevent fuel flows from the East, the fact remains, that the East was producing about two-thirds of Nigeria's oil (Cronje 1972:24). Thus Shell-BP the largest crude oil producer in Nigeria at the time was tempted to promise to make a token payment of £250,000 to Biafra before the Federal assault on Bonny (Cronje 1972:27). Now the capture of Port Harcourt had finally sealed off any advantages that oil conferred on Biafra, since crude oil production is mainly within the Port Harcourt or Rivers state environment.

We have noted earlier that the biggest oil-producing company in Nigeria at the time was Shell-BP, and the British had a 49 per cent share in B.P-British Petroleum. Before the war Britain had imported 10 per cent of her oil needs from Nigeria and with the Arab-Isreali War of 1967, the closure of the Suez Canal by Egypt affected adversely Britain's desperate attempts to achieve a balance of payment surplus (Cronje 1972:23,145). Until May 1968 when Port Harcourt fell to the Federal Forces, all on-shore production was at a standstill. However, the fall of Port Harcourt heralded two important developments; the oil companies-in particular, Shell-B.P-could return and Biafra was cut off from easy communication with the outside world (Cronje 1972:143-4). Thus Cronje (1972:144) said:

> Even before the fall of Port Harcourt preparations for the return of Shell-B.P had gone ahead. In March 1968, Shell-B.P announced plans for the construction of a £17 million pipeline and terminal some twelve miles off the mouth of the River Forcados in the Mid-West; the scheme was an old one, but work was accelerated to prevent any future incident from halting Nigeria's entire production, as the blockade of Bonny had in 1967. If there had been a second terminal then, the blockade of Bonny could not have halted the flow of oil from the Mid-West.

On the eve of the Kampala Peace Talks in 1968, Nigeria's Foreign Affairs Commissioner, Dr. Okoi Arikpo told a group of journalists in London that the Federal Military Government had taken steps to ensure that our troops in the field are given instructions to be very cautious with the oil installations in the Rivers state, particularly around Port-Harcourt. The Federal Military Government had already decided that as soon as Port Harcourt is liberated Shell Company and other companies will be authorised to begin necessary arrangements to ensure that oil begins to flow again (Arikpo April 1968 cited by Cronje 1972: 144)

Port Harcourt fell on May 19, 1968 and Shell-B.P technicians were back in the area in July to find large-scale damage. The flow of oil was restarted in October, only three months after the company's return and in January 1969 the company was producing 200,000 barrels per day. Company spokesmen confidently predicted that Shell-B.P's pre-war production of 500,000 barrels per day would be substantially exceeded by the end of the year, when Nigeria's total production was expected to reach 1,000,000 barrels per day (Crone 1972:144). The fall of Port Harcourt and the security corridor carved around it made the Federal Government and its landed/rentier/comprador classes hopeful and anxious to make up for some of the loses they had sustained as a result of the war. Oil revenues had amounted to some £30 million in the year ended 31 March, 1967. Since then the Federal Governments incomes from this source have been only a fraction of what it might have been, had oil production expanded as expected. At a production level of one million barrels per day, Nigeria stood to gain in revenue about $80 million a year. In terms of foreign exchange earnings, the effects would, of course, be immensely greater, and the war had been a heavy drain on both the Federal budget and the Nigerian foreign currency reserves (Financial Times

London 22 April 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:145). The resistances of the rebels in the southern front were predicated, therefore, on the strategic nature of crude oil to Biafra and Nigeria and indeed making it impossible for Nigeria to realise the benefits from the Eastern side which controlled some two-thirds of Nigeria's pre-war production. We shall expatiate on this later.

5.6 Pressures on Ibo Heartland and Counter Offensive against 3 Marine Commando

By July 1968 the Federal Forces had moved up northwards from the south quite considerably after the fall of Port Harcourt in May. It resulted in the 3 Marine Commando's control of the southern bank of the Imo River and towns such as Obigbo, Chokocho, and Ozuzu-Obufo. On the main Port Harcourt-Owerri road, the Federal Forces had pushed the Biafran Army up to Umuakpu after Omanelu, 22 miles south of Owerri. At the same time, the 3 Marine Division elements were occupying Ebocha along Ahoada-Oguta road (Madiebo 190:267). These pressures and threats on Ibo heartland from the south necessitated a diversionary plan by Biafra to lure the Federal Forces into different battles at Onitsha, across the Niger into Mid-West and along Ikot Ekpene axis. In order to reorganise for this three pronged offensive, Nwawo was posted to 13, Eze to 12 and Amadi to 11 Biafran Divisions. Amadi was ordered to attack Onitsha after he had completed the reorganisation of his Division. Eze was ordered to clear Ikot-Ekpene as soon as possible (Madiebo 1980:257). After his reorganisation of the 11 Division, Amadi finally attacked Onitsha with his 54 Brigade under the command of Major Ohanehi. The operation was not a successful one in so far as it failed to clear Onitsha, but equally it was far from being a total failure. While the battle at Onitsha was going on, the 11 Division also dispatched special force through Atani across the Niger to Mid-Western Nigeria to re-occupy places left unsecured by Federal Second Division in the Division's concentration of forces to capture Onitsha. As a result of Federal counter attacks in the Biafran penetration of the Asaba-Ogwashukwu area of Mid-West, Biafran Forces fell back behind the Asse River natural defensive line (Madiebo 1980:259).

For the 12 Biafran Division, the plans of the Divisional Commander or what he calls "confidence" operation was to conduct on permission some limited offensive prior to the main attempt on Ikot-Ekpene. His aim was to lure the Nigerian Forces out of Ikot-Ekpene to defend those areas that would be attacked initially and equally to try to capture more ammunition and weapons to enable him make much impact on Ikot-Ekpene in the major planned attack by Colonel Eze's 12 Division. The first diversionary operation was of a battalion strength designed to take all Federal held towns and villages across Imo River south of Aba. The seeming focus of this operation would appear to threaten Port Harcourt so as to force Federal troops to send in reinforcement from somewhere. A Biafran special task force battalion was able to cross into Umuabayi from Akwete and was able to capture the town (Madiebo 1980:260). At the capture of Umuabayi a lot of stores were taken which included 100,000 rounds of ammunition, 50 bicycles, 3 battery charging machines, 4 wireless sets, 2 typewriters, 300 rounds of 105mm artillery shells, 2 anti-aircraft guns and ammunitions, a few other weapons and fairly large quantities of food and clothing. After some major of success and with Federal counter attack on Umuabayi and with some resistance leading to the destruction of two armoured vehicles, the Biafran battalion withdrew back across Imo River to Akwete after ten days of operation, though proud but very worn out (Madiebo 1980:260-1)

As the diversionary operation on Umuabayi was going on, Biafra's 61 Brigade of its 12 Division was undertaking a second diversionary operation aimed at pushing Federal Forces at Nkwok back towards Opobo and also to threaten to take Opobo if possible. The brigade plan was to advance from Azumini to clear Nkwok and to move a force to clear Obiakpa and straddle Aba-Opobo main road. Another force was to move northwards to attack Ntak-Afa, Ikot Okoro and other Federal positions in the area in order to clear them from the side of the Kwa Ibo River which Biafran Forces were occupying and to probe down to Etinam. The third and main force was to attack Ekefe-Mbioso and Ibesit and after clearing those areas to move and burst out at mile 18 on the Opobo road. The initial Biafran moves were quite successful and encouraging. Such objectives like Ikot Okoro and a few other villages in the north were cleared and

Biafran troops were within a mile of Obiakpa junction. The Biafran Forces going southwards to Opobo cleared several villages on their way including Ibesit. This operation lured the Federal Nigerian Forces from Ikot-Ekpene which met the strategic objective of the Biafran Forces in the area. Thus both Biafran 58 and 62 Brigades became geared for the Ikot-Ekpene diversionary offensive to lure and take the heat off the Nigerian Federal Forces from the persistent pressure on the Ibo heartland from the southern fronts of the 3 Marine Commando. The Ikot-Ekpene diversionary operation progressed well and very fast too, leading to its recapture by the Biafran Forces (Madiebo 1980:162-3; Momoh (ed.) 2000). However, after reorganisation, the Federal Nigerian Forces of 3 Marine Commando launched a massive counter offensive with very heavy artillery and air support which forced the Biafrans to withdraw to their former defences. The successes or the relatively good results achieved both at Onitsha and Ikot-Ekpene, through these special "confidence operations" gave the Biafran Army another lease of life at a very crucial stage of dwindling moral (Madiebo 1980:265).

5.6.1 3 Marine Commando Thrust into Ibo Heartland Southern Fronts

With the sufficient mop up around Port Harcourt and its environs, the stage was set for the 3 Marine Commando Division to move into Ibo heartland from the minority areas in the south. Thus the battle for Aba and Owerri had begun. The researcher as a participant was among those who took the plunge across the Imo River from Chokocho through Okehi. After Okehi, 14 Brigade under Lietenant Colonel Agbazika Inih who blazed the trail across a ford Chokocho a tributary of Imo River. The 14 Commando Brigade that undertook the crossing of a ford of the Imo River tributary off Chokocho lost some men in the process and the secessionists equally had some loses. Thus the battle for the Ibo heartland from the southern fronts had begun through Akwete axis. The 12 Commando Brigade under Lieutenant Colonel Aliyu was assigned to capture Akwete and to link up with 17 Commando Brigade under the command Lieutenant Colonel Shande that went through Ukehi, crossed Imo River bridge at Owazza oil fields to converge at Asa on Aba-Port Harcourt high-way (Tedheke eye witness acount 1968). The researcher was one of those stationed at Chokocho Bridge that was blown up by the retreating Biafran Forces a little distance north of Igrita some 15 to 20 kilometres

from Port Harcourt.

The general offensive from the southern fronts into Ibo hearthland was undertaken by 12 Commando Brigade at Akwete axis, 14 and 17 Brigades that pushed through Ukehi and separated as we noted in the foregoing. At Owerri – Port Harcourt road 16 Commando Brigade was to push through Omanelu, Umuakpu, Obinze to Owerri and 15 Commando Brigade was to push through Omoku, Ebocha, Egbema to take Oguta. According to Madiebo (1980:267), by the month of July 1968, Federal Forces had moved up northwards from the south quite considerably. The end result was that they were now controlling all important towns along the bank of Imo River such as Obigbo, Chokocho and Ozuzu-Odufo. On the main Port Harcourt Owerri road, they had pushed up to Umuakpu, 22 miles south of Owerri. At the same time they were occupying Ebocha along Ahoada-Oguta road. Madiebo (1980:268) said he told Ojukwu of the very grave threat to Owerri and Aba as a result of the ongoing thrust by 3 Marine Commando Division of the Federal Forces into Ibo heartland from the south. He stressed that only a considerable amount of reinforcements and plenty of ammunition to 12 and 14 Biafran Divisions could prevent a major military disaster. The Biafrans had mercenaries under Major Steiner that had the commandos to stem the threat of Federal menace on Owerri and Aba. By 20 August, 1968 Steiner's troops were concentrated at Owerri Holy Ghost College. Steiner's two commando battalions were to be deployed thus: one to assist 14 Biafran Division in its operations around Omanelu along Owerri-Port Harcourt road. The other was to go to Owazza to assist 12 Biafran Division. From there, the Biafran commando battalion would cross the Owazza Bridge, capture Chokocho and to destroy the bridge there, so as to cut off the communication line of the Federal Forces moving on that axis towards Okpuala (Madiebo 1980:269). The bridge which Madiebo said was to be blown up was already destroyed by retreating Biafran Forces when Chokocho was first captured by Federal Forces (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968). However the fact remained that the Chokocho axis was porous for a long time even after the fall of Aba to 12 and 17 Commando Brigades.

The Biafran plan to retake Chokocho according to Alexander Madibo was slated for 22

August, 1968. On August 21st , a day to the operation, Taffy Williams, a mercenary with his commando battalion were already in a position around Owazza less than two miles to the bridge across Imo River at Owazza which they planned to assault the following day. At mid-day on the 22nd, Federal Forces of acompany strength attacked the bridge-head supported by artillery guns firing at point blank crossed the river bridge. Prior to the crossing Madiebo said that Biafra's bunkers were crumbling slowly and those soldiers inside them were finding it increasingly difficult to stay on. The Biafran Army Commander said he ordered the mercenary commander Taffy Williams to take his commando battalion of 850men to round up the Nigerian Forces which he said was a company strong of less than 150 men without delay. The mercenary refused to do so (Madiebo 1980:269). Alexander Madiebo with very extensive details of the war and particular war situations stated exactly the crossing of Imo River through the Owazza bridge that was partly blown up at both ends by retreating Biafran Forces. However, the Shell-B.P oil pipelines at both ends of the bridge which spread in compact assisted the Federal Forces with the crossing. It was not the crumbling bunker that made the Biafran elements to flee but one company Sergeant Major whose name has escaped the researcher's memory tumbled onto the bridge half drunk and the Biafran elements in the bunkers opened a barrage of fire but he continued to surge forward. This frightened the Biafran men in the bunkers who came out and flee. The researcher was the second to enter the bridge. The strength of the Federal Forces that crossed the bridge was a battalion, precisely 45 Battalion under the command of Captain Jetkwe. But the attack was led by one of the companies. It was the entire 17 Commando Brigade of the 3 Marine Commando Division of the Nigerian Army that was in the movement through the Owazza axis to link up with 12 Commando Brigade at Asa. The detour off Chokocho was necessary strategically to avoid crossing Imo River at Obigbo (now Oyigbo), the terminal point between Rivers state and Ibo heartland (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968).

The Federal offensive to take Aba was a two pronged one both by the 17 Commando Brigade on the west of Aba-Port Harcourt road and 12 Commando Brigade on the East. However, they converged at Asa. The researcher was one of the 17 Commando

Brigade troops stationed at Owazza oil field to protect the rear of the advancing Federal Forces for the battle for Aba. While 12 Commando Brigade concentrated on Akwete axis to Aba, the 17 Commando Brigade put a strong defence along the mainroad of Aba-Port Harcourt road after Asa and as usual detoured by the left north of Asa through Ebieri Omuma and took Umuiku, a junction town south-west of Aba (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968). Madiebo (1980:269-73) said that the mercenary of Biafran Commando Battalion Commander Major Taffy Williams refused to put up a fight despite assurance from him hence his withdrawal first to Asa and when Asa fell to the Nigerian Forces, then to Aba. The commado battalion under the mercenary still refused to fight hence 12 Biafran Division was to assist in the struggle to contain Federal Forces that made a slow but steady move to capture Aba. On the 4th September 1968 Aba fell to the Nigerian Forces (Madiebo 1980:272; Momoh (ed.) 2000). The two Nigerian Commando Brigades entered Aba at the same time and even fired at each other because of the confusion that resulted from Biafran 12 Division and Nigria's 12 Commando Brigade. (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968).

The 17 Commando Brigade wasted no time but commenced movement on a link up operation with 14 Commando Brigade to its west through a two pronged attack from Aba-Owerri road and the Umuiku road through to the same Ugba junction (Umuivo) that equally led to Umuahia. This was undertaken after Aba was relatively secured by the Federal Forces. However, the mounting pressures of the Biafran Forces were all around Aba and its environs. One can understand these pressures in the light of planned operations to retake Aba. In the first of such plans Alexander Madiebo the Biafran Army Chief slated his special or "S" Division and 12 Division to clear Aba. The Biafra 'S' Division was given the task of moving through Ugba junction (Umuivo) along Aba-Owerri road to clear Ngwa High School as their first step towards clearing Aba town. Biafran 12 Division had the task of clearing Ogbo Hill on the Ikot-Ekpene-Aba road, preparatory to a re-entry into the town. On three consecutive occasions, the 12 Biafran Division started the operation at the agreed time only to find that 'S' Division could not make it for one reason or the other. At this time, the 17 Commando Federal Brigade struck and took the strategic Ugba junction and indeed began to advance

towards Umuahia through that road. This move was however halted by 12 Biafran Division timely intervention pushing the Federal Forces back to Ugba junction (Madiebo 1980:273-4). The Biafran attempt at pushing Federal Forces back to Umuivo or Ugba junction was aided by ogbunigwe explosives that wounded the researcher lightly but led to the death of the soldiers at both his front and back. The push to take Umuahia which suffered reverses with the Biafran counter offensive was as a result of the promise made by the General Officer Commanding 3 Marine Commando Division, Colonel Benjamin Adekunle to give Owerri, Aba and Umuahia code-named 'OAU' as a Christmas gift to General Yakubu Gowon by December 25, 1968 (Momoh (ed.) 2000:104-5; Tedheke's eye witness account 1968).

For the realisation of the next objective of the war which was the penetration into Ibo heartland and the capture of Owerri, Aba and Umuahia code-named "OAU" meant as a 1968 Christmas gifts to General Yakubu Gowon, was underpinned by a five pronged attack carried out by five Commando Brigades. Along the Ebocha-Egbema-Oguta axis 15 Commando Brigade was to take Ebocha, Egbema and Oguta but all the initial efforts through Ebocha were halted by the 60 Biafran Brigade. On the 9th of September, the Federal Forces embarked on what seemed a river assault on Oguta through the Orashi River. The report by Alexander Madiebo was that about six Federal boats were at Ezi-Orsu less than four miles to Oguta town. The Biafrans went into action with their lone boat having a six pounder which was lying idle on the Oguta Lake for some time. In the battle that ensued the Biafran Naval boat destroyed two Nigerian boats before the Biafran boat was hit hard and had to beat a retreat. Despite the setback, the Federal Forces pressed on and eventually Oguta was taken by the troops of 15 Commando Brigade forcing the Biafran Forces to establish defence lines along Oguta-Mgbidi road and Oguta-Uli road (Madiebo 1980:274-5). A counter attack was planned to retake Oguta by the Biafran Army Chief which however failed. A second attempt to clear Oguta by the Biafran Forces on the 12th September, 1968 succeeded and Nigerian Forces were cleared from Oguta (Madiebo 1980:277-8).

In about a day or there about, the Federal Forces occupied Oguta the Biafran defences around Ebocha bridge completely disintegrated and led to Biafran withdrawal, thus enabling Federal Forces to have a link up from Oguta to Port Harcourt. The clearing of 0guta was therefore, of a little relief from the depth of the strategic crises that confronted Biafra. The crises were the very nearness of Federal Forces to Uli Airport and the occupation of Egbema oil fields by Nigeria the only available source of energy or fuel for Biafra. There was pressure on the Biafran Army to regain the oil fields as Biafrans were already feeling the pinch of the loss. The counter offensive by Biafra's 60 Brigade under the command of Major Asoya mustered men and some ammunition with some determination were able to push Federal Forces from Ezi-Orsu and thus commenced the push towards Egbema oil fields. Soon after Egbema oil fields fell to the Biafran Forces forcing Nigerian forced down to Okwuzu (Madiedo 1980:278-9). The 15 Commando Brigade setbacks at Oguta and environs were a household knowledge in Sector 1 of the 3 Marine Commando Division under the Command of Colonel Godwin Ally. At this time the researcher had converted from infantry to Air Defence Artillery and a field sergeant in charge of an Oerlikon Air Defence gun at Elele. In ones tittle experience of the war, Alexander Madiebo's account though had some flaws seems to be the most comprehensive inspite of the Nigerian Army Education Publication of 2000. One is not surprised because he was always around the war theatres from the north, west, central and south of Biafra.

Simultaneously as the battle for Aba and Oguta were raging, the one for Owerri was equally going on under 16 Commando Brigade with Lieutenant Colonel Etuk as the Brigade Commander. One of his three battalions that took Owerri, the 33 Battalion was commanded by Major Sunday Ahoretuwheire, a very brave combatant officer (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968). The 16 Commando Brigade confronted Biafra's 14 Division with headquarters at Obinze near Owerri along Owerri-Port Harcourt road. Federal Forces were advancing steadily and took Ohoba town and made steady progress towards Avu and Obinze on the outsakirts of Owerri. With the main defence requirements for the Biafrans being the availability of manufactured products made in Biafra such as ogbunigwe (mines) the 14 Division of Biafra was able to hold on for

some days before Owerri fell on the 18 September, 1968. The delays in the reorganisation by the Biafran Forces after the fall of Owerri and Aba made it possible for Okpuala to equally fall to Nigerian Federal Forces. This development exposed the whole of Mbaise to the forces of 3 Marine Commando. The Biafrans had no answer to this development because with the link up of Aba and Owerri, a two pronged advance began by the Federal Forces to take Mbaise. The Federal moves at Olakwo-Obiangwu road and the Okpuala-Uvoro road had the main objective for the Federal Forces to converge on the main Owerri-Umuahia road at Enyiogugu 17 miles east of Owerri. If this had happened not only would the bulk of 14 Division of the Biafran Forces around Owerri be rendered ineffective and disorganised and such would have aided a very fast progress of the Federal Forces to Umuahia, the then capital of Biafra (Madiebo 1980:280-1).

According to Madiebo (1980:281) the 63 Biafran Brigade that was facing the Nigerian Forces had already been weakened after a continuous battle for six weeks with the Federal Forces. The 63 Biafran Brigade was thus reorganised for the task ahead, that is, to check forces of 3 Marine Commando Division from pushing toward Enyiogugu. For this task, a battalion of 'S' Biafran Division was moved from Aba environs to reinforce the 63 Brigade. However, by the time the battalion arrived the 3 Marine Commando Forces had pushed within a mile of Enyiogugu main junction. The Biafrans launched a determined counter attack against the Nigerian Forces using its 63 Brigade on the one axis and the 'S' Division Battalion on the other. The Biafrans succeeded in making four unsuccessful moves against the Nigerian Forces to dislodge them from around Enyiogugu. On the 7th day of the battle for Enyiogugu, the Federal Commandos almost succeeded in pushing Biafran Forces out of its defences, when they had to explode one 'ogbunigwe' that forced Nigerian Forces to withdraw. A second push by the Nigerian Forces also was met with another 'ogbunigwe' which broke the assault forcing a second withdrawal. It thus gave the Biafrans the liverage to advance which forced the Nigerian Forces into a retreat. This gave the Biafrans the advantage to regain the main Aba-Owerri road at Olakwo and Okpuala and soon after they were able to regain full control of that road between Olakwo and Owerrinta bridge, near Ugba

junction. The Biafran Forces continued to push their way southwards to regain Ngor complex down to Elelem. From Okpuala junction they had pushed down to Amala which would have opened the way to Chokocho if they had exploited their success (Madiebo 1980:282).

Meanwhile, the Federal Forces of 16 Commando Brigade at Owerri were pushing out of town in all directions. On the Owerri-Okigwe road they had reached Orji Bridge some four miles from Owerri. From this axis a major attack was launched by the Nigerian Forces in the direction of Mbieri and Orodo with the aim of getting at Orlu and Nkwerre. The Biafrans were able to halt this move just a mile from Mbieri and after a counter attack for several days, Federal Forces were forced to retreat back to Orji Bridge. On the Ihiala road, the Nigerian Forces got as far as Ogbaku from where they spread northwards towards Oguta again. In that move, all the towns and villages on the left of Owerri-Ihiala road as far north as Izombe, fell to Federal Forces. In this stride, both Oguta and Uli-Ihiala were once again threatened. The 60 Biafran Brigade was able to stabilise the Izombe axis as they pushed the Nigerian Forces slightly back from Izombe to Obudi and the Biafrans redirected their attention to Okigwe in the north where a very serious threat was developing from the Nigerian 1 Division (Madiebo (ed) 1980:282-3). The continuous Biafran pressures and their adoption of non-conventional military strategy when Federal intimidation was much led to infiltration of 3 Marine Commando Division's defence lines. Etuk (in Momoh 2000:520) accounted for these infiltrations after Owerri was captured by 16 Commando Brigade. He said:

> …the thing started at the time when I was sending my Quarter Master to go for supplies; each time he was coming back he would be ambushed. At times he escaped and a lot of the goodies he collected… would be shared by the rebels and the balance he would bring to me. So I reported back to my Dvisional Commander, Adekunle. He didn't take the matter seriously and this continued until when supplies were no longer coming. I couldn't communicate with the outside world since the battery of my radio was dead. I couldn't talk to anybody. Even General Gowon had to encourage me to continue managing. That was when he came to Port Harcourt. Since the word of encouragement came from the Commander-in-Chief himself I developed the confidence that something would be done. I sat back in Owerri and continued the fighting. The rebels knew that we were helpless because the main route that we used from Port Harcourt to Owerri was blocked totally and there is no way to go in or come out.

At this time, the Biafran Forces had occupied the stretch of the Owerri-Port Harcourt road down from Omanelu, the boundary town between East Central state and Rivers state. The researcher was one of those taken from his anti-aircraft gun post at Elele to push on to Umuakpu under a reconstituted 15 Commando Brigade under the command of Lieutenant Colonel R.Aliyu. Even Elele nine miles from Omanelu was partially threatened as Biafran infiltrations occurred on its links with Port Harcourt (Tedheke's eye witness account1969).

5.6.2 Oil and Biafra's Changed Strategy

We have noted earlier that rebel's persistent resistance, in the southern fronts were predicated on the strategic nature of crude oil to Biafra. The issue of fuel to prosecute the war became of very strategic importance to Biafra's War efforts. Despite the fact that the secret of refining became pervasive in Biafra at the later stages of the Civil War but sources of crude must be maintained to feed the many mini-refineries. Achuzia (1986:178) remarked that shortage of fuel led to the abandonment of certain operational movements and therefore the war efforts in certain fronts. On the side of Nigeria the capture of Port Harcourt and its environs was of great strategic gains to the Federal Nigerian Government and of very serious strategic loss to Biafra. It gave more bargaining power to the combined landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes of Nigeria during the Kampala Peace Talks (Madiebo 1980:255) thus reducing drastically the bargaining capacity of the Biafran comprador classes. The threats on Biafra's Ibo heartland from the south, therefore, necessitated another diversionary strategy to attack oil installations and to advance as it were into oil producing areas. Cronje (1972: 145-6) said Ojukwu's speech to the Biafran Consultative Assembly early February 1969 when analysed laid a great deal of emphasis on oil, not only near Pot Harcourt but Ebocha oil field was claimed to be firmly in Biafran hands. With the capture of Port Harcourt as the strategic oil companies' headquarters and its environs Biafra was left with few crude oil wells and the only major one was the Owazza oil field north of Chokocho across Imo River. The strategic figuring of crude oil in Biafra's calculations in later stages of the Civil War was in two areas. Firstly, the need to have access to crude oil to prosecute the war and secondly, to make it impossible for oil companies to

operate thus still recreating the strategic value of Biafra, even tenuously among the oil companies and imperialism or advanced capitalist countries.

According to Cronje (1972:16) a London Chamber of Commerce delegation which visited Nigeria in March was told by Shell-B.P. oil executives and by the British High Commission in Lagos that the Biafrans no longer posed a military threat to oil operations. They also were given the impression that the oil companies were on the verge of a boom that would be more extensive than that predicted by the press. The giant oil company Shell-B.P investment plans in Nigeria in 1969 had been given at £52 million pounds (*Financial Times* 1 March 1969 cited by Cronje 1972). The Biafra's strategic calculations to disrupt crude oil flows from Port Harcourt and the Mid-West by causing fears in the minds of oil companies could be seen in its strategic implications and dynamics. Ojukwu's speech in Febraury 1969 that Ebocha oil field was in Biafran hands and on the 29 April, the Biafrans claimed to have captured Aboh across the Niger, a town just thirty-eight miles from Ughelli-Warri area, headquarters of Shell-B.P Western Zone and of other oil companies and at the centre of some Nigeria's richest oil fields were pointers to the strategy of disruption of oil operations. It should be noted that the Mid-Western reserve which had been rapidly developed after Biafra's secession and brief occupation of the Mid-West in August/September 1967 accounts for a third of Shell-B.P's total Nigerian output in April 1969. The capture of Aboh almost coincided with the announcement that Nigeria's crude oil production was back to its pre-war peak level (*Daily Telegraph* 28 April 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:146).

Evidence showed that south of Asaba to Aboh along the west bank of the Niger had been controlled by the Biafran irregular forces made up mainly of its elements from the Mid-West for several months possibly since the Biafrans' retreat from Mid-West in 1967. The Nigerian troops of 2nd Division, were unable to clear the area coupled with some desertion by a unit of the Federal Forces in the face of rebels' attack. A company posted to Aboh equally mutinied retreating from Aboh some ten miles. Oil workers said they were quite accustomed to showing their passes to Nigerian patrol team in the morning and to a Biafran patrol in the afternoon, when they returned to their camps

after work. However, the Biafran capture of Aboh at the end of April, 1969 was the first major crossing by a regular force in strength. On 9 May, 1969, a Biafran patrol attacked an oil camp near Kwale in the Mid-West, capturing eighteen Italian and German employees of A.G.I.P. Eleven others died. The men had worked on a rig at Okpai and were ordered for a pulling out of two remaining rigs from the area as a result of an earlier attack six miles from the area which was denied. The source stated that the reason for the dismantling of the rigs was not because of hostilities from the rebel forces, but was due to seasonal flooding. All the same, the employees of other oil companies who had been drilling nearby maintained that A.G.I.P had been too near the front and had been warned. Okpai was within a twenty-mile radius of three major Mid-Western oil fields, Olomoro, Uzere East and Uzere West which together accounted for almost 60 per cent of Mid-Western Nigeria's total pre-war production. Nigeria's oil output, which had reached an average of 594,000 barrels per day during April 1969, was down to 517,000 barrels per day during May. The Biafrans claimed in July that they were in control of 60 per cent of the oil wells west of the Niger which was very much in doubt. However, their proximity and attack on Okpai, may have served notice on the oil companies to withdraw their staff from vulnerable positions. This led to the drop in crude oil production (Cronje 1972: 147-8).

The death of the eleven European employees and the capture of eighteen others at Okpai caused a major international uproar. The then United Nations' Secretary General U Thant, the Pope and some Western governments tried to intercede. The captured men were put on trial "for hostile acts against Biafra, including spying". They were condemned to death, but soon afterwards pardoned and released. Biafra won some limited diplomatic victory as the episode attracted a visit by an Italian Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mario Petini. There was equally an understanding that the Italian companies would from henceforth keep off all disputed territory. The Nigerian authority assured oil companies that she would take steps to prevent any reoccurrence in the future, few foreign companies were prepared to rely on the Nigerian Army to protect its staff or property within the range of the Biafrans (Cronje 1972:148). Thus the Biafran strategy to impede crude oil production so as to impinge on Nigeria's source of

sustenance of the war and equally to arouse some international attention paid off limitedly. The signals were vividly past across by the Biafrans that oil installations were military targets and as such most of the oil companies were scared and as such Nigeria's crude oil production dropped.

5.6.3. Revived Biafran Airforce and Attacks on Oil Fields

The Biafrans had the oil industry which borders mostly on the periphery of the war zones as a strategic target. The Federal Nigerian Government's assurance that the Nigerian Armed Forces would protect staff or property of the oil companies within range of the Biafrans became seriously undermined. This range was drastically increased at the end of May 1969 with the arrival on the scene of five Minicon planes, a small two seater MFI-9Bs trainer aircraft, fitted with twelve rockets under the wings and an extra fuel tank in the spare seat. The idea of having such planes for Biafra came from Count von Rosen, a Swedish pilot working for a private air charter company. On 22 May the new Biafran Air Force was ready for action after being fitted with extra fuel tanks and rocket earlier in the month in Gabon. Its first raid took it to Port Harcourt where von Rosen claimed to have knocked out two MIGs and two Ilyushins. Two days later, they attacked the airport in Benin and on 26 May, they were over Enugu. These aircrafts flew at such very low level which made the Biafran Air Force Minicons undetectable. Rosen said that one of the two main tasks of the Biafran Forces was to attack by air targets of vital economic importance to the Federal national economy, particularly oil production which could be critical to the outcome of the war. The second task was to cripple the Nigerian Air Force so that it could not mount its attacks against relief flights and civilian targets which were partly fulfilled within a week (Cronje 1972:148-50).

One way the Nigerian Federal Government reacted to the Minicons' menace was to stop all internal commercial flights to Port Harcourt, centre of the oil industry east of the Niger. Equally, there was a ban on the use of all light piston-engine aircrafts over the war theatre following the activities of the rebel MFI-9BS. The Federal ground forces were told to treat all light air crafts as hostile. The sheer problems of travel inhibited effective co-ordination and wasteful logistic support was the result (Cronje 1972:150-1

cited Scott). Biafran Air Force was not through with their new lease of life yet. On 29 May, it attacked the Nigerian Power Station at Ughelli. The significance of the Ughelli power station is in the start of Biafran policy of bombing any strategic target within range. It was not only the power station but many oil installations seemed very vulnerable since many were well within range of the apparently fairly accurate Biafran pilots. Ughelli itself was the centre of Shell-B.P's expanding Mid-West operations, while *Gulf"s* loading terminal was only a short flying distance away (*Financial Times* 31 May 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:151) The following day Shell-B.P was reported as evacuating families of expatriate employees from its base at Ughelli. The Federal Government was said to be trying to purchase small aircrafts to combat the waves of Biafran incursions. Thus the raids had changed the dimension of the Civil War (Cronje 1972 cite *Observer* 1 June 1969).

According to Cronje (1972:151) there was a lull in Federal Nigerian bombing operations which might be attributed to two likely factors. One was that the British Prime Minister at the time, Mr. Harold Wilson's intercession during his visit to Lagos and earlier representations made through the High Commission in Lagos suggested there was a pointer to the fact that the scaling down of Federal air raids was the result of British influence on Lagos. But it may have been due to damages done by Biafra's Minicons and other difficulties under which the Nigerian Air Force was then facing. This became quite evident when Owerri was besieged by the Biafran Forces and the Nigerian troops holding the town had to be supplied by air (*New Statesman* 6 June, 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:152). Chief Anthony Enehoro, the Federal Commissioner for Labour and Information confirmed that some of the Soviet-built aircrafts were unserviceable and that this was affecting night operations. He added that there was no bombing pause, that the air offensive would be resumed as soon as damages were repaired (*West Africa*, 19 April, 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:152).

The British may have been less worried about the stepping up of Federal air attacks as a result of the Milicon raids than about the effects of Biafra's new tactics on Nigerian oil production. There was indeed a cause for concern. Since the resurgence of the

Nigerian output of crude oil the Biafrans had made it quite clear that the oil installations on the Federal side had become their chief target, since oil revenue provided Nigerians with 'the sinew of war' (Cronje 1972:152). In the early part of June during the release of the oil workers captured by Biafra at Okpai A.G.I.P station, Ojukwu emphasised that, "oil is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy, and it is from oil that they obtain all necessary credits for the prosecution of the futile war (Cronje 1972 cited the Times, 7 August, 1969). A few days earlier in his *Ahiara Declaration*, Ojukwu announced that, Biafran troops were advancing on Port Harcourt and holding positions in Elele some twenty-fives miles from Port Harcourt and in the outskirts of Igrita just twelve miles north of Port Harcourt. In the Mid-West, he went on, 'the successes of our troops have been maintained despite numerous enemy counter attacks'. He also claimed that the Minicons had set the refinery in Port Harcourt on fire, but this was not confirmed by reports from the Nigerian side (Ojukwu 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:152). The issue was not whether these claims were correct but their negative impacts on the oil industry whose toll was already telling on the crude oil production. It resulted in the stoppage of all chartered commercial flights to Port Harcourt and a ban placed on flights of all light piston-engined aircrafts over the war theatre. It equally included evacuation of oil expatriate workers from sites like Ughelli.

Count Von Rosen and his other Swedish pilots went back to Sweden at the early part of June 1969 but Biafran air raids continued. On June 18 the Biafrans struck again at Ughelli, this time around it was the Shell-B.P Oil Control Centre and claimed to have hit two vertical bulk tanks and technical equipment on the ground, setting it ablaze, though reports from Lagos said that only one empty tank was hit (*Daily Telgraph*, 20 August, 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:152-3). There was a claim on the Nigerian side that two of the Minicons had been destroyed and their base set on fire. The Biafrans claimed to have continued their advance on the ground into oil fields on both sides of the River Niger. On 17 June, 1969 the Biafrans claimed to have captured the Owazza oil and gas fields in the Imo River basin. Shell-B.P the owners of the fields seemed to have been taken by surprise as the European technicians were said to be there at the time. However a Federal counter attack passed the fields over to Nigerian again which was

reversed a few days later by a Biafran thrust that took them across the Imo River. They spent some time consolidating their position before announcing on July 12 that the Imo River fields were behind their lines.The true situation was that the Nigerian Federal Forces only occupied the flow station and not all the entire fields and pushed on to Asa along Aba – Port Harcourt road north of Obigbo (now Oyigbo) on its movement to its objective of Aba (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968).

It was not surprising therefore that Biafran Forces infiltrated into Owazza through the void between 14 and 17 Commando Brigades West of Owazza flow station. Since Aba was captured on September 16, 1968 and the fall of Owerri on September 4, 1968 the objectives made the division to neglect the void between 14 and 17 Commando Brigades. The fact remains that Biafra had lost all access to most of the oil fields in the East and only Egbema and Owazza were the last hope that could enable the breakaway republic to have the fuel for its war machines. However, before the war, the Imo River field was the most productive in Nigeria accounting for about one-fifth of the country's total output. At the beginning of July, Shell-B.P sources admitted to a decline of their recent outputs by about 100,000 barrels per day compared to April figure, and ascribed this drop to Biafra's advance into the Imo River basin, adding that their technicians in the area had been recalled. Biafra, however, did not hold these fields for long, but they remained in the vicinity, as a result production in the area was cut back for the rest of the war (Cronje 1972:153). Since Federal Forces were dislodged from Owerri on April 25, 1969 and Biafran Forces total control of the Aba – Owerri road, the defence void in this area expanded and it provided the Biafran Forces the ample opportunity to press southwards along Owazza, Okehi, Omagwa, Ubima, Omanelu axis (Tedheke's eye witness account 1969).

In the Mid-West area, Biafrans equally claimed progress where the new Shell – B.P terminal off the Forcados River was scheduled to go into production on 1 July, 1969. The opening was postponed because company officials in Lagos said there was a leak and denied that it was connected with Biafran attempt to disrupt Nigerian oil production. The new pipeline was scheduled to carry the output of Mid-West and particularly that of

the greater Ughelli area which had reached 120,000 barrels per day in April 1969 which was expected to reach an average of 350,000 barrels per day shortly after. In July of the same year, the output in this Ughelli or Mid-West area had reached 142,000 barrels per day and just a month after it was down to 124,000 with a total Shell – B.P average of only 280,000 compared to its April total of 372,282 barrels. The total production of Nigeria by Shell – B.P and Gulf combined had equally dropped from a daily average in April of 593,656 barrels per day to 470,000 in August of that year. Thus while the Civil War lasted, the hopes for oil boom flickered away (Cronje 1972:153-4)

In the light of the foregoing developments, neither the British Government nor the British oil companies were in a position to mitigate the Biafran threats to crude oil production. Except to do their utmost to ensure that the Nigerians were put in a position where they could win the war. This period saw the steepest rise of all time in British arms exports to Nigeria from September 1969. For the next two months British shipments totalled £7 million pounds in the ground weapon class which constituted practically all recorded imports into Nigeria under this category (Cronje 1972:154). The resolve to send such massive support must be situated to a large extent on the reinvigorated Minicon raids against oil targets in the Mid-West. The attacks started shortly after the return of Count von Rosen to Biafra in the second half of July 1969 with addition of four Minicons. This brought the total Minicons in the Biafran Airforce to nine in addition to the five imported in May. The first of the new series of raids occurred on 28 July, 1969 when the Biafrans scored a direct hit on a new flow station at Kokori not far from Ughelli. The oil field was closed and the families of expatriate European employee of Shell-B.P were evacuated (Cronje 1972)

In some parts of Mid-West, villages which Biafran captured soon after would fall into Nigeria hands and vice versa. The strategic shift into guerilla raids was made on Federal positions. The oil situation was serious enough which induced the then British High Commissioner in Lagos, Sir Leslie Glass to visit the Mid-West for on-the-sport assessment. Shell-B.P had closed some pumping stations as a precaution against infiltrators. Sir Leslie had to announce that the Federal side was to use heavy anti-

aircraft guns to defend its positions and Shell-B.P locations and installations in the Mid-West (Cronje,1972:155). However, the Biafrans plotted a new target the attack on Gulf Oil installations base off the Escravos Estruatory in the Mid-West which until then was seen out of the range of Biafra's Minicons. On 10 August the Biafrans scored at least one direct hit on a storage tank. The Biafrans claimed two as well as the destruction of a helicopter on the ground. In September they attacked Sapele power station and the factory belonging to the United African Company, and oil installations at Ughelli, Uzere and Eriemu. The accounts of the amount of damage inflicted by these raids varied according to the origin of the reports, but correspondents in Nigeria went quite far to confIrming Biafran claims (Cronje 1972:156).

After August, the Nigerian Government allowed no further publication of oil production statistics because the drop in production which such would have shown would have been considered too damaging, after the optimistic forecasts earlier in the year. The Imo River field remained closed down while 'technical factors' were said to have prevented the completion of the Shell-B.P. terminal at Forcados which was scheduled for opening on 1 July 1969 or at least three weeks later, when leaks in the pipeline would have been repaired. Equally Gulf Oil Company was reported to be experiencing 'shipping difficulties (*Financial Times* 13 August, 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:156). East of the Niger, the Minicons raided the vast oil complex at Bomu, near Port Harcourt in the Ogoni area. The devastating blow was struck on 30 October, when the Biafrans raided the Shell-B.P oil storage vessel, 110,000 ton Dutch tanker, the *Niso*. Most of the Biafran air attacks went unannounced in Lagos but the (oil industry) sources said that Shell-B.P. and the Gulf Company subsidiary were now facing the possibility that the oil exports might have to cease. This manner of attacks had negative dramatic results as the attack on the Forcados terminal shut off Mid-Western Nigerian oil production. It made official statistics of oil production unavailable but post-war figures showed that Shell-B.Ps production which had recovered in October to 461,617 barrels per day dropped to an average of 341,297 barrels per day. By December 1969, the Biafrans had at least impeded oil production in Nigeria to a degree which was clearly unacceptable to Shell-B.P., to the British Government which had a direct stake in the

company and which knew that the threat might force Lagos into unnecessary concessions for political and economic reasons (Cronje 1972:157-9).

5.6.4 Oil and the Strategic Importance of the Southern Fronts

We have noted earlier that because of the rentier nature of the Nigerian political economy based on natural resources that aid the class formation of the rent seeking class these resources became very strategic in their calculation. In war the grand strategic calculations is always an economic issue either in providing for war materials in the form of logistics support or in the destruction or neutralisation of opponent's economic strength to prosecute a war. In some cases opponents go to war for and over valuable resources. The strategic nature of crude oil to the Nigerian rentier/landed classes cannot be over emphasised. It has been of great importance to the Eastern landed/rentier bourgeois classes and their counterparts from other parts of the Nigerian Federation. This was more crucial with the collapse after the Korean war boom of 1953 of agricultural world commodity prices which went down in 1955/56 (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986:176). This brought out the strategic nature of crude oil finds in Nigeria as the landed/rentier classes only depend on the land and its natural resources for their primitive accumulation of capital. The post-Korean War collapse of agricultural prices of export products or commodities leading to the gradual collapse of regional sources of revenues led to the crises of post independence Nigeria and indeed in the First Republic. That all eyes turned to crude oil was epitomised in Sarduana's statement concerning the East, NCNC and the discovery of crude oil (*West Africa* 2 January 1965:3 cited by Diamond 1988:218). Saying that the crude oil was only in the calculation of the end the NCNC was only half truth. All eyes from the North, East and West were on it.

The strategic importance of crude oil to the Nigerian economy and indeed to Biafra as the case might be was put bluntly by Brigadier General Benjamin Adekunle (rtd). He said that the grand strategy of the Federal Government and the military was to start war from the North. In stating the obvious he said:

> They forgot one thing-economic strategy involved in the planning of any war. Whoever owns the economic power can at least go into sustaining power. You can really get anywhere. So the idea occurred to the Federal Government then that the south must not be left alone. Fighting from the north alone wouldn't win any war so the southern front must also be opened. The southern front was opened and unfortunately I was nominated to be the commander (Adekunle in Momoh (ed.) 2000:261)
> .

The strategic importance of the southern fronts was not just a product of the penetration of Ibo heartland from the south but that of the struggle by the landed/rentier bourgeois classes for their soul which was their surviving the war. The strategic nature of the southern fronts was nothing other than the grand strategic calculations of the gains of crude oil to emergent comprador/ rentier/landed/bourgeois classes on both sides. For both Biafran and the Nigerian governments crude oil was needed to aid the prosecution of the war. In the case of the Federal Government its control was needed to assure oil companies and their home governments of Nigerian capabilities to defend the oil zones and equally as the major source of revenue to prosecute the war. The Biafrans had it as a bargaining tool at first and later the source of energy for the prosecution of the war (Cronje 1972: St. Jorre 1977; Achuzia 1986; 178). The facts of the resistance by Biafrans in Ibo heartland from the south was not only because they were in the core of Ibo area but principally to access crude oil to be able to continue to prosecute the war and equally to frighten the foreign oil producing companies from production in order to weaken Federal Nigerian war efforts. The southern fronts were very important equally to imperialism, especially of Britain and France (Cronje 1972; St. Jorre 1977).

5.7 Lull in the War

It was quite difficult to understand why the war lasted so long why the Biafran Forces did not throw in the towel early enough or the Federal Forces, with their overwhelming might, did not over-run the secessionist enclave in a matter of days or weeks. Before the commencement of the war, each side made their own strategic calculations based on either outright victory or stalemate. There was the belief on the side of the Nigerian Government that an outright victory was a matter of days, in fact "within 48 hours" as

ascribed to Lieutenant Colonel Hassan Usman Katsina. The Biafran's did not ascribe to easy victory but envisaged a stalemate that could eventually compel the Nigerian Government to a settlement favourable to it. The Federals based on their assessment of easy and quick victory became surprised at the level of resistance by the secessionist forces (Momoh (ed) 2000:121). Oluleye (1985) expressed this surprise succinty thus, "The numerical strength, training, experience and armaments of both armies were so disproportionate that the encountered resistance became a mystery to the Federalists". Biafra was, therefore, slightly less equipped in men and war materials as her sources of arms were restricted as she had not been accorded international legitimacy and worsened by the decimation of its human war materials which weakened its military capabilities in the counter coup of 1966, the best she expected was a stalemate. On Biafra, Oluleye (1985) emphasized, "Biafran leadership hoped that within a month of war and if Biafra gave a good account of itself on the battlefield some major powers, such as Britain and U.S.A. would intervene and if necessary, impose a settlement on both sides"

Despite the heavy limitations imposed on Biafra by the circumstances of its war situation such as low level of numerical strength, training, experience and armaments compared to that of the Federalists, the Biafrans took to extreme valour. There were three major reasons for this state of action on the side of the secessionists. One was the genocidal propaganda which sank deep in the inner recesses of the psyche of every Biafran. The fact that the Biafrans did not feel safe in Nigeria fired their zeal on to hold on to death or the last man. Matters were not helped with the massacres of Ibos at Asaba after its capture by 2 Division which Alli (2001:41) described as unprovocative and mortally executed which included "…defenceless children, women, girls, boys and adults". He concluded, "The Biafran accusation against the genocidal motives of the Federal Forces seemed so real and substantiated". St.Jorre (1977:284-5) cited Conor O'Brien who issued the first public warning in September 1967 that, "mass murder on a scale unprecedented as yet in Africa" was imminent that ever since the 1966 massacres it had been the intention of the Federal Government to eliminate the Ibos: whether or not it succeeded was not strictly relevant, such incidence like the Asaba massacre in 1968, that of Afikpo 1969 and others did not help matters". The second reason was the story of

the genocidal posture of the Nigeria state during the Civil War was also not helped by indiscriminate aerial bombing or air-raids by the Federalists on civilian centres of population (St. Jorre: 1977:286). The foregoing genocidal propaganda played on the Biafran people giving them the greater zeal to die for their cause was the third reason. This fight for vital interest conditioned by the immediate historical tragedies of pogrom against the Ibos in the North and its replay in the war fronts stiffened the resistance of Biafrans against the Federal incursions into Biafra. It resulted in the lull in the war and the dig-dung war situation in the second to the third quarters of 1969 (Tedheke's eye witness account 1969). The overall survival instinct and the battle for vital interest held the Biafrans on to the last hour.

The lull in the war equally was a product of changed strategy by the Biafran Armed Forces. With the dwindling of military supplies Biafrans combined a mixed strategic approach to the war situation by combining guerrilla strategy with conventional war strategy (Tedheke's eye witness account 1968-69). According to St. Jorre (1977:207-8) "After the fall of Port Harcourt (Biafra's last seaport) in May, Ojukwu had announced that the Civil War had entered a second phase" in which his troops would adopt guerrilla tactics. He said "…we shall all have to return to our provinces and villages. We shall torment and harass the enemy at every turn and chase him out of our land." Yakubu Gowon, the Head of State of Nigeria in a nation-wide broadcast in late August 1968 equally said that "…the final offensive was under way. We have resolved', he said, '…we must now press on with all our might to defeat the rebels militarily and renounce all traces of the tyranny and terror of the rebel regime from the face of the country" (St.Jorre 1977:208). While Lagos had the objective of pressing to force succession to a quick end, the rebel resistance intensified leaing to the loss of Owerri on 25 April, 1969 (Momoh ed. 2000: xvii). The ambush of 16 Commando Brigade Quarter Master which Lieutenant Colonel E.A. Etuk said, forced rebel blockade on Owerri began to rear its head in-between Elele and Isiokpo-Omagwa areas of Owerri-Port Harcourt road (Tedheke's eye witness account 1969). As can be observed the foregoing were the key issues that resulted in the prolongation and the lull in the war.

The lull in the war after Biafra had been hedged in and compressed into an enclave around Umuahia, Owerri and Uli-Ihiala/Nnewi axis was a factor of the Biafrans battling for their vital interest. Momoh (2000: 122) said, “The Federal Government assessed that the war would be waged mainly in the Igbo hinterland and adopted a strategy of capturing Enugu, closing all Biafran outlets to the outside world and capturing the oil areas, believing that once these were accomplished, Biafra would be forced to surrender. However, it did not work exactly this way as Biafra kept withdrawing into the hinterland on the advance of Federal troops and resorted to air supplies when its outlets were closed.” The vital interest of Biafra was the fundamental issue that led to the prolongation of the war and the lull in the war from late 1968 to after the rainy season of 1969. The vital interest of Biafra brought out the ingenuity of the Biafrans in constructing new airports when Port Harcourt fell, in developing bombs, rockets and mines (ogbunigwe) to shore up their war efforts when supplies dwindled, in outclassing the Nigerian side in propaganda, in resistance with bare hands the Nigerian Federal might and so on. This vital interest of the Biafrans was historically constructed from the post-July 29, 1966 counter coup pogrom in the North against the Ibos, the Asaba massacres and others at the war zones which Alli (2001:141) said “…was bewildering…repulsive and revolting.” These historical constructs forced Biafra to fight to finish thus their struggle became a life-or-death matter. Hence with bare hands they resisted fiercely, with little or no materials they manufactured, with little or no expertise they built airports, refineries and they developed and constructed bombs, mines or ogbunigwes, converted tractors to tanks and so on. For the first time in Nigeria the Easterners articulated and actualised some degree of self-relliance, which they were forced into because “necessity became the mother of inventions”.

5.7.1 3 Marine Commando’s Final Push and Collapse of Secession.

The secessionist resistance mounted after their recapture of Owerri on 25 April, 1969 when 16 Commando Brigade under Lieutenant Colonel AE Etuk withdrew from the city. Before and after the rainy season of 1969, the Biafrans had at least impeded oil production by Shell B.P and fears mounted in the British Government circle that the threat might force Lagos, for economic and political reasons, to make sweeping

concessions to the Biafrans; and of course, to the Nigerians themselves (Cronje 1972:159). What was upper most in the calculations of the British was the new Minicons planes and their devastating impacts on oil production which Harold Wilson referred to as "…the marauding flights of soldiers of fortune" (Commons Official Report, 8 December 1969 cited by Cronje 1972:159). In order to beat off the menacing Minicon bombings, though Britain maintained that she was supplying no more than 15 percent of Nigeria's total arms imports, it was actually supplying unprecedented large shipments of arms to Lagos. Thus it was easy for the government to withstand its critics who maintained that the war was a stalemate (Cronje 1972:159). However Colonel Robert Scott, the British Defence Adviser who reported on the Federal Forces capability to achieve victory in the 1969/70 dry season refuted the term "stalemate". He said "The term 'stalemate' is unjustified. Both sides continued to attack and counter-attack and clearly the Federal troops now have the capability of mounting a major offensive and one hope for sustained offensive. As long as manoeuvre is possible an outcome is equally possible therefore such state does nort exist" (Scott cited by Cronje 1972: 160).

Colonel Robert Scott further stressed that the Nigerian Forces were capable "despite their limitations" of achieving victory provided: '(a) that they can formulate and pursue a single valid aim and that all ranks committed to battle are sufficiently motivated; (b) that the Federal Military Government do not lose heart because of continued political pressure to bring about a cease-fire prior to negotiating a settlement with the rebels. This at present seems unlikely; (c) that the Federal higher command can impose their will upon their field commanders to ensure they move jointly and determinedly to achieve the Federal Military Government's aims; (d) that the field formations prove capable of maintaining momentum" (Scott cited by Cronje 1972). Scott went further to emphasise that the Federal Forces, however, had to achieve two main tasks to attain victory: (a) to deny the use of the terminal airstrip complex at Uli to the rebels; (b) to defeat the rebel field force before they can succeed in establishing their independence conclusively in international eyes" (Scott cited by Cronje 1972). He predicted that the 1st Division on the northern front would move to capture Uli, with the 2nd and 3rd Divisions

in support. He later admitted that he had been completely wrong in this prediction: as things turned out, the 3rd Division suddenly found the Biafrans collapsing on their south-eastern front, and 3 Marine Division swept through Biafra, capturing Owerri and arriving at Uli - the last strategic point to fall - before 1st Division apparently had time to take stock of the situation (Scott cited by Cronje 1972).

The fact that the British were very much concerned can be gleansed from the confirmation of the stalemate by Colonel Robert Scott, the British Military Adviser in its High Commission in Lagos. Going through the Military Adviser's panacea for victory in the dry season of 1969/70, the whole issue boadered on command and control; the problem of clear-cut aim and objective; the problem of lack of will on the part of the Federals; and finally the waning of momentum. If these are not pointer to stalemate what else? The truth was that the situation was almost getting out of hand which necessitated relieving of duties the General Officers Commanding (GOCs) 3 Marine Commando Division and 1st Division on 16 May, 1969 (Momoh ed.2000:xvii). Colonel Robert Scott's further mention of Uli airstrip as a problem was a pointer to the effectiveness of the new lease of life that the revamped Biafran Airforce had acquired and its devastating bombing of oil fields, oil terminals and other strategic locations. His reference to the need to defeat the rebel field force was a product of the changed strategy from conventional war strategy to that of guerrilla by the Biafrans. As an other rank in the war, the details were not too clear, though the general trend was quite understandable, especially one with some little refined educational background. The collapse of Biafra as one can understand from Cronje's account (1972:160-1) was not purely that of strategic military defeat but starvation aided. Suzanne Cronje remarked that Robert Scott could not be blamed for his strategic mistake for he was looking at issues from purely military point of view, where men and weapons decide, thus leaving out of account- though he must have known it- that starvation had been used as the most powerful weapon in the Nigerian conflict. An example in the war was the collapse of Biafra's 12 Division near Aba whose men were too demoralised-whose units had not received their rations for days, perhaps weeks, and some of the soldiers were so hungry that they collapsed. Many of them threw away their weapons and gave up the

battle (Cronje 1972; Tedheke's eye witness account January 1970). The situation was so bad at the end of 1969 that Ojukwu asked the relief agencies to supply some food to his army. However, the request was turned down. This was a pointer not only to how desperate the situation was but also that it was not normal for Biafran troops to rely on the relief agencies for their rations (Cronje 1972:161).

By 1969 the food situation in Biafra became so acute as relief workers at the time recalled that they had to protect the public during the distribution of food from soldiers who were waiting to take it from the people by force, as such armed guards had to be used to safeguard the stores. This situation was said to be unprecedented compared to what prevailed earlier on but now precautions had to be taken to prevent soldiers from attacking distribution points. This development followed the loss by Biafra of important food growing areas north of the Onitsha-Enugu road towards the end of the year. It was equally as a result of the fact that the Joint Church Aid (JAC) by itself could not supply what the combined efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the voluntary agencies had brought in before the I.C.R.C. plane was shot down by Nigeria in June 1969. Joint Church Aid had made good some of the deficiency; in autumn 1969 it was estimated that the airlift provided some 200 tons a night. This was, of course, far from enough, and the severe shortage had naturally affected the population as a whole-including the army. The collapse of Biafra from the Aba area in December 1969 would have happened anyway without the last massive dose of British arms and the Soviet 122mm guns trained on Uli (Cronje 1972:162).

The speed with which the Federals tore through tte defences of Biafra's 12 Division tends to corroborate the fact that 'General Stavation' was responsible for the unreplied offensive of the Marines. From April 25, 1969 through May 16, 1969 when there were changes in command of both 1st and 3rd Division of the Nigerian Army to January 7, 1970 operation "Tail Wind" the final push by 3 Marine Commando Division to break rebel resistance, there was stalemate of a sort. However the very rapid breakthrough by 3 Marine Commando of the rebel defences from the south-east really suggests fatigue and starvation as having done the trick for Nigeria at this dieing hour of the Civil

War. From January 7, 1969 commencement of operation “Tail Wind” to January 12 when Biafrans announced the surrender, it was just six days difference. The only operation that surpassed this during the entire Civil War was the betrayal of the Mid-West by the Ibo elements in the state leading to Biafrans occupation of the Mid-Western state on August 9th, 1967. The researcher witnessed the collapse of Biafra, the dropping of guns by fighting Biafran soldiers, the tragedy of the starved population and so on. In this human tragedy, the relief could not meet the exigencies of the moment, especially within the first one week. But the hope that kept the victims on was that the war had ended. For those of us on the side of the triumphant forces, we had to visit Orlu Relief Centre, Radio Biafra “Enugu” via Obodoukwu masted on a large tall tree and Uli airport litterd with reckages of relief planes (Tedheke’s eye witness account 1970).

5.8 Summary

We have categorically proved that the issue of the *national question* is not just a political issue but a political economy issue. It is an issue that is heralded by economic bonds which results in a political integration. For Mid-West in particular and Nigeria in general, the factors that would result in the resolution of the *national question* are lacking and hence the great betrayal of the Mid–West and the rebel occupation of the state on August 9, 1967. However, the rebel occupation resulted in the coalescence of the class forces on the side of Federal Nigeria. The comprador classes of Mid-West, Western and Lagos states fell solidly behind the Northern landed/feudal classes. The creation of 2 Division was a fall-out of the rebel invasion of Mid-West state on August 9, 1967. The invasion resulted in the massive recruitment of the Mid-Westerners, the Western and Lagos states elements into the Nigerian Army, particularly the Second Division of the Nigerian Army (St. Jorre 1977). The coalescence of forces led to the very rapid dislodgement of the invading rebel Liberation Army or 11 Division from the Mid-West thus it was prevented from penetrating deep into Western state. The coalescence of other Nigerian landed/rentier/comprador classes against their Eastern counterparts changed the phase of the Civil War from a war between the Northern and Eastern landed/rentier/comprador classes to a truly Nigerian Civil War. It also changed

the strategy from that of a “Police Action” to a “Total War” (Momoh 2000).

The 2 Division that was a child of circumstance tore through the Mid-West aided by elements of the nascent 3 Marine Commando like a torrent and by October 8, 1967 Asaba was under the control of Nigerian Federal Forces. However, this rapid operation by 2 Division did not come without a fall-out. It led to the trials and executions of Brigadier Victor Banjo and his associates as sabotours (Ottah 1980). On the Nigerian side, the victories of 2 Division led the Divisional Commander, Colonel Murtala Ramat Mohammed into very tragic mishaps in attempts at assault landing on Onitsha from Asaba. Three of such attempts were made and each one proved very disastrous thus closing the chapter of 2 Divisions assault landing to capture Onitsha (Momoh 2000; Madiebo 1980). The sweet victories through Mid-West by 2 Division, a product of the collaboration and cooperation by the non-Ibo elements in the state was taken for granted by the Divisional Commander who wanted to replicate such by embarking on adventurism. This coming shortly after the massacre of Ibos at Asaba perhaps strengthed the resolve of the Biafrans to fight to the last man was a wrong strategic adventure. It made Federal Nigeria to lose a lot of men and materials in the River Niger assault crossing. The Commander of 2 Division later changed his mind and organised through land route to capture Onitsha. This was accomplished five months after the failed assault landings. However, the Abagana tragedy once again happened to the 2 Division in which a lot of men and materials were lost (Momoh 2000).

The major dynamic change in the political economy of the Third World is the transition from the primary agricultural export crops production to minerals. This has been as a result of the increasing technological transformation in the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe, North America and Japan. This transition though has created a dependent comprador/rentier/landed bourgeoisie in the Third World, it has not made it a class that can transform society but in its feature, it is dependent on the vagaries of their mentors of advance capital. Whether in agricultural produce or mineral exports this class remained a rent seeking class. One of the ways in which the transition from agricultural export crops to minerals exports is being effected is through the

deteriorating terms of trade brought about by the cheapening of these export crops from the Third World. The reduction in exports of primary export crops in some cases has been reduced by the production of synthetic materials, for example rubber, vegetable oil and so on. This sort of situation of reduction in exports through deteriorating terms of trade and reductions in exports through synthetic production by the avanced capitalist countries led to a shift from raw agricultural export materials to that of strategic minerals which does not change the nature of the rentier/landed classes or comprador bourgeoisie. In the class formation process this intensifies the intra-class struggles between imperialism and the landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois class and equally between the various factions of the internal landed/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie which resulted in crises of the First Republic, the coup and counter coups of 1966 and the Civil War.

Wars are not neutral. It is a product of material conditions and contradictions of society. Hence Clausewitz (1832:23) defines war essentially as "…a mere continuation of politics by other means." Every facet of the Nigeria Civil War confirmed the foregoing from the pretence of "Police Action", to "Total War" after the rebel invasion of Mid-West on 9 August, 1967 to the struggles for the oil producing states of the Eastern miniorities. In this respect, the importance of crude oil to both the Nigerian and Biafran landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes and above all to both imperialist Britain and France cannot be down played. The Nigerian crude oil according to Cronje (1972:23-4) provided Britain with 10 percent of its energy needs prior to the 1967 Arab-Isreali War resulting in the closure of the Suez Canal. Thus Britain was forced to readjust its source or pattern of oil supplies. The impact of this oil embargo was very negative on the British as she lost abou £10 million a month from July and double that from September 1967 leading into a trade deficit which Her Magesty's Government hoped to keep balanced or even in its favour that year. For France oil was not left out hence the politics of oil between Nigeria and Britain on the one hand and Biafra and France's Rotschild on the other (Cronje 1972).

Crude oil was strategic to all those involved in the Nigerian Civil War whether as antagonists or supporters. This accounted for the more intense battles in the southern fronts of the secessionist republic. Adekunle (2000:261) pointed at an initial strategic miscalculation when the war was initiated from the north of secessionist Biafra. He said that was a strategic error by the then Northern controlled Federal Military Government. He stressed, “They forgot one thing-the economic strategy involved in the wining of any war. Whoever owns the economic power can at least go into sustaining power. You can really get anywhere. So the idea occurred to the Federal Government then that the south must not be left alone. Fighting from the north alone wouldn’t win any war so the southern fronts must also be opened. The southern fronts were opened and unfortunately I was nominated to be the Commander.” The secessionists needed the oil badly as a bargaining chip with imperialism and the multinational oil companies. And with its dwindling fortune of war, the strategic importance of crude oil assumed a new dimension which was hitherto taken for granted-the oil to fuel the military machine. This brought out the significance of Owazza and Egbema oil fields to Biafra to obtain fuel to prosecute the war. Thus fierce battles were inevitable in the southern fronts for the landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes interests in Nigeria, those of imperialism and the Biafran war machine.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPACTS AND LESSONS OF THE CIVIL WAR

6.0 Introduction

The impacts of the Nigerian Civil War were numerous. These include among others the creation of states which the national leaders in the regions before independence felt was impossible prior to the First Republic. The colonial authority through the Willink Commission though saw the problem of the minorities refused to accede to the request of the minorities for their own states. In the words of Ezera (1964: 252) "As a result of this inquiry, hopes were raised and inter-tribal (sic) feelings and animosities exacerbated. The demand for separate states filled the air. Yet in its recommendations, published three months after, the Commission did not recommend the creation of a single new state. It did not think the creation of new states in each of the regions would provide a remedy for the fears of the minorities". It thus recommended other constitutional measures to safeguard the rights of the ethnic minorities. Despite the foregoing recommendations, the rights of the minorities in the three major regions of the immediate post-independence Nigeria were trampled upon and criminally disregarded by the dominant political parties in the different regions that were equally ethnically dominated. Thus the issue of the *national question* exacerbated leading to very intense struggles in the forms of inter-regional, intra-regional, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic or inter-tribal in nature which became very pervasive in the immediate post-independence Nigeria which set the political space on overheat. We shall investigate all the various facets of the *national question* including states creation whether such have solved the issues of the *national question* or it is being progressively tackled in the interest of national integration.

One of the issues to be raised in the discourse here is whether the Nigerian Civil War was a progressive war or not. By progressive war we mean a war fought to remove the fetters of the old order that hinder the free development of society and indeed of the productive forces. A progressive war is a war that is fought to mutate society and

change it from the lower form of culture to a higher one. It is a war that is meant to revolutionise society, to transform it from existing oppressive material relations of production to a more egalitarian one that is more able to free society from the fetters or obstacles to its free development. It is revolutionary war of transition from the old order of oppressive material productive relations to new society more organised in productive life than the one superseded. It was the foregoing Marx (1984: 21) meant when he said:

> At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or-this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms-with property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure.

We shall, therefore, examine the dialectics of progress as it relates 'to the Nigerian society and see whether the Nigerian Civil War was an embodiment of progressive values. In this respect, we now delve into the dynamics of the class forces and see whether they are on the path of historical transformation or not. Various people at the threshold of history fought wars to revolutionise their productive lives and societies. The new forces in the womb of their ancient regimes struggle to overcome the fetters or obstacles of the old society struggling to be born to open up new hopes, new vision, new vistas and new horizons. Marx (1984: 21) said that in order to understand such transformations it is necessary always to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic-in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production.
Marx (1984) further stressed that a social order is never destroyed until all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their

existence have matured within the framework of the old society. In this direction, therefore, we shall examine the forces that went to war in Nigeria and see whether they were transformative or not. We shall, therefore, revisit our concepts of non-transformative and transformative values in war and in peace. It would sound cynical that in trying to touch at the depth of the non-transformative and transformative values and war, it could be deduced that Nigeria and Nigerian's lost the war. The deductions that would give us out to the foregoing conclusions are the continuous retention of the poverty of the political economy of imperialism and its landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes. The question which thus begs for very urgent answers, therefore, is "whose war and whose victory"? The Nigerian Civil War was won by the Nigerian very conservative landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeois classes but we lost the peace, we lost the progress that the war would have afforded Nigerians which are its developmental processes and the progressive transformation of society. Liebhold (2000:44) said that the crisis in Vietnam's post-war situation was an indication that the country won the war against the Americans but lost the peace. We can confidently say that this Vietnam situation has been however short-lived as Vietnam has started real progress but contrary is the case in Nigeria as we profited little or nothing from the war. What Nigeria has achieved was mere psychological victory minus the material foundation of this victory.

6.1 The Political Economy of the Internationalisation of the Civil War

The political economy of the landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes is a political economy of a rent seeking class and not a truly organising capitalist productive class. Unable to provide for its war needs in defence materials, the landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes must seek for external sources to cater for its logistics needs to prosecute a war. This was the characteristic nature of Nigeria's national defence and security which was the bane of the Nigerian military prior to the Civil War, during the Civil War and after. The Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact of 1960 was meant to serve the interests of the ruling classes of Britain and Nigeria. It committed Nigeria to assist in the defence of Britain if the later was attacked by any country, including the former Soviet Union. And by it, Nigeria became, in law and infact, an ally of a member state of the

North Atlantic Treat Organisation (NATO) and, *ipso fact,* indirectly part of the NATO defence system. Thus the arrangements were premised on the belief that the main external threat to Nigeria's security would come from the former Communist states and organisations. As a result, it was believed that the Western (capitalist) world, especially Britain, would help to shield Nigeria from the Communist peril (Asobie 1988; 18-19)

After the coup and counter coup that deepened the crisis of the Nigerian state in 1966, there was the specific objective by the Nigerian state to attract external military support to prevent the dismemberment of Nigeria. In its quest for military aid to defeat Biafra, the Federal Military Government found itself approaching countries of both the capitalist West and the socialist East. At first, however, Britain remained the preferred source of military assistance. For instance soon after the January 15 coup d'etat the American Embassy in Lagos offered military aid to transport the Northern group of Federal Ministers meeting in Lagos; but they preferred British assistance. Britain agreed to provide military help provided a formal request signed by Zanna Bukar Diphcharima, as the Acting Prime Minister, was made. However, when the British became assured that Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi was working to restore the political status quo ante, the British promised him military assistance to subdue Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and his fellow coup plotters. Thus even in the midst of the political crisis, the British were prominent as sources of military assistance for the maintenance of internal security. They were never perceived as source of threat to Nigeria's national security. As such, with the outbreak of the Civil War, the Federal Military Government came to rely on the Western powers except France and the United States for military support and supplies of military equipment, weapons, and ammunition and for expert advice as well as logistics and diplomatic support (Asobie 1988: 29-30)

However, the Nigerian Government in the period of the slide into the Civil War and during the Civil War discovered that the threat to Nigerian unity and territorial integrity came from certain Western (capitalist) states and their allies in Africa. The authorities in Lagos came to discover that imperialist France and its African surrogates, such unrepentant colonialists as Portugal and Spain and intrasigent racists such as Voster's

South Africa and Ian Smith's Rhodesia; even the handmaiden of the United States, Israel aided Nigeria's dismemberment while the US itself stopped arms supply to the Federal side and sent in tons of relief materials to Biafra. It must be remembered that the Nigerian Government approached the former Soviet Union and its allies for military assistance only after Britain and the United States had turned down its request for the purchase of military aircrafts. It must be noted too that Soviet military supplies to Nigeria during this period did not entail any form of financial aid from the Soviet Union. The arms deals were on strict commercial terms. Indeed, the Illyshin aircrafts, for instance, were paid for by Nigerians, with loans from Egypt (Asobie 1988: 30). This detailed reference to Harold Assissi Asobie's article is to give us the incontrovertible fact that the Nigerian state and equally the secessionist Biafra were both dependent on foreign sources for the arms supplies with which they persecuted the Civil War. This was the case because they were not organised in modern capitalist scientific and industrial production enterprises hence they depended highly and indeed completely on external sources for their total arms supplies.

The basis of Nigeria's defence and equally the survival of Biafra was dependent on external sources hence the nature of dependent externalisation of the Civil War from both sides. The secessionist Biafra was, therefore, not to be blamed alone in the externalisation of the Nigerian Civil War. The externalisation was as a result of the political economy of the rentier/ landed/comprador bourgeois classes, its mode of organisation of their state or centre of political power and accumulation. In this respect, therefore, the nature of the externalisation is as a result of the nature of the political economy of dependence of both Nigerian and Biafran comprador/landed/rentier classes. In this regard both are guilty of the same offense of externalisation and it would have been impossible for a contrary position, that is, not externalising the conflict as the nature of the externalisation was a logical consequence of the Nigeria's and indeed Biafra's dependent landed/rentier/comprador classes. We are aware that Biafra needed the externalisation badly as it would accord the secessionists the legitimacy they needed as a new born entity seeking for nationhood or statehood among the comity of nations. Biafra was thus seeking for diplomatic recognition to ease her

acceptance as a state in the international system. The Nigerian Federal Military Government under General Yakubu Gowon did not need this but she needed sources of arms supplies in order to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion. The Biafrans needed both the diplomatic recognition and sources of arms supplies in order to sustain and realise the Biafran dream of statehood.

The impact of the Nigerian Civil War in the foregoing direction, therefore, has been the further deepening of Nigeria's dependency. Enormous dangers abound in a nation becoming over-dependent in its relationships with foreign powers in both its grand strategy and military strategy. The general scenario in Africa does not point to the fact that there would have been any difference if Biafra had had its way. Biafra's dependence on external sources for arms and ammunition like Nigeria was total. In Momoh (ed) (2000: 157) the supply of arms and ammunition throughout the war remained Biafra's main problem. At the outbreak of the war, the Biafran soldiers had only the small arms that had been brought back from the other parts of the country before the exodus and those left on the shelves in the local depots. Biafra equally bought from surplus armament dealers, during the war, a wide range of weapons of varying calibres (Cervenka 1972 cited by Momoh ed 2000). The influx of weapon into Biafra during the war through night flights notwithstanding, the supplies were not enough to fully equip all Biafran formations. Rather than improve the arms situation, it aggravated the problem. The situation did not improve despite, the substantial quantities of weapons captured from the Nigerian troops at different encounters. The situation was grievously compounded with Biafra's lack of heavy weapons and equipment making their troops left with no other option than to operate the few armoured cars captured from Nigerian troops and other home-made rockets, grenades and crude aerial bombs such as "ogbunigwe" (Momoh 2000: 157). The lesson from the Biafra's war experience which holds true for Nigeria equally is that foreign dependence by a state is inimical to the evolution and defense of national interests (Akinyemi 1980: 6). This is scientifically correct despite the fact that Nigeria won the war in acute dependence on foreign arms and ammunition while Biafra lost the war because of her heavy dependence resulting in inadequate supplies of war materials, arms and

ammunition.

In other to confront the marauding Minicon's and their soldiers of fortune that flew them to bomb crude oil installations, the Nigeria Federal Forces had to rely on the Soviets and the British for arms, ammunition and bombers to break the stalemate. This dangerous development by the Minicon bombers almost crippled the oil flows and demoralised the Nigerian Government and Federal troops. Britain had to respond by supplying an unprecedented large shipments of arms to Lagos (Cronje 1972: 200). We have noted earlier that dependence aided Nigerian victory over Biafra in the war and obstructed Biafran chances to winning the war. Biafra lost the war because of her dependence on foreign sources for arms supply, though the case was the same with Nigeria that equally depended on external sources to prosecute the war successfully. We noted that such factors as lack of sovereignty and the success of the encirclement and suppression campaigns by the Nigerian Forces sealed off Biafra and made it impossible for arms and ammunition to flow into Biafra in the required quantities to aid her successful prosecution of the war. Oragwu (1989: 289) said that Nigeria had technological incapacitation when she was ushered into the Civil War but the situation was assuaged because she had access to all necessary imports which was her bloodstream for surviving and winning the war. For Biafra, the contrary was the case which made her have more incentive in her technological breakthrough in many areas providing for her war machine.

6.1.1. Landed Aristocracy, Comprador Bourgeois Classes, Desperation, Propaganda and Externalisation of the War

The desperation on the part of both the Biafran and the Nigerian landed/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes resulted in the use of instruments of propaganda as a weapon of war. The Biafran authority needed more of the propaganda in order to generate enough sympathy and gain support from those that would be sympathetic towards its course of action. The Nigerian Government was no less prone to propaganda as she had a problem of secession at hand. Ukpabi (1989: 278) said that the illegality of the act of secession provided the Nigerian state with the justification

and the propaganda material to back up its war-effort. Its argument would be that it was compelled to go to war to restore the unity of the country: an argument which many countries in Africa and other parts of the world would support. Biafrans needed a hard-headed propaganda on the other hand because the act of secession placed her at a moral disadvantage since any country that would try to assist her would immediately be accused of supporting a rebellion against a legal Government. Thus the tone was set for both sides in the Nigerian Civil War to set out its line and course of propaganda in order to win sympathy for its course. According to Cronje (1972: 210) the connectedness between propaganda and foreign policy became very obvious in the Nigerian Civil War, that the two were inextricably intertwined not only in the statements of the two parties to the conflict but also in words and actions of their backers.

The propaganda of both sides to the Civil War took the dimension it took because of the desperations of the parties to the conflict, their political economy of dependence and their rentier/landed/comprador bourgeois classes' world view. Nigeria was not in the mainstream of thought and action in the remarkable strides since the emergence of the modern states system in science and technological achievements. It is of paramount importance to emphasise that the power equation in the world for the past five hundred years in the international system has been based on the level of scientific and technological achievements by global powers principally based in Western Europe, North America and Japan (Sen 1984; Kennedy 1989: xxiv Oragwu 1989; 214). In the absence of the foregoing to support the war on both sides, the import of propaganda to win the sympathy of those who would aid the war efforts of both sides became a life-and-death matter. We have earlier noted that Biafra needed propaganda badly to crave the necessary sympathy for her recognition as a new entity striving for independence in the international system. This was very necessary because she was placed at a disadvantage as a result of the stigma attached to secession globally. She needed serious propaganda also in order to be able to corner sympathisers that would help her in her defence materials to be able to sustain her dream of secession and independence from Nigeria. Nigeria and indeed its landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes equally needed propaganda to prevent

the world-wide recognition of Biafra as a sovereign nation and also to get at sympathisers to aid her in her armament and ammunition supplies to deal with the ongoing rebellion. Thus, it was incumbent on both sides to externalise the Civil War. The basic critical issue in this externalisation was the death of arms supplies to both sides and the paucity with which it trickled in at both sides in critical situations which was more acute in Biafra (Cronje 1972; Ukpabi 1989; Oragwu 1989; St Jorre 1972; Momoh (ed.) 2000).

In the modern times, no nation will go to war without some degree of moral support from others who believe in their course of action. In the Vietnamese War, the Americans intervened on the side of the landed/rentier/comprador capitalist classes of the South Vietnam against the Ho Chi Min Revolutionary Forces of North Vietnam and the Vietcong of the South who were supported by the Socialist Forces globally (Giap 1970). The two antagonists needed the externalisation of the conflicts for arms and ammunition supplies to be able to prosecute the war. For the then South Vietnamese Government, the Americans had to intervene on their side in addition to the arms and ammunition supplies by the United States and other Western capitalist countries. The North Vietnamese principally fought the war on their own but with sizeable shunk of arms and ammunition supplies from the Socialist States which were the former Soviet Union and China as the principal helpers of North Vietnam or Hanoi. The struggle was between the forces of centrifugation (South Vietnam) and those of centripetal disposition (North Vietnam) who battled for either the break-up of Vietnam backed by imperialist United States and other Western capitalist countries and a united Vietnam aided by the socialist camp of the cold-war era. No matter how self-sufficient a nation is, in going to war with another nation, it needs some moral suation to be able to carry its strategic agenda into effect. A good example of such was the 1991 and 2001 American invasions of Iraq. The United States convinced other nations to back her up as a moral strategy for the war. In all these wars and others not mentioned, the issue of propaganda was of paramount importance. It was a serious war strategy to win support for either side to the war. Propaganda was used for diplomatic offensive and support, to mobilise world public opinion for the different sides to those conflicts. While in the cases

of the Vietnamese War and the Nigerian Civil War propaganda was to mobilise world public opinion on either sides for diplomatic supports, they equally were aimed at military help from sympathetic supporters.

6.1.2 Diplomatic Offensive, Propaganda and the Nigerian Civil War

A common factor in all modern war is diplomatic offensive in order to garner moral and material support for a war whether intra or inter-state. No matter the nature of the war, propaganda and diplomacy go hand-in-hand. We have noted earlier Cronje's (1972: 210) assertion of the interconnectedness between propaganda and foreign policy in war. Foreign policy is a strategy or planned course of action developed by the decision-makers of a state vis-a-vis other states/ non-state actors or international entities, aimed at achieving specific goals defined in terms of national interest. A specific foreign policy carried on by a state may be the result of an initiative by that state or maybe a reaction to initiatives undertaken by other states (Plano & Olton 1992:6). Biafra's national interest of self-determination in her dream of secession and Nigeria's national interest in surviving as an entity were the two dimensions to the foreign policies of both sides to the Civil War. In this respect, propaganda was a major instrument in their foreign policy offensive or diplomacy. Plano and Olton (1992: 241) defined diplomacy as the "… practice of conducting relations between states through official representatives. Diplomacy may involve the entire foreign relations process, policy formulation as well as execution. In this broad sense a nation's diplomacy and foreign policy are the same. In the narrower, more traditional sense, however, diplomacy involves means and mechanisms whereas foreign policy implies ends and objectives. In this more restricted sense, diplomacy includes the operational techniques whereby a state pursues its interests beyond its jurisdiction."

The key interest of both Nigeria and Biafra was based on the same philosophical ground of survival, though the interest diverged in either keeping the country united as Nigeria or breaking it up to bring to birth a new nation, Biafra. Thus the battle for survival took two different paths in propaganda and diplomacy. In the internal propaganda both sides to the Civil War achieved even weight in a way. However in the

external "…. the Biafrans won hands down and in doing so (it) greatly enhanced their diplomatic and political aims. The official projections of the Biafran cause and image abroad was an integral part of the drive for international recognition, humanitarian involvement and material assistance" (St Jorre 1972; 351). The diplomacy of the Biafrans was carried out before the shooting war through the Eastern members of Nigerian embassies. Later, full-time diplomatic emissaries were appointed most of whom were highly skilled and dedicated diplomats and who, as individuals, tended to put their Nigerian opponents in the shade (St Jorre 1972). In this respect John de St. Jorre emphasised:

> The Biafrans then mustered an impressive band of international heavy weights, men who were already well known in the international circles: the politicians such as 'Zik' and Okpara, lawyers like Mbanefo, the Church officials like Ibiam, academics-Dike and Njoku-and writers such as Ekwensi and Achebe. Historically, the Easterners had one of the most efficient information services and some of the best people in the Federal Service (St Jorre 1972; 351)

In foreign policy and diplomacy, the domestic situation often in most cases determines the external projections. The propaganda war was well prepared before the actual shooting took place but Biafrans were strangely slow in projecting themselves until the starvation episode virtually did the job for them almost a year into the war. The dilemma of the Biafrans was that they were torn between realities and phantom claims, between the 'invincible' and the "beleaguered" images of Biafra. The invincible image was desirable for attracting speedy recognition, possible new investment and for squeezing money out of the oil companies. It was equally the only possibility to keep the home front in high spirit and such was maintained through out the war despite the fact that the theme of propaganda had swung through 180 degrees on the starvation issue to prick the conscience of humanity (St Jorre 1977: 352). Momoh (ed.) (2000; 186-7) said that Biafra's propaganda exploits at the international level was quite ingenous. As it easily earned a distinction on the basis of her techniques, to earn the sympathy of the world by projecting the sufferings of children. The world knows that war is not exactly a picnic and it is accepted that unnecessary deprivation, hunger, sufferings and starvation might be alright for adults but not for children. Children fall victims of war but no nation before

Biafra had exploited that phenomenon exclusively to prick the conscience of its antagonist and equally command the sympathy of the world as much as Biafra did. Thus the Biafrans photographed a child afflicted by *kwashiorkor* and splashed it on television screens and newspapers all over the world. It was the magic wand which succeeded where Biafra's public relations consultants, the relief and religious organisations and Biafran diplomacy failed. The success of Biafra's propaganda on the suffering of children in war has aroused the conscience of the world to the issue of children in conflicts and has become a major concern of the world and the United Nations since then.

The phases of Biafran propaganda deserves attention in its content and the way in which first one then another theme or/phase received the strongest orchestration. In the early days, the 'religious' war was played up. The tone was that the Muslem Northerners, backed by the Arabs and the Russian anti-Christ's were bent on a fanatical *jihad* against the Christian Easterners. However, this made little rounds as it was not corroborated by facts, since Gowon himself and two-thirds of his Executives were Christians, while the bulk of the Federal Army was non-Muslim soon exposed this phase of the propaganda. The next phase was the issue of deliberate mass starvation and genocide which came to the fore and the latter had the longest and most effective run. When the foregoing was being lashed by reports of foreign correspondents, the increasing numbers of Ibos living in liberated Federal zones in the war areas by the International Observer Team and other visitors to the fronts, the Biafrans cleverly switched to 'genocide by starvation' and even 'economic genocide'. In the whole period of the war, the under-dog image helped Biafra considerably and so did the Jewish comparison but none of the propaganda theme marched the power of the starvation/genocide appeal (St. Jorre 1977: 152-3). In all, what brought the true nature of the war a little closer to its distant audience was the television which made the leading actors familiar in a way that photographs and words failed to achieve. There is a little doubt, too, that television film of the relief situation in Biafra had the greatest effect in stirring the conscience of the Western world, even more so than the provocative pictures which the humanitarian organisations used in their posters (St

Jorre 1977; 357). The Biafran television propaganda were effective making Baroness Asequith said in the British Lords Official Report of 27 August 1968 that; “Thanks to the miracle of television, we see history happening before our eyes. We see no Igbo propaganda; we see facts (cited in Cronje 1972: 210).

Having been pushed down the ladder in propaganda, the Federal Nigerian Government had to hire a consultancy outfit and was equally aided by the official position of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the British Government. The OAU had a very supportive position for the Federal Nigerian Government throughout the Civil War while equally playing the role of an arbiter between the two belligerent brothers. This position of the OAU strengthened Nigeria’s image abroad which was used by the Soviets to justify their support for Nigeria. The British Government position in favour of Nigeria was also very consistent as the war lasted despite that her support in terms of armaments was quite ambivalent. The official position of the British in this matter was contradictory to its public opinion which was tilted in favour of Biafra because of the very effective television propaganda (Momoh (ed.) 2000: 187). The foregoing position of the Nigerian Army publication on the Civil War is a very simplistic view. Ezera (1964: 250) saw as one of the major obstacles to the creation of more states in Nigeria during the Willinks’ Commission on the creation of states/regions on the reluctance of the British to do so. He said, “Another factor which tended to stand in the way of the creation of more states was the British official attitude, which, in its formalistic concern for the unity of Nigeria, had hitherto been strongly opposed to what it regarded as the ‘fragmentation’ of the country-a view which had been held and re-stated by successive colonial secretaries”.

Equally the British position on Nigeria could be gleaned from its ideology of decolonisation and indeed those of other colonial powers that manipulated the processes in order to snatch the rearguards of the national liberation movements (Nkrumah 1973). Thus, Chinweizu (1978: 162) correctly stressed that, “The British imperialist powers and those of France found ready lackeys through which they bribed to submission and therefore the state quo was willingly accepted”. The position of

Britain during the Civil War like her decolonisation of Nigeria was not a product of humanitarianism but of a deeper consideration of overall economic interest of Britain. It was also as a result of intra- imperialist struggles between Britain and France over the control of Nigeria's mineral resources, especially crude oil that became very strategic in the economic calculations of both imperialist powers after the 1967 Middle East Arab-Israeli War (Cronje 1972; St Jorre 1977). The fact that the official position of Britain was divergent from that of its public opinion was therefore not surprising. The ambivalent nature of British attitude in arms supplies to Nigeria which (Momoh (ed.) 2000) referred to was to some extent correct but the British in their always clever diplomatic approaches to issues of this nature might have adopted the 'wait and see' stance in order to play safe in the event of the unexpected happening.

The propaganda between the antagonists in the Civil War metamorphosed into equally a bitter propaganda between the two most powerful erstwhile former colonial imperialists in Africa-Britain and France. The French attitude towards Biafra according to Cronje (1972: 323) must be seen in the light of historical context of its colonial rivalry with Britain and the political tensions between them at the time. Suzanne Cronje saw it as Charles de Gaulle's Anglo-phobia, and his determination to initiate foreign policies which were independent of Washington and London, naturally predisposed him towards the Biafrans. St Jorre (1977: 210) said, "…while Britain refused to withdraw its support from the Federal Government, France moved on the Biafran side. The position of the two erstwhile colonialist rivals in Africa thus hardened and this was to follow in intra-imperialist propaganda". St Jorre (1977: 212-3) said that why France was bent towards Biafra was principally for three major considerations which are only political and nothing else. These he identified to be: (a) that de Gaulle disliked federations, especially large ones and that Nigeria as one if she succeeds would present a strong pole of attraction to the weak francophone states around her; (b) that the concept of Biafra appealed to the ideological and political instinct of the French leader, a nationalism struggling for self-determination. Thus aiding Biafra, France would be fulfilling its historic and Gaullist-inspired destiny of encouraging true nationalism, strengthening the middle way between the two cold war power blocs and asserting France's independence from the

Anglo-Saxons and Russians who, in this case, were all conveniently lined up on the Nigerian side. The French President de Gaulle is said to rarely miss an opportunity on Britain and America, and Biafra, with Britain firmly on the side of Nigeria, provided an excellent and not too risky opportunity. And (c) there was the role of the Ivorien President, Houghonet-Biogny, de Gaulle's oldest and most respected African friend.

John de St Jorre saying that the entire issue was political was quite incomprehensible in the manner the intra-imperialist propaganda exacerbated between Britain and France. The root of the intra-imperialist rivalry and propaganda could be traced to some truth in the allegation of Anglo-French rivalry in Africa. In the words of Cronje (1972: 198), "De Gaulle had a deep sense of history, and the French felt they had been cheated by the British in the scramble for Africa which was set off by the Berlin Conference of 1884-5". Thus one can see the reason for the hardened positions between the two erstwhile colonial powers in Africa in the Nigerian Civil War. The scramble for Africa was not political but economic and the revival of that scramble in the Nigerian Civil War cannot be said to be entirely political as John de St Jorre would make us believe. Of particular concern were conservative fears in Britain played upon by suggestions that the French were out to gain for themselves spheres of Britain's traditional interests. The British press with concocted evidence stated that Rothschild, a French banking house, had done a deal with Ojukwu involving oil concessions, which was bandied about (Cronje 1972: 198). The economics of the war of the press between Britain and France has been a common thing between imperialist countries for centuries. In their scramble for North America, Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Oceania, the emergent industrial press played a key role in imperialist's expansionism. The fact is that the issue of humanitarianism was always put forward, however, the fears of British and French interest colliding in the war of words but economic interests is the real issue. This pointed to the rivalry between the French and Britain during the Nigerian Civil War.

The increasing propaganda occasioned by the human conditions in Biafra drew world conscience in favour of the secessionist republic. It only aided the relief operations that

went into Biafra. It did not do much to aid the international recognition of the secessionist republic. As we have noted earlier, the pictures of starvation on both the print and electronic media, especially, the television screne raised very deep sympathy for Biafra internationally. It made Biafra had access to the military supplies from Portugal, apartheid South Africa, Rhodesia and Israel (St Jorre 1977:218-9) in addition to the ones from France. However, from April to May 1968 four countries in Africa recognised Biafra. According to St Jorre (1977: 193) "… a dramatic series of events which threatened to change the entire course of the war occurred. On 13th April, Tanzania recognised Biafra; on 8th May Gabon followed suit, less than a week later, the Ivory Coast had recognised and on 20th May Zambia brought the total to four". The statements by the four countries concerned were said to have one thing in common which was their disappointment and frustration at the failure of the Federal Government to settle the crisis by peaceful means (St Jorre 1977: 194). Biafra's very effective propaganda especially that of the television had created the frustrating condition because of the issue of the human tragedy that was unfolding in Biafra at every turn of events.

6.2 Issues in the National Question

In all its national discourse the *national question* is confused with issues of the *nationality.* There is no doubting the fact that *nationality* which is a product of ethno-sectional identity is an integral aspect of the *national question* but not the sole issue in the *national question.* It includes rather all those issues which are of the material oppressive relations imposed by the dominant property relations or the relations of production either within or without. Thus the *resolution* of the *national question* transcends the ethnic *nationality* to embrace the issue of the fundamental transformation of economy and society, the issues of socio-economic and cultural integration of a nation. It equally embraces the *leadership question* or the leadership and the development process. If the American leadership had not fought the battle over the "Tea Tax" imposed by imperial Britain and through it won the war of independence, the 'American Dream' would not have been realised today. The *leadership question* is the fundamental issue that negated the *resolution* of the *national question* in Nigeria.

Chinweizu (1978:96) said: …The the demands for self-determination under imperialism and petty-bourgeois nationalism in Nigeria, nay in Africa never went beyond bourgeois legality, beyond parliamentary speeches and verbal protests was because of the orientation of the petty-bourgeois nationalists. As they found it in their class interests not to abolish the thrall of imperialism but to reform it. Rather than the liberation of the whole society from imperial relations, such men were quite happy to seek those civil liberties that would enable them to inherit colonial privileges and attain "civilised" status.

As a result of the liberal capitalist orientation of the Nigerian nationalists, the depth of their national liberation became suspicious and limited. The fact that it degenerated to identity and sectional politics tells the nature of Nigerian nationalism or the national liberation movement. Chinweizu (1978: 99) stressed thus: "That their limited struggles did result in our present degree of autonomy is no excuse for making fetish of it, or for not showing up its inadequacies and their sources. To understand what needs to be set right, we must understand what went wrong, where and why. The colonisation of Africa…, the emergence of an African petit-bourgeoisie indoctrinated into liberal capitalist beliefs-beliefs that did not sufficiently define their African domain of operation-were some of the factors that determined the nature of autonomy Africa would win after World War II". The foregoing has worked against *national integration* or the *resolution* of the *national question.* This has been as a result of the amalgam of the merchant class, the dependent industrial elements and the feudal landowners all profiting from the proceeds of the land and in alliance with imperialism that makes the independence won in yesteryears a sham (Baran 1978). Cabral (1980: 122) said: "The ideological deficiency, not to say the total lack of ideology, on the part of the national liberation movements-which is basically explained by ignorance of the historical reality which these movements aspire to transform-constitutes one of the greatest weaknesses, if not the greatest weakness of our struggle against imperialism."

The *national question* is a product of the imposition of material oppressive relations by a dominant property relations or the relations of production. In the periods of the emergence of capitalism in the womb of feudalism, it was the fetters of feudalism

against the rise of capitalism, obstacles to free development of society. In the periods of capitalist imperialism, the *national question* is the dynamics of the fetters imposed by this global outgrowth of capitalism in its various phases of semi-colonialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and indeed globalisation on the dependent peoples' capacity for independent development. The *resolution* of the *national question,* therefore, is the issue of freedom from material oppressive relations both within and without in order for a people to be able to act in self-determination to transform oppressive material and political relations for independent development. This has been hindered by the alliance of the merchant class, the dependent industrial elements, the feudal land owning/rentier/comprador classes and imperialism (Baran 1978) which forces perpetuated the crises of the Nigerian First Republic which emanated from the collapse of world commodity prices in the post-Korean War of 1953 (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986). The dilemma of the Nigerian state and its developmental process is that the state and society has not been in the mainstream of thought and action in the remarkable stride made over the past five centuries in scientific and technological development. As a result of her isolation from the foregoing process, the Nigerian state and society has been left with her static technological heritage. Nigeria's isolation by both internal and external forces from modern technology is a part of the reasons for her underdevelopment and her limited appreciation of the man-machine system arising from the interface of science, technology and society in their evolutionary process (Oragwu 1989: 214).

The *resolution* of the *national question* has been an issue of economic development based on science, technology and industrialisation since the emergence of capitalism some centuries ago. The *resolution* of the *national question* is an issue of *national integration*. During the period of the French Revolution, that gave birth to the modern French nation, few rural folk in the largely rural society of the *ancient regime* thought of themselves as being distinctly "French"-indeed, many of them did not even speak French (Weber 1976; Nodia 1994: 8-9). What made it possible that French became the national language and indeed language of *national integration*? It was industry or industrialisation and its outshoot-commerce. Laborde (1968) illustrated how industries,

modern industries united, the Germans, created united France and led to the emergence of the sprawling cities of New York areas to the Great Lakes. Fedoseyev et al (1977:51) said, objectively, however, people's national identity is in many ways, and sometimes entirely, determined by the social, economic and political ties shaped over the years, rather than by language or territory and ethnic features of culture, customs and traditions or by ethnic self- identification. On how populations of different and separate provinces in some states merged into one nation, Marx and Engels (1968: 397 cited by Fedoseyev et al 1977:51) stressed that national bonds appear on a social rather than ethnic basis in the form of common interests, moral standards and views. Halloran (1996: 4) said of the Asian Tigers that: "A lively nationalism, born of an anti-colonial struggle and post-colonial achievement is the driving force in Asia". The *resolution* of the *national question* therefore is a product of integrative processes of industrialisation based on modern science and technology.

6.2.1 The Military and the Deepening of the National Question

The crises that led to the Civil War were crises of national unity and indeed crises of *national integration*. The fundamental underpinnings of these crises were seen to be ethnic, regional, sectional or based on primordial sentiments by liberal ideologues. This group sees ethnic groups as lying in wait for one another nourishing age-old hatreds and restrained only by powerful states. Remove the lid, and the cauldron boils over. Various analysts in this regard have ideas of what the future would look like; some see the fragmentation of the world into small tribal groups; others, a face-off among several vast civilisational coalitions. They all share, however, the idea that the world's current conflicts are feuled by age-old ethnic loyalties and cultural differences. Bowen (1996: 3) said: "This notion misrepresents the genesis of conflicts and ignores the ability of diverse people to coexist."

In these matters the stop gaps in the *resolution* of the *nation question* by the coup plotters of January 15, 1966 was the elimination of some political and military leaders who were seen as tribalists, ethnic chauvinists or peddlers of nepotism. This anarchical approach towards the issue of *national integration* without a deeper and sound world

view could not have helped in bringing into being the much needed unity project. The aims of the coup plotters were riding the country of ethnic chauvinists and Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu said: “Our enemies are the political profiteers, the swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand ten percent; those who seek to keep the country divided permanently so that they can remain in office as ministers or VIPs at least, the tribalists, the nepotists, those that make the country look big for nothing before international circles, those that have corrupted out society and put the Nigerian political calendar back by their words and deeds” (Ademoyega 1981:89). The July 29, 1966 counter coup was worse off as it had no national unity agenda at all. Alli (2001: 213-4) said that the July 1966 coup was strictly regional and a Northern martial intervention designed to restore Northern spirit, meet Northern interests and to redress the killings of the January 1966 coup. …It was not a tribal coup; rather it was a regional hegemonic coup of revenge”. Alli’s conclusion that the coup of July was a hegemonic coup which seeks to maintain the Northern hold on Nigeria for the interests of the North is nothing short of the truth. What is this Northern interest? He answered it. He said, “ Since then, the North has contrived to hold on to power even when a non-Northerner was designated head of state between 1976-9” (Alli 2001:214). This confirms John R Bowen’s position that the basis of such conflicts is not ethnic but struggle for … power, land or other resources. The Aguiyi-Ironsi’s military rule, a child of circumstance equally aggravated the *national question.* The apolitical nature of Ironsi made his approach to the unity project to compound the whole process which degenerated into series of crises with his May 24, 1966 Decree 34, the Unitary Decree, leading to riots in Northern cities from May 29 which resulted in the killing of thousands of Nigerian citizens-not only Ibos, but also Yorubas, Efiks, Anangs, Ijaws and so on (Ademoyega 1981:112-3). This was preparatory to the July 29, 1966 counter coup which Mohammed Chris Alli said was a hegemonic coup of the North for Northern interests.

The July 29 coup like Ironsi’s military rule further exacerbated the *national question* and compounded issues of *national integration*. That the coup split the military down the middle was no exaggeration; it equally removed the pretence of “unity in diversity” that

the Nigerian rulers of the First Republic peddled all along. Yakubu Gowon exposed this reality and the general thinking in the North about the Nigerian unity project. The July 29, 1966 coup carried out by Northern officers was aimed at leading the North out of the Nigerian Federation through secession; its keyword was *araba*-the Hausa word for division or secession. Nigeria would have disintegrated at that stage were it not for British and American diplomatic intervention: Gowon, who emerged as the new leader, had prepared a statement to announce the dissolution of the country, but the British High Commissioner in Lagos at the time, Sir Francis Cuming Bruce, persuaded the new leader at the last minute to delete the vital clause (Cronje 1972:17). Even the amended speech delivered by Gowon on August 1 bears evidence of the thinking of secession despite the advised amendment. It went thus:

> I have now come to the most difficult but most important part of this statement. I am doing it conscious of the great disappointment and heart-break it will cause all true and sincere lovers of Nigeria and of the Nigerian unity, both at home and abroad, especially our brothers in the Commonwealth. As a result of the recent events and other previous similar ones, I have come to strongly believe that we cannot honestly and sincerely continue in this wise, as the basis for trust and confidence in our unitary system of government has been unable to stand the test of time. I have already remarked on the issue in question. Suffice to say that putting all considerations to test, political, economic as well as social, the basis for unity is not there, or is badly rocked not only once but several times. I therefore feel that we should review the issue of our national standing… (BBC ME/2229/B/ 1cited by Cronje 1972: 17)

The basis for national unity which eluded the dominant rentier/ landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeois classes also equally eluded the Nigerian military. *The dynamic value of national unity* is not a product of esoteric thinking, to be acquired in churches and mosques, it is a national core value based on sound economic development laced with both forward and backward integration. Thus Gowon struck at the absence of the *core value* of *national integration* without knowing it. At his time of leadership there was no basis for *national unity*, a unity that could not materialise because economic development based on imperialism had stagnated the unity project and brought into the fore the nationality crises or ethnic chauvinism. Even today the issue remains almost the same, if not the same. By 1978 Okwudiba Nnoli published his

classic, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* and by 2003 Attahiru Jega published his edited *Identity Politics* (Nnoli 1978; Jega 2003). Despite military rule in Nigeria for about 28 years of Nigeria's 47 years of independence, the issue of *national unity* still remains a hard nut to crack. We have noted earlier that transcending the nationality or ethnic chauvinism is a product of integrated economic development. This has been properly put in focus by the example of Western Europe and North America that Laborde (1968) had proved of their *national integration* arising out of national scientific, technological and industrial development.

6.2.2 Creation of States as Inadequate Resolution of the National Question

The jubilation that greeted Gowon's creation of 12 states was deafening, it was in a way crippling momentarily on the landed aristocracy that dominated Nigerian politics. The issue of the *minority question,* a part of the *national question* was tackled by the creation of states for the Eastern and Northern minorities. It equally put a lie to the British consistently strong opposition to the so-called fragmentation which stated that the creation of new states should only be considered as a last resort and even where such a solution was considered, not more than one new state in each region should be created (Report by the Nigerian Conference 1957:14 cited by Ezera 1964:251-2). The *minority question* in Nigeria led to the constitution of the Sir Henry Willink's Commission to probe into the fears of the minorities who fervently desired states of their own but their demands were rejected by the Commission. It did not think the creation of new states in each of the regions would provide a remedy for the fears of the minorities. It feared that fulfilling such demands would lead to fresh agitations for more states as each of the three existing regions were so heterogenous as there will be no end to further fragmentations. It therefore recommended constitutional safeguards for "minorities' be written into the constitution. It also recommended strengthening of the Federal Police as a means not only of securing the unity of the country but also of acting as checks against any possible abuse of power by the majorities (Ezera 1964: 252)

On the one hand, the Willink Commission was right that the agitation for new states will not have an end if the demands were met. On the other hand, the Commission was wrong that new states should not be created and only provided for constitutional safeguards for the minorities. If minorities had got their states or regions, it would have reduced the hegemonic influence of the regional hegemonic powers and would have resulted in a more balanced Federation. Gowon created these states which as a result of their impact on the *minority question* raised hopes for the minorities and it played a positive political card on the side of the Northern led Federal Forces. The states created for the minorities only gave them respite from the tyranny of the majority ethnic groups. They were mere centres for the distribution of the euphemistic national cake and not centres for the organisation of the baking. The majority ethnic groups that equally had their states were not centres for the baking of the national cake but just for the sharing. Thanks to the post-Civil War oil boom. This is where the dilemma in the *resolution* of the *national question* lies. In an economy whose class is not an organising class but depends on rent seeking, the struggles for the fallouts from the master's table is always very intense and a do-or-die affair or a life-and-death matter. This is why the creation of states for the minorities and even the majorities though a part of the *resolution* of the *national question* but it is quite inadequate in the *fundamental resolution* of the *national question* which goes beyond state creation. The *resolution* of the *national question* is a dynamic economic issue. It is an issue of national integration or national unity which is a product of vibrant scientific, technological and industrial development rooted in vibrant research and development (R&D).

The quintessence of modern democracy and indeed federalism in the United States saw her many states as assets that are quite fundamental. She saw these states and their autonomous existence as the dynamics of federalism pointing to the principle of pluralism which underpins the federal system that allows for the limited self-determination within the federation. The political federalism was never pursued in isolation of economic federalism. Brown (1983: 1) said that those who frame the US constitution took note of her weak position vis-à-vis the European powers that had major footholds in North America. She had to strengthen her power by self-reliance

creating the base for an autonomous economy. The base of an autonomous economy did not only strengthen America's external defence and security situation, it equally strengthened the internal security based on self-reliance. It created the foundation for the *resolution* of that country's *national question.* The American Civil War was fought for the *resolution* of *internal colonialism,* the need to free the semi-feudal slave economy in the south from its drudgery, to give abstract freedom to the slaves under capital's need for more labour, though another form of modern "slavery".

Thus the American Civil War was fought to ease the contradictions of the American slave economy from its semi-feudal drudgery in order to place slave labour on the competitive labour market of capital. Hence the American Civil War by deduction was a progressive war (Ransom 1989: 15). Nigeria took the steps to create states but like just its historical development of nationality which got stocked from a non-progressive development into the nation, state creation equally got ossified because of the poverty of economic development. The continuous demand for more states even in the majority areas is a product of the poverty of Nigeria's economic development. California state in the US has the land mass equal to the old Northern Nigeria and yet it is a single state. It is the sixth largest economy in the world, it slided recently from the fifth position to the sixth. The population of California is over 20 million people. The old North now has 19 states and yet there is still the demand for more states; the same holds for the other former regions. Hence the fears of Sir Henry Willink have been confirmed. His fears have been confirmed not because they were fundamental fears but because the British fostered on Nigeria an economic system which is an enclave economy that is not dynamic and therefore lacks integrative mechanism, the petroleum industry to the bargain notwithstanding.

We have noted earlier that the triumph of social democracy and therefore democratic dividends rests on the ability of capitalism to maintain an unterrupted growth. Since social democrats rely on the ability of the capitalist class to provide part of the surplus that would be used to mount the welfare programmes, thus every inducement is given to this class to enable it overcome the economic crisis so that social welfare would be

reactivated (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu 1986: 194). In Nigeria's inherited political economy of dependent capitalism, the liverage for a relative economic autonomy (Sen 1984: 76) is absent. The economy has been based on the so-called *comparative advantage* instead of *competitive advantages* (Porter 1998; 20) which has condemned Nigeria and indeed Africa into very difficult and beggarly position in the international division of labour. The first post-independence government of Nigeria refused to free us from this slavery called economic development. Even now the same philosophy still holdsve noted earlier We haBalewa Government's economic spokepersons, two leading Federal Ministers, Zanna Buka Dipcharima (Trade) and Waziri Ibrahim (Economic Development) told of their fears and refusal to transform Nigeria's economic development from the dead end of mono-culture and primary export crops production. This was the death knell of the First Republic resulting in the coups and counter coups from 1966 to 1993 (Tedheke 2005). The *national question* therefore cannot be fully resolved in state creation but only in the area of dynamic autonomous self-sustaining political economy of national development. We can therefore see the crises of the First Republic and since the post-Civil War as having not eased but edged on by the political economy of imperialism and that of rentier/ landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeois classes. Of this class and its surrender to imperialism Fanon (1983:128) remarked:

> The national bourgeoisie since it is stung up to defend its immediate interests, and sees no further than the end of its nose, reveals itself incapable of simply bringing national unity into being, or of building up the nation on a stable and productive basis. The national front which has forced colonialism to withdraw cracks up, and wastes the victory it has gained.

The various dialectical contradictions leading to the crises of the First Republic were not progressive and transformative to bring about a synthesis or change and move society forward. They, however, brought about the change of form or colour from one sectional form to the other, not in content or synthesis. They however intensified the crises that led to the Civil War which were a negation of the forces of progress-the productive forces. It was retrogressive as it brought about the stagnation of the Nigerian society, and the stagnation of the nationalities, preventing their development into a

nation. The creations of states and their continuous splinter into the present mini states have not assuaged the situation. The present approach to the *resolution* of the *national question* is quite inadequate. It has enhanced and strengthened false consciousness by turning reality upside down, by according secondary contradictions such as ethnicity, regionalism, cultural and religious differences as the prominent/important contradictions whereas imperialism, the economy, classes and economic interests which are primary contradictions are seen as non-prominent contradictions. This is the basis for the increasing agitation for state creations which have not resolved the *national question* which resulted in the Civil War and continued to hunt the Nigerian society to date.

6.2.3 The Rentier State, the Praetorian Military and the National Question.

In the midst of national value decay, it is impossible to insulate national institutions from such decay or retrogression and the Nigerian Military cannot be an exception. The events of January 15 and July 29, 1966 brought out the value degeneration of the Nigerian Military that it lacked the credential for national integration on"… a stable and productive basis." The military founded on a building up of the nation on a rent seeking state as a part of this superstructure makes almost impossible to overcome this rent seeking mentality hence the Nigerian Military becomes equally a rentier military. It was and has been to defend the rent seeking class or the rentier/ landed bourgeois classes that the birth of the Nigerian Military was premised. Hence according to Yaqub (1994:136) "There is, to use the popular argument in political science, no apolitical military institution. The military or militarism is about the resolution of conflict which is more often than not (is) exacerbated by the configuration in society, particularly a political community in an instrumental sense, the military is used, first and foremost, to establish a particular social order; and secondly, to defend and maintain that status quo". It is, therefore, not surprising that the military cannot be otherwise while defending the rentier state, its political economy and the rentier/ landed bourgeois classes.

From the foregoing, the most important aspect of our analysis, then, is that the military institution is part and parcel of any political system, irrespective of its level of development, and the sophistication of the mode of production-whether the socio-

political system is capitalist, socialist, imperialist or theocratic (Yaqub 1994: 134). The fact that the 'Nigeria' military was predominantly used to preserve, protect and promote the British social order of imperial capitalism was never in doubt through the colonial era. This was most vividly expressed with respect to the period of the nationalist struggles. What is now seen as the Nigerian military was never a participant in the patriotic activism of the nationalists, however limited in scope it was. It is generally accepted in the literature of the Nigerian military that it was the last of the colonially created institution to indigenise four years into independence (Yaqub 1994:138). The rentier class is a stratum of the capitalist class that only lives by "clipping coupons" who takes no part in any productive enterprise whatsoever, whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentiers from production and set the seal of parasitism on a whole country (Lenin 1983:94).

According to Lenin (1983: 195) "The income of the rentier is *five times greater* than the income obtained from foreign trade of the biggest 'trading' country in the world! This is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism". The Nigerian military that was used to establish this social order by the British and with the rentier/ landed bourgeois classes grown to service imperialism cannot be neutral in the political economy of rentierism. The rentier nature of the military is summarised by Yaqub (1994: 133) "…that the military has been an influence in state and local government (LG) creation should not… blind our minds to who the beneficiaries of the whole exercise have been. These are largely the individual military governors appointed as well as the whole national resources diverted to defence and security sectors, obstensibly to beef up the country's needs when not at war or a threat posed. In a word, therefore, the military influence in the country's politics should be seen for what it is; corporate and individual self-services". Alli (2001) who saw the military as having laid siege on the nation is in support of Nuhu Yaqub's position of "the… military being corporate and individual self-serving." The military's action of the rentier state and the rentierisation of the Nigerian military is therefore a negation of the *resolution* of the *national question.* The military is both individual and corporate servicing because of its awareness of the enormous

resources at the disposal of the state which each passing military regime has developed a pattern of parasitic appropriation of the resources in its primitive accumulation upon retirement. Thus the level of parasitism and corruption gets worse with each passing military regime (Yaqub 1994: 140).

When the military is an armed gang in the name of military rule in the service of the rentier state and the rentier/ landed bourgeoisie, it becomes a very dangerous group since it would carry on its corruption and primitive accumulation with impunity. If it is an armed gang or military rule's attenuated by some elements of an emergent progressive national bourgeoisie, its resolve to act with impunity is seriously restrained. This is the great difference between the Nigerian military regimes and those of South Korea, Brazil, Pakistan, Idonesia, Taiwan and so on. In the advance countries, the military is the pivot of national development as the military related industries perform dual purposes in efforts by those first comer industrial nations in developing their relative economic autonomy. The same has been true of the second comers and the elements in the Third World that are now following after their heels (Sen 1984:76). In the foregoing respect Franko Jones (1992:56-7 cited McCann 1979) who quoted a Bazilian military strategist, General A de Goes Monteiro thus: "What is necessary is to construct the perfect country, in order that afterwards the perfect army may be organised. They (the armed forces) do not appear before the fact of development; they arise as a result of the material and cultural development of the country. An efficient army does not exist in a poor country". The argument of the Brazilians in constructing a perfect country is that true political sovereignty was preceded by economic development (Albeto Torress cited by Franko Jones 1992: 56). Such development, however, necessitated the formation of a strong national leadership (McCann Jr 1984:762 cited by Franko-Jones 1992: 56).

The doctrinaire drive of the Brazilians was that all internal political energies needed be channelled towards well structured economic ends to achieve the industrial prowess for international political recognition. As such domestic political systems had to be transformed into effective agents of economic change. The Brazilians thus called for

the creation of an institution transcending political parties with the strength and legitimacy to implement a broad national development programme. Economic progress would in turn enhance domestic security by encouraging cohesion and stability and by fostering international perceptions of Brazil as a world power (Franko Jones 1992). A rentier political economy does not provide for integrative economic infrastructures for nation building. It rather leads to enclave economies that enhance fragmentation. Since the Nigerian military is a rentier military that aid the rentier state and its political economy; its base is fragmented along sectional and primordial lines and the coups of 1966 exposed all that and even till now the military has not find its bearing. In Brazil, the national institution that was founded to cohere national resolve and national strength was the military. This has not been the case in Nigeria despite the façade of its semblance.

The Praetorian Guard was a Roman creation as a habit of many Roman generals, who decided to choose from the ranks a private force of soldiers to act as body guards which consisted of both infantry and calvary. The group that was formed initially differed greatly from the later guards, which would assassinate Emperors. The death of Emperor Augustus, 14 century AD marked the end of Praetorian calm, the only time the Praetorian guard did not use its military strength to play a part in politics of Rome to force its own agenda. Augustus would be the sole emperor that would command the Praetorians complete loyalty. From his death onward, the Praetorians would serve what was in their best interest. Although the guard became synonymous with intrigue, conspiracy, disloyalty and assassination, it would be argued that for the first two centuries of its existence the Praetorian guard was, on the whole, a positive force in the Roman state. During this time it mostly removed (or allowed to be removed) cruel, weak and unpopular emperors while generally were supporting just, strong and popular ones. Only after the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius in AD161-169, that the guard began to deteriorate into ruthless, mercenary and meddling force for which it became famous. From the reign of Augustus Ceaser to that of Marcus Aurelius the guards were very protecting to these monarchs, thus extending their reigns, and also by keeping the disorders of the mobs of Rome and the intrigues of the Senate in line. The Praetorian

guards helped give the empire a much needed stability that led to the period known as *Pax Romana* (http://en. wikipedia. org/wiki/praetorian guard January 11 2007:1-2).

In modern usage, the term or phrase "praetorian guard(s)" designates an exclusive, unconditionally loyal group personally attached to powerful people, especially dictators such as Napoleon I's Imperial Guard, ,Adolf Hitter's SS troops or Romania's former Communist leader Ceausescu's Securitate (secret police). *Praetorianism* is used to mean the advocacy or practice of military dictatorship (http: //en. wikipedia. org/wiki/praetorian guard January 11 2007:6).According to Maniruzzaman(1992: 247) "...military dictatorship means the rule by a military officer or a military junta who takes over the state power through a military coup d'etat and rule without any accountability as long as the officer or the junta can retain the support of the armed forces." In stressing the linkage of the concept dictator to that of praetor Maniruzzaman (1992:248) said that, the word dictator is derived from the early Roman constitution. This constitution provided for the election of a magistrate as dictator for six months with extraordinary powers to handle some unforeseen crises. This constitutional dictatorship deteriorated into military dictatorship when the post- constitutional rulers of the Roman Empire used the Praetorian guards as the main base of their power. This was the period of the beginning of decay of the Roman Empire. Therefore Praetorianism is a product of the decay or crises of a political economy of the Roman Empire which eventually collapsed in the Barbarian Germanic invasion of the empire (Engels 1983).

Apart from the foregoing, "recently a few European states- Spain (1920s and 1930s), Portugal (1920s and 1970s) and Greece (late 1960s and middle 1970s) underwent military dictatorships. However, it is in post-Second World War states belonging to the Third World that military dictatorship has emerged as a distinct and analytical phenomenon, restricted to the developing and modernising world' (Perlmutter 1981: 96). In explaining these coup prone phenomenon, of the Third World states are many schools of thought, Janowitz (1964:32) is of the opinion that "…the organisational format designed to carry out the military function as well as experience in the 'management of violence' is at the root of these armies ability to intervene politically."

Decalo (1976:14-15) noted that rather than the organisational strength, it is the military's organisational decay that often creates conditions for various factions within the military to launch sudden and swift raids on the government. Another group of scholars place more emphasis on society as a whole to get at the reasons for military rule. Finer (1969:110-39) saw military intervention as resulting from the "… low or minimal political culture of the society concerned." Huntington.(1969;194) argues that : military explanations do not explain military interventions. The reason for this is simply that military interventions are only one specific manifestation of a broader phenomenon in underdeveloped society the general polarisation of social forces and institutions. Yet another group the skeptical behaviouralists stress the internal dynamic of military hierarchies, cliques within the military, corporate interest, personal ambitions, and idiosyncrasies of particular military men in explaining the political behaviour of the military (Decalo 1976: 7-22).

O' Donnell (1978 :19) sees the rise of military dictatorship in Latin America from the 1960s to the mid-1980s in terms of interactions between world economic forces and the indigenous economic trends of the relatively more developed countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. He argues that these bureaucratic authoritarian regimes arose at a particularly diaphanous moment of dependence of the countries concerned. This historical moment 'was created by the exhaustion' of import-substitution industries as a means of expanding the domestic economy and by weakening of the internal market for the Latin American primary exports. The result was economic crises marked by rising inflation, declining GNP and investment rates, flight of capital, balance of payment deficits, and the like. This crisis in turn activated the popular sector in Latin America which was perceived as a threat by the dominant social classes and the military officers. As the case of the Roman Empire in which the decay of society led to the ruthless use of the Praetorian guards or the dictatorship of the military the same was the case of Latin America. Londregan and Poole (1990:175,178) in their study of the 121 countries covering 1960-82 constructed a statistical model enabling them to use income level, economic growth rate, past history of coups, and the interdependence of coups and economic growth as independent variable, and the

military coup d' etat as dependent variable. They find that both high level of income and high level of economic growth as separate factors inhibit coup's d'etat. According to their study, incidence of coups d' etat is twenty-one times more likely in the poorest countries than among the wealthiest.

However, violence and intelligence surveillance are negative strategies of rulership. A mere positive way of keeping the armed forces satisfied is the raising of salaries and other allowances and perquisites of the members of the armed forces. Military rulers always invariably increase the defense budgets soon after a take-over. Once raised, defense allocations usually remain at highest levels in subsequent years. For the decade of the 1960s, the average annual expenditure on defence compared with total state budget in Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America was almost double for military governments compared with non-military governments (Kennedy 1974:163). The rate of growth for defense expenditure in developing countries is surpassing the growth rate of the developed nations (Janowitz 1977:48). In Nigeria the raising of defence budgets and the corrupt practices associated with it led to the emergence of a very strong factor of a rentier/patrimonial military bourgeoisie that has been bent on cornering all state resources and power whether serving or retired. Alli (2001:227) said, "...unfortunately, the military has fundamentally induced more insecurity in the polity since colonial times. Driven by questionable and self- appointed messianic considerations, well placed individual military officers have their agenda of development and transformation on a gullible nation with amazing inpunity." Alli (2001: 234) further stressed,

> … a legacy the military has bequeathed to the nation, everyone is a presumed kleptomaniac with fingers so swift and restless, no one could conceivably be clean. At the highest levels, the nation may be restless over alleged disappearance of some billions of naira to no avail. In recent times, the public swallowed the presumed loss of oil money, 2.8billion, 12billion in the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida and several in unaccounted for and disappearing billion dollars under Sani Abacha.

In the words of Ego – Alowes (2006), we do not quarrel with the coalition that won the Civil War. This is so because it has been correctly pointed out in the belief that it is not

the cause for which men took up arms that makes a victory more just or less, it is the order that is established when arms have been laid down that matters. The post-Civil War scenario where the Nigerian Military whether serving or retired have laid siege on the nation and where because of their ill-gotten wealth they have equally taken siege of the so-called democratic governance is a case in point. The Military have equally deconstructed the Nigeria federalism which has brought further imbalances of Nigerian federation in the First Republic that was one of the secondary variables that led to the Civil War. While one of the balancing yardsticks of the First Republic was equal representation in the senate that made the whole North had 12 Senators compared to 37 Senators from the South, the post Civil War senatorial representations has given the North prepronderance over the South because of more states in the North. Since the North has more population, it equally has more representation in the House of Representatives which is normal. As such the North has more than 50% count of Senators and almost 2/3 count of members of House of Representatives (Ego-Alowes 2006).

6.2.4 Post War Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

Close to the end of the war, the Biafran economy had almost grinded to a halt, with the increasing tightening of the noose of encirclement around what remained of Biafra by the Federals. With the increasing progressive reduction in land area of the secessionist enclave life became increasingly unbearable. According to St Jorre (1977:387), “In Biafra, the blockade and the continually tightening military noose reduced life to its barest essentials. Normal economic factors hardly applied, for the task of survival was reduced to two stark necessities; food and arms. The Biafran Government was very tardy in launching an emergency food production programme-this came with the formation of the ‘Land Army’ in January 1969-and it is doubtful whether it made much of an impact on the overall situation. The relief supplies remained the biggest source of protein, though bulk foods, with the help of the relief agencies which provided seeds, were produced locally.” The very grim Biafran situation was compounded by what Ojukwu saw as Biafra’s current ills in June 1969 thus:

> We say that the Nigerians take bribes, but here in our country we have among us some members of the police and the judiciary who are corrupt and who "eat" bribes…even while we are engaged in a war of national survival we see some public servants who throw huge parties to entertain their friends... we have members of the armed forces who carry on "attacks" trade instead of fighting the enemy. We have traders who hoard essential goods and inflate prices, thereby increasing the people's hardship (Ojukwu'sAhiara Declaration Geneva: Markpress 1969:24-5 cited by St Jorre 1977:386).

The very grave situation in Biafra necessitated the *Ahiara Declaration* of June 1969. The collapse of Biafra though was anticipated but the speed with which it happened took everyone by surprise, the victorious Nigerian Army not excluded. The crucial Federal breakthrough had occurred as far back as Christmas of 1969 when the 3 Marine Commando Division tore through the remnant enclave of Biafra as it linked up with 1 Division at Umuahia; thus isolating one of the last important food producing areas of Arochukwu to the East and cutting Biafra into two. The attack was led by 17 Commando Brigade commanded by Major Samson Tumoye. With the support of the new Russian 122 mm artillery guns, he had caught the Biafrans by surprise, attacking from the South-East. After the first thrust, he did not relax his momentum but continued his Brigades pressure and suddenly the Biafran 12 Division caved in and crumbled. The way to Owerri opened after the capture of Owerrinta and Owerri, the temporary capital of Biafra after it was shelled on January 1970 and was occupied the next day. A rapid thrust towards Uli and Orlu commenced and Biafra finally collapsed (St Jorre 1977 393-5; Tedheke's eye witness account 1969/70). The end of the Civil War witnessed a very serious refugee situation hence the politics of how to win the peace after war saw the rolling out of Gowon's Federal policy of Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (3^{rs})

The first stroke of that policy was Gowon's famous announcement of *no victor no vanguished* and the general amnesty the Federal Government granted to those who were on the side of Baifra. The final collapse of Biafra was preceded by Odumegwu Ojukwu's flight on 10 January, 1970 from Biafra after a meeting with his cabinet and military advisers, urging that they should face the realities on the ground and that

everything should be done to salvage what was left, to end the suffering, ruling out any idea of a government in the bush. The following day he announced his plan to leave Biafra to search for peace. He thus appointed his Chief of General Staff, 'Major General' Philip Effiong to administer the remnant of Biafran Government (Momoh 2000:151). Ojukwu however did not give up his secessionist conviction when he said in his departing speech thus: "I know that while I live, Biafra lives. If I am no more, it would only be a matter of time for the concept to be swept into oblivion" (cited by Momoh (ed) 2000:152)

The very initial situation on the ground made Major General Effiong not to have any option but to tender a surrender. Except from his speech through Radio Biafra Obodoukwu states:

> A stop must be put to the bloodshed… the suffering of our people must be brought to an immediate end... Our people are now disillusioned and those elements of the old regime who had made negotiation and reconciliation impossible have voluntarily removed themselves from our midst… I urge General Gowon in the name of humanity to order his troops to pause while an armistice is negotiated in order to avoid mass suffering… by the movement of population.(except in New Nigeria January 13, 1970 cited by Momoh (ed) 2000:152)

General Yakubu Gowon made a broadcast in emotionally charged address to the nation which showed his sincere intentions and commitments to national reconciliation. He paid tribute to the courage, loyalty and steadfastness of the fighting Federal troops and the resourcesfulness of the combatants. Excepts from his broadcast of January 12, 1970 states:

> My dear compatriots. We have arrived at one of the greatest moments of the history of our nation. A great moment of victory for national unity and reconciliation. We have arrived at the end of a tragic and painful conflict. We reinterate our promise of general amnesty for all those misled into the futile attempt to disintegrate the country… we must all demonstrate our will for honourable reconciliation within a united Nigeria. Fellow countrymen, with your continued loyalty and dedication to the national cause, we shall succeed in healing the nation's wounds. We must all welcome, with open arms, the people now freed from the tyranny and deceit of Ojukwu and his gang. Long live one

> united Nigeria! We thank God for His Mercies (New Nigerian Newspaper 13 January, 1970 cited by Momoh (ed) 2000: 152-3; cited by Course 12 National War College Abuja 2004).

Having won the war, Gowon was determined to win the peace. However, the sudden end of the war had two immediate consequences, one bad, the other good. The sudden end caught the Nigerian Government pants down; there appeared to be no contingency planning for an emergency relief operation in the event of Biafra's collapse which was the bad side. This was however rectified but was a little delayed which caused some havocs. The good side was the fact that the first time since the war began the millions or so refugees in the rebel enclave could move freely and return to their villages; wherever one went in the war zones one saw great columns of refugees walking steadily home (St Jorre 1966: 404-6, Tedheke eye witness account January 1970). There was mass hunger and starvation, the sick and exhausted people, usually refugees caught a long way from home, some of whom died because aid was too slow in reaching them. There is no accurate figure for this category and probably never will be, though it ran into thousands, possibly even hundreds of thousands but certainly not millions (St Jorre 1977: 404). Thus rehabilitation was a little bit hampered as a result of the unexpected collapse of Biafra and lack of preparedness on the side of Nigeria for this mometious occasion as General Yakubu Gowon stated.

However, apart from the patchy handling of the relief situation at the initial stages because of the unexpectedness of the collapse, the most outstanding feature of the end of the Civil War was the remarkable atmosphere of reconciliation, especially at the top levels but also lower down. It was quite marvellous to see combatant officers and men who had been facing each other over the barrel of the gun for two and a half years embrace and weep tears of joy. Gowon promised armesty and said 'There will be no Nuremberg trials here and the spirit behind this statement went deep down the line (St Jorre 1977: 407). Later, senior military officers and civilians intimately associated with Biafra's secession were screened and some detained for varying periods of time, but the worst known sanction taken against them was the refusal by Lagos to re-engage

them in government service. St Jorre (1977), remarked that: “When one considers the brutality, the proscriptions, the carefully nurtured, immensely durable hatreds that have so often followed wars in the civilised West (the terrible aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, fought not so long ago is one example) it may be that when history takes a longer view of Nigeria’s War it will be shown that while the black man has little to teach us about making war he has real contribution to offer in making peace”. However, making peace has much more than just the gesture of mutual accommodation which to some extent is a sign of the inner content of the Africanhood. It could be as a matter of fact equally a great sigh of relief hence the “…joy of tears” on both sides. Across the federation, the reaction to the victory was as unexpected as it was revealing. Instead of wild jubilations, parties and the like…there was nothing but a profound feeling of relief and a sudden upwelling of compassion for the defeated Ibos (St Jorre 1977: 402).

Gowon in quoting Lincoln talked of “…binding up the nation’s wounds” and declared three days of national prayers. In a war that had “…no victor and no vanguished’, he told the military that ...this was one campaign for which no medals would be given” (St Jorre 977). On the mood at the end of the war in Lagos, St. Jorre said:

> I had arrived in Lagos a couple of days after the collapse and remember the curious impact of this low-keyed reaction, rather as if a well-loved but troublesome member of the family had just been released by death, from an agonising painful and incurable disease. One realised again that beneath that bombast, the inconsistencies, the sheer bloody-mindedness which had characterised so much of the crisis, Nigerians, high and low, had been deeply ashamed of their war (St Jorre 1977: 402*)*

It was not only the account in Lagos that truly depicted the mood of the Nigerian nation. Another account from Mid-West on the reception of the news of the end of the war equally showed the same emotion as given to St Jorre by a Canadian newspaper administrator of the *Nigerian Observer* in Benin City. In his account, the staff of the newspaper had gathered to listen to Major General Philip Effiong’s broadcast on Radio Biafra two days after Ojukwu had gone on exile. He said:

> To me the newsroom of the *Nigerian Observer* will always remain an unforgettable scene. Members of the corporations staff from every department and representing practically every tribe (sic) that make up this multi-ethnic state and, yes, Ibos too, had huddled around the radio, tense and expectant. Exactly four-thirty p.m, the Biafra national anthem was played in full and Effiong, in a short speech, announced the capitulation and threw Biafra at the mercy of General Gowon. There were no cheers, no jubilation or arrangements for celebrations. Most of the listeners had tears in their eyes and the editor wept (Edwin Swangard's private account to St Jorre1977: 402-3).

The tone of reconciliation was much ahead of that of rehabilitation. This was understandable because Nigeria was least prepared for the sudden collapse of Biafra as she was caught pants down. The foreign aid agencies and donors were kept out making issue of relief more difficult to achieve at the earliest possible time after the collapse. The Western World's conscience was tugging at the issue from all angles of human emotions which let off its steam in offers of aid for the starving survivors which was quickly followed by demands that Nigeria should open up its air fields, particularly Uli, and allow relief organisations do their job unhindered was turned down. Nigeria reacted angrily and banned all countries like France, South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia which had supported Biafra which were told to keep their aid and stay out. Relief organisations that acted similarly, notably Caritas and the World Council of Churches were also barred. 'Let them keep their blood money' Gowon retorted. 'Nigeria will do this itself he concluded.' The Catholic priests and nuns in the last pocket of the enclave were expelled gradually leading to rapid deterioration of the relief situation (St Jorre 1977:403). There was mass hunger and starvation at initial stage of the refugee problem at the end of the war which the humanitarian spirit or benevolence of the soldiers around could not cope. If the Federal Government had been less strict and opened up its doors to some of the humanitarians and foreign governments clamouring to come in, it was possible that more lives would have been saved. With the very critical situation of the refugees things may not follow like that. However, there was no shortage of food on the edges of the affected areas under Federal control prior to the collapse. The real difficulties were lack of transport and personnel to take relief where it was mostly needed, an acute shortage of medical staff and equipment for the

abandoned hospitals, an absence of any proper kind of administrative structure though the improved Nigerian Red Cross did its best (St Jorre 1977: 405).

When the issue of relief became properly organised, the National Commission on Rehabilitaiton and the Nigerian Red Cross mounted the task force for implementing and co-ordinating external assistance for the Emergency Relief Operations. As the problem of relief was contained, the need arose to resettle and rehabilitate the refugees and damaged physical properties. The programme and projects that were adversely affected during the hostilities such as damaged roads, bridges, electricity, agricultural schemes and so on engaged the attention of Government with the specific purpose of re-activating the national economy (Course 12 War College Research 2004). The general strategy adopted in taking on the numerous problems of rehabilitation and resettlement was to implement schemes and create the economic environment that could enable people to engage in gainful public or private employment, including the self-employed policy programmes were as a matter of fact directed at getting farmers back to the land, workers to their work places, traders to the market, transport operators back on the road and craftmen to their workshops. All were geared to the singular objective of reviving economic life of the people by generating income through public, private and self-employment (Course 12 War College Research 2004).

The specific requirements for resettlement and rehabilitation programmes differ according to the various areas and sectors. In certain areas, the crucial factor could be the restoration of public utilities for re-activating job opportunities such as electricity, water supply and medical facilities in the three Eastern states and Mid-Western state. In other areas what was needed were vital transport linkages, equipment and spare parts to facilitate the evacuation of produce and distribution of some relief materials. They also included the reopening of banking facilities closed down as a result of the war, the provision of capital and facilities needed for stimulating economic production. Some pump priming programmes were instituted such as deliberate public sector jobs by the local, states and Federal authorities. In the case of the Armed Forces personnel, some form of vocational training in various fields was essential prior to demobilisation

(12th Course War College Research 2004.) The end of the Nigerian Civil War 12 January, 1970 marked the end of the legal tender of the Biafran currency. As a result, those who had the currency found themselves in serious socio-economic transaction problem as such individuals and groups that possessed the currency were asked to lodge it in banks. The crisis of buying and selling became such that people had to resort to barter trading. At the end of the lodgement exercise, a sum of twenty Nigerian pounds was given to each respective individuals and groups irrespective of the amount of the Biafran pound lodged in the bank. (12th Course War College Research 2004).

At the end of the war, Eastern Nigeria was left in a critical state of infrastructural devastations from a lot of causes such as infrastructural decay, retreating secessionist defence strategy like blown-up bridges, destruction of roads to slow Federal advances and so on and including destructions from Federal Air Force bombings. As such a lot of railway facilities, roads and bridges were damaged. There was total collapse of health facilities, educational facilities, electricity services, water supply facilities and so on. The negative impact of the absence of these facilities on hunger and desease was tremendous hence exerting a toll on the population. With the displacement of hundreds of thousands of families, the major issue that could bring succour to them was the reconstruction of all broken down infrastructures principally as a result of the war. The nature and scale of devastation demanded urgent Federal Government attention if the spirit of “no victor no vanguished” was to be of any significance. Hence the urgent infrastructural repairs would aid the effectiveness of resettlement and rehabilitation programmes especially as authorised by the Federal Executive Council in February 1970. Some of the major sectoral programmes successfully reconstructed and rehabilitated included the posts and telecommunications facilities, electricity supplies from Afam Power Station, the Asaba- Onitsha-Enugu road, the repairs on the Niger Bridge, Calabar and Port Harcout and many other war affected areas. There were other major projects which included also, agricultural, transport, health, education, building, water supply and railway facilities (Course 12 War College Research 2004).

6.3 What is a Progressive War?

In the historical categorisation of wars, there are progressive or just wars and non-progressive or unjust wars. The progressive or just wars are fought to destroy the fetters to social and economic development in order to advance the historical process or socio-economic development and cultural advancement of peoples or societies. Lenin (1970: 4-5) said, "In history there have been numerous wars which, in spite of all the horrors, atrocities, distress and sufferings that inevitably accompany all wars were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy the exceptionally harmful and reactionary institutions..." The Revolutionary Wars in Europe, such as the Civil Wars of the English Revolution in the 17th century, the French Revolutionary Civil Wars 18th and 19th centuries, that of the Untied States in the 19th century, all wars against oppression such as national liberation wars, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal wars are all progressive or just wars. Progressive or just wars are, therefore, wars that are fought to overthrow feudalism, semi-feudalism, feudal absolutism and alien oppressive relations in order to enthrone freedom for material and cultural development. It is as a matter of fact a war that is fought in order to enthrone freedom from oppressive material and political relations both within and without for a peoples' independent development to break the fetters of material property and hegemonic relations. While non-progressive or unjust wars are wars fought to maintain existing material oppressive hegemonic relations. These are wars fought to maintain the status quo, the *ancient regime* or the old order. It is a war fought to retain the fetters to development, to maintain the break on cultural transformation or a people's development process. It is a war to maintain and retain exploitative economic relations or master-servant, master-slave relations or feudal-serf relations and indeed capitalist oppressive relations.

A progressive or just war is not a war between slave owners for the "equitable" redistribution of slaves among the slave owners just like a war between capitalist nations for the "even sharing out of territories which resulted in the First and Second World Wars. In this respect, Lenin (1970:6-7) said; "But picture to yourself a slave-owner who owned 100 slaves warring against a slave-owner who owned 200 slaves for

more ‘just’ distribution of slaves . Clearly, the application of the term ‘defensive’ war, or war for the defence of the fatherland, in such a case would be historically false, and in practice would be sheer deception of the common people, of philistines, of ignorant people, by the astute slave- owners. Precisely, in this way are the present-day imperialist bourgeosie deceiving the peoples by means of ‘national’ ideology and the term ‘defence of the fatherland’ in the present war between slave-owners for fortifying and strengthening slavery”. The Nigerian Civil War was a product of the class struggle between the feudal and the semi-feudal landed aristocracy on the one hand and the emergent landed/rentier class based on merchant capitalist relations. Both of them are based on earnings from the land, that is, proceeds from the peasantry and royalties and earnings from mineral extractive industries. We have noted that the unifying relations between the two antagonists was that they were all land depending classes, that is, the Northern landed aristocracy, and the remnants of other semi-feudal landed aristocracy in the West and Mid-West on the one hand and the Eastern merchant/landed/rentier classes on the other hand. The connecting material relation linkages made Dr Nnamdi Azikwe say, “… thank palm produce” for the coming into being of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Nnoli 1978).

The only progressive aspect of the Nigerian Civil War was the creation of states which freed the minorities from the hegemonic grips of the regional majorities. We have noted earlier that it was a political master-stroke that rallied the minorities around the Northern feudal army or the remnant of the Nigerian Army prior to the Civil War (Ademoyega 1981). However, the progressiveness of the partial resolution of the *minority question* as a *partial resolution* of the *national question* is the issue of freedom from the material oppressive relations of the regional dominant ethnic groups. The *national question* is of partial resolution because the larger ethnic groups of the erstwhile regions have coalesced into an oppressive group at the Federal level hence the issue of fiscal federalism has taken a turn for the worse. This has brought to the fore the issue of internal colonialism thus heightening the clamour for *resource control.* Arising from the foregoing, therefore, what was given with the right hand in state creation for the minorities has been taken away by the ethnic chauvinists of the majority ethnic groups

with the other hand. In the foregoing respect, do we still then say that the Nigerian Civil War was a progressive war? The answer is two fold. In respect of the minorities in state creation it was partially progressive but in hardening and cementing the alliance between the dominant ethnic groups sounded a death knell at the fiscal Federal policy of derivation which concerns the struggles between the majority ethnic groups and the minority ethnic groups made the Civil War not be a progressive war. It was a war fought to impose or strengthen the control of Nigeria wealth by the ethnic majority groups. The outcome of the war has become the struggle against internal colonialism and imperialism, hence the Niger Delta or *South-South question*. Despite the fact that the South-South or Niger Delta is closer to the South-East and South-West in geographical and cultural affinities, both conspired with their Northern counterparts to rip off the Niger Delta or South-South area. In this respect, the bond of material interests of the majority ethnic groups is stronger than that of geographical and cultural affinities.

6.3.1 The Conservative and Progressive Forces On War and Peace

The thesis versus the anti-thesis in the dialectics of history is the parallel of the conservative versus the progressive forces in the historical materialist struggles in order to make and remark history or development. The historical struggles between the thesis and anti-thesis produce historical motion and therefore the synthesis or the birth of a new society. Was the Nigerian case so? Or did the Nigerian situation lead to the birth of a new society advancing in material development especially in science and technology? Ransom (1989) said that the American Civil War led to the revolutionising of technology four fold and the end result sped up the rapid advancement of society and as such the Union Forces won both the war and peace. This would have been impossible if the semi-feudal slave society of the Confederal Forces of the south had won the war. It would have retarded greatly the American “dream” because such victory would have been a drag on the progressive forces that were bearing the kernel of the progressive American “dream”. In England, the elements of the emerging progressive bourgeoisie won the Civil War, the same was the case in France during the French Revolution and hence post-Civil War tremendous advancement of those societies (Hill 1983; Marx 1978: 10). Thus Marx (1978: 10) said of the French Revolution of 1789-

1814 thus:

> The heroes as well as the parties and the masses of the old French Revolution, performed the task of their time. The task of unchaining and setting up modern bourgeois society. The first ones smashed the feudal basis to pieces and mowed down the feudal heads which had grown on it. The other created inside France the only conditions under which free competition could be developed, parcelled landed property exploited and the unchained industrial productive power of the nation employed; and everywhere beyond the French borders he (Napoleon) swept the feudal institutions away, to the extent necessary to provide bourgeois society in France with a suitable-up-to-date environment on the European continent.

Thus the revolutions in England and France like the one of the United States were to sweep the old society away in order to enthrone the progressive forces and the new progressive relations of production. The same were the cases of Russia with the Bolshevik Revolution and that of China with the Chinese Revolutionary War of the 1911-1949. In both Russia and China, the Revolutionary Forces won the Civil Wars (Sayers and Khan 1975; Mao 1972). In order to win a Civil War and equally to win the peace, it is only the progressive forces that can be able to achieve the two victories hand-in-hand. In Vietnam, the socialist revolutionaries won the war and were the side that had a date with history. In any nation where the backward elements or the landed/rentier bourgeois classes won a Civil War such a victory is wasted-such was the misfortune of Nigeria. It was the same with our nationalist whose struggle was wasted (Baran 1978: 368). On the Vietnamese, Liebhold (2000: 45) remarked:

> It has even been suggested that Vietnam won the war but lost the peace. But look again and you will find real progress. As recently as the mid-1980s, the country still suffered from famines, now a self-sufficient Vietnam is one of the world's largest exporters of rice. With a per-capital GDP of $330, It remains one of the world's poorest nations. But over the past it has reduced poverty more dramatically than almost any other country in the world from 58% of the populace in 1993 to 37% in 1998, according to the World Bank. More than 90% of the population can read. In most countries with comparable level of development, the infant mortality rate stands between 60 and 90 per 1,000 live births. Vietnam's rate is 34. Ninety-eight percent of kids here are fully immunised, that's a record most developed countries can't touch.

If the forces that were loyal to the forces of imperialism had won the war, such daunting progress would have been impossible with conservative forces. The conservative forces are antithetical to historical progress and indeed the advancement of culture and the historical process. The forces that bear history are not the conservative forces that want the retention of the *status quo.* The forces of conservatism are the grave-diggers of history, they retard progress and use all amount of ideological colourations to sustain their power and dominion or hegemony. Marx (1978: 13) remarked of the coup of Louis Bornaparte in December 10, 1851 after his election of December 2, thus:

> *On December 2, the February Revolution is conjured away by a cardsharper's trick, and what seems overthrown is no longer the monarchy but the liberal concessions that were wrung from it by a century of struggle. Instead of society having conquered a new content for itself, it seems that the state only returned to its oldest form, to the shamelessly simply domination of the sabre and the cowl.*

The foregoing would drag France into the dream of conquering Europe once again over which she met her defeat in the hands of a unified Bismark Germany in 1871. What is of importance to us was the overthrow of the progress achieved by the class struggle of over a century of the liberal concessions that were wrung from absolute monarchy in France from the 1789 Great French Revolution.

In a similar way, the snatching of the rearguard of the nationalist movement in Nigeria in 1940s resulting in the alliance between British imperialism and the Nigerian nationalists brought the forces of reaction into the fore. This was consumated in the alliance between the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the National Congress of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) after the 1959 elections which ushered in independence and subsequently the First Republic. The NCNC overture to NPC to form the Federal Government coalition after the 1959 Federal Elections confirms the scientific validation of Baran (1978:368) thus "… its capitalist, bourgeois component, confronted at the early stage with the spectre of social revolution turns swiftly and resolutely against its fellow travellers of yesterday, its mortal enemy of tomorrow. In fact, it does not hesitate to make common cause with the feudal elements representing the main obstacle to its own development, with the imperialist rulers just dislodged by the national liberation,

and with the comprador groups threatened by the political retreat of their foreign principals". The dethronement of the radical Zikist Movement and the working people struggle after 1949 Iva Valley massacre, the Nigerian nationalist movement turned 360% right wing. It resulted in the conservative alliance of the NPC/ NCNC coalition of 1959 through to 1964, an alliance that became highly intolerant of its opposition and generated the very serious overheat of the political space in the First Republic leading to the coup and counter coup of 1966 and the Civil War that followed. It is possible that if the progressive forces had won independence for Nigeria, the political wranglings would have been reduced and perhaps we would have perhaps avoided the Nigerian Civil War.

6.3.2 Revisiting Non-Transformative Values and War

The contradictions between non-transformative values versus transformative values are the dialectical contradictions in historical materialism. When values become fetters to socio-economic and cultural development they become more vehement and violent to the progressive historical forces, the forces of change and social transformation. Toure (in Adedeji (ed.) 1990: 10) said that "Conflicts arise from human relations in two principal ways: first, individuals or groups of individual have different values, needs and interests; and, second, most resources are not available in unlimited quantities and so access to them must be controlled and fought for. These two factors intrinsically cause conflicts". However, the scarcity of resources lead to conflicts but the key to conflicts are non-transformative forces, that is, the value system that has exhausted its historical process that has become fetter to value transformation or the progress of history. Uku (1978: 17) although tried to make some distinction between the North and the South of Nigeria but came to a wonderful conclusion on the similarities between the two on the economic field. She said:

> If the distinction can be drawn, it may be said that the North was conservative, whereas the South claimed allegiance to socialism. Northern conservatism, however, was merely a reflection of a near-stagnant, social structure and Southern "socialism" was not at all concerned with state enterprise or programmes of income redistribution and social welfare. Nigerian political issues,

> therefore, did not polarise around the economic field because all parties believed in economic development through foreign investment. Conflict over economic politics tended to be simply those of geographical rivalry (Uku 1978: 17)

The social structure of the North based on Feudo-Islamic culture disposed that section of the Nigerian state to more conservatism. This does not absolve the South from some degree of conservatism which is a product of the nature and structure of a socio-economic social formation, the pretensions of the regions in the South to the contrary notwithstanding. In Western Region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo proclaimed one form of socialism while Dr Nnamdi Azikwe proclaimed his so-called pragmatic socialism, whatever that means. However, Skyne R. Uku though did not state that Southern Nigeria was conservative but she pointed out the elements of conservatism that united both the Northern ruling classes and their Southern counterparts. She hit the nail at the head when she says, "Nigerian political issues therefore, did not polarise around the economic field because all parties believed in economic development through foreign investment". The House of Representatives Debate of November 1961 in which two key Federal Ministers, Zanna Buka Dipcharima (Trade) and Waziri Ibrahim (Economic Development) admitted frankly that they favoured pro-imperialist economic policies than a relative Nigerian economic autonomy, which was not challenged by the opposition tells volumes of Nigerian ruling class' conservatism whether in the North or South in the immediate post-independence years prior to the Civil War (Osoba 1978: 64-9).

The ideological congruence of conservatism uniting the leadership of the highly compromised nationalist movement in Nigeria prior to independence and after could be gleaned from the content analysis of their political economy. Dr Nnamdi Azikwe of pragmatic socialism said that he accepted whole heartedly liberal ideology or doctrine which he enunciated at Haward University. He thus remarked:

> I absorbed the following as part of my equipment for the battle of life; in political science, to seek for the good of life, by fighting for individual freedom, under the rule of law, in liberal democracy, in anthropology to regard no race as superior or inferior…, in economics, to safe guard private property… (Chinweizu 1978: 97-8 cited Azikwe *My Odyssey* 117-21)

Zik further exposed his conversatism and dependent capitalist ideology thus"…it is not inconsistent with socialism for a socialist through hard and honest work to acquire a limited amount of wealth to enable him to co-exist with his capitalist counterparts" (Wilmot 1979: 7 cited Azikwe's speech at Aba Convention of NCNC 1957). Chief Obafemi Awolowo was not different from his contemporaries as he was so scared of communism or socialist revolutionary struggles in the North. He warned the Sarduana that,"… it was in the best interest of the North and of the country that neither the communist type nor the gangster type of politics should gain ascendancy in the Northern Region. For if either of them did, then, woe betide all decency, order and good faith in the country. I argued that it was urgent he should assert his leadership by encouraging the nationalist elements, aligning himself with them and mould their efforts" (Daily Times April 9, 1953 cited in, *The Analyst* Vol 1 no 5 December 1987: 20).

The fear of communism expressed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo had been the ideological thread that united the so-called nationalist leaders and indeed made them the junior partners in the imperialist's chain of exploitation of our people. This ideological congruence led them to maintain the *status quo,* the economics of imperialism leading to the crisis of the First Republic. Chinweizu (1978:162) said that, "The British imperialist powers and those of France found ready lackeys through which they bribed to submission and therefore the status quo was willingly accepted". Thus the political economy of conservatism was imposed by imperialism on Africans in particular and most of the Third World countries in general. In order to put in place favourable structures to serve imperialism, one would see the enslavement laws put in place before power of paper independence was granted to the would be independent countries. This was the case in Nigeria and indeed in Africa were new legal chains were placed on the emergent dominant rentier/landed bourgeois classes. In this respect Chinweizu (1978: 167) said:

> The would be independent countries signed to uphold all these laws before power of paper sovereignty was handed to them. They signed to protect multinationals whether it was a stealing against the emergent nations or not and

whether it was against the interest of the ex-colonists is never the matter but international laws must be upheld for Europe and North America to get more milk to fatten.

The level of colonial economic exploitations and deprivations led to the economic crises that pervaded the would be neo-colonies. What would have stemmed the negative tide of the perpetuation of economic degradation would have been the alliance of the popular forces. In Nigeria, the amalgam of the power of the popular forces blossomed in the 1940s. However, a blow was struck at it with the betrayal by the leading nationalist leaders in their alliance with the colonialists in 1952 for ultimate transfer of power to the former. The more power was transferred to the ruling rentier/landed bourgeois classes, the less prepared it was to uphold the popular content of its anti-colonial struggle (Bangura 1988:9; Tedheke 1998: 96). As a result, conservatives were entrenched in Nigerian politics as the progressive dynamo of the radical Zikist Movement and that of the Nigerian working class was extinguished. Hence we had in our hands at independence those who did not have the resolve to bear history resulting in the post-independence crises and indeed the tragic Civil War that followed.

6.3.3 Subverting Transformative Values, Crises or War

In the absence of authentic capitalist development, a revolutionary struggle and its world view produces a unifying factor that holds people together in the hope of a better polity and a better tomorrow. The absence of the foregoing in a backward economy and society degenerates into ethnic chauvinism hence the inclement Nigerian crises that are always rampant in the Nigerian political community. It results in the subversion of transformative values either consciously or unconsciously leading to crises and or wars. It was as a result of the crises of underdevelopment, the fulfilment of capitalist law of uneven-development that made Cabral (1980:116) emphasised that "… So long as imperialism is in existence an independent African state must be a liberation movement in power, or it will not be independent." Independence in this sense means attaining a relative economic autonomy (Sen 1984) devoid of the extreme trappings of the so-called borderless economy or globalisation. The economies so trapped are the

backward economies of the former colonial peoples hence the saying goes that “if the West sneezes, we catch cold”.

There are two strands in the subversion of the transformative values of a people either by imperialism or by a local rentier/landed bourgeoisie or the two combined in operation to kill local national initiatives. Oragwu (1989:214) said “It is quite clear that the predominance of power, which Europe wielded throughout the world, remained for centuries firmly based on her technological superiority. Nigeria’s isolation from the world’s modern technology is part of the reasons for her underdevelopment and her limited appreciation of the man-machine system arising from the interplay of technology and societies in their evolutionary process”. This is the depth of the Nigeria’s transformative value subversion by the imperialist ruling classes and their Nigerian collaborators, the landed aristocracy /rentier/comprador bourgeois classes. Since capital has not been revolutionary technology-wise in Africa, its penetration created a “disposable industrial reserve army of the unemployed” that has no industrial sector to absorb it in periods of boom. In pre-colonial Africa, there was nothing like “surplus population”. What existed was some degree of equilibrium between man and nature. There was also some form of labour shortage rather than labour surplus population. However, that was to change overnight with the presence of colonial capitalism which shattered the balance and, created overpopulation as was evidenced among the Kikuyu (Onoge 1983:37-8). In areas where lands were not alienated from the peasantry during the colonial period, they were compelled by the nature of the colonial political economy to devote a substantial portion of their land and labour power for the production of export crops at the expense of food crops which they would have needed (Onoge 1983; Tedheke 1982).

For the extractive industry and construction industry, the coloniser broke the resistance of the peasantry through forced labour or by introducing migratory labour force through the imposition of taxes. In extractive industries such as mining, the African lands were devastated and the population rendered superfluous. The cases of the tin mining in Jos Plateau, the Ogoni land where decades of oil exploration and exploitation have

devastated the land and the population rendered superfluous and so on are some of the examples (Tedheke 2000:60-1). Diamond (1988) said that one of the factors that resulted in the regional and ethnic cleavages were the superfluous population in the Nigerian polity prior to independence and in the First Republic. The need to absorb this superfluous population, have employment for the teeming masses was therefore a very serious preoccupation of the regional landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie. The superfluous population in the Eastern Region made up principally of the Ibos with much pressures on their land to migrate enmass to the Northern Region, which created fears of "Ibo domination" in the North. The policy of Northernisation was put in place to keep the Ibos and other Southerners out (Cronje 1972:11) to keep the North for the superfluous Northern population. In this regard, therefore, the increasing population of the unemployed in the regions and the very hard economic realities of the collapse of the economic bases of the regions and the hard facts of its impact on the Nigerian state led to the intensified crisis of post-independence Nigeria and in the First Republic. The crisis of the First Republic was therefore a crisis of a landed aristocracy/rentier comprador bourgeoisie that saw no further than the end of its nose which revealed itself incapable of simply bringing national unity into being, or of building up the nation on a stable and productive basis. Thus this national front which forced colonialism to withdraw cracks up and wastes the victory it had won (Fanon 1983: 128)

The foregoing collapse of the victory of first independence or paper independence led to a weakened front in the tackling of the *national question.* It led to the subversion of the transformative values thus resulting in national crises and war. The Nigerian First Republic crises and the Civil War were cases in point. The various dialectical explanations leading to the crises of the First Republic were of non-transformative values and as such would not bring about a synthesis for a better society. They however produced the change of form or colour from one sectional form to the other devoid of content or synthesis. They however intensified the crises that led to the Civil War which was a product of the negation of the forces of progress, the productive forces. It was retrogressive and indeed conservative as it brought about the stagnation of society, and the stagnation of the progress of the nationalities preventing their

development into a nation. It enhanced and strengthened false consciousness which has turned reality upside down by according secondary contradictions such as ethnicity, regionalism, cultural and religious differences as prominent/important contradictions whereas imperialism, the economy, economic interests and classes which are primary contradictions are seen to be non-prominent contradictions (Ake 1986; Tedheke 2005)

6.4 Whose War, Whose Victory?

The Nigerian Civil War was not a progressive or just war. It was a war of the sharing out of the sweats of the down trodden, between the rentier/landed bourgeois classes to get the booties of the Nigeria people. It was equally a war to maintain the tentacles of imperialism whether on the Nigerian side or on the side of Biafra. Cabral (1980: 68) said, "The struggle unites, but it also sorts out persons, (the) struggle shows who is to be valued and who is worthless. Every comrade must be vigilant about himself, for the struggle is a selective process; the struggle shows us to everyone, and shows who we are." Castro (1968:139) said, "…tell me who defends you, and I will tell you who you are! Tell me who attacks you, and I will tell you who you are!!" The nature of Nigeria's colonial and post-colonial political economy tells the actions and reactions of the principal antagonists in the Nigerian Civil War. The fact was that they both played into the hands of imperialism tells the fact of the nature of the Nigerian and indeed Biafran military. It tells about the apolitical nature of the two antagonistic military in the Nigerian-Biafran War (Ademoyega 1981).

As a result of the tricky nature of imperialism, it is better to examine and re-examine their humanitarianism in general and during the Nigerian Civil War in particular. This is why we see the humanitarian overtures by the imperialist nations during the Civil War as the "sourcerer's choice". The sourcerer gives a spell and equally gives the medication. We have noted earlier introduction to Marx by Engels(1983:8-9) who said that, "Clear survey of the economic history of a given period can never be obtained contemporaneously, but only subsequently, after collecting and sifting of the material

has taken place". What Karl Marx is saying is that if events are limited to their current causes and not to their historical and economic causes that it would lead to a lot of misinterpretations of their origins and the forces behind them. Davidson (1969: ix) said that whatever capitalist imperialism may or may not have achieved, one thing is certain about it. It has utterly failed to raise those structures upon which the underdeveloped people can carry themselves into a new civilisation capable of standing and evolving on its own foundation. This is the basis of the "sorcerers choice". The death tolls in the war, the refugee question, the mass starvation and the condition of women and children in the war and yet imperialism on both sides was only interested in the booties of the war was a case in point. It was the classic case of "when two elephants are fighting, it is the grasses that suffer". This is where, the issues of a "progressive or just war" comes in and the question of "whose war, whose victory?" equally comes in.

6.4.1 Imperialist Humanitarianism and the Nigerian Civil War

The nature of capitalism is to accumulate capital without which the capitalist perishes. As such the driving force in Marx's model of the capitalist system is the competition for capital accumulation. Since expand or die is the requirement of each individual capitalist and since competition forces all capitalists to proceed likewise which is reflected in the expansionary drive of the capitalist nations, thus the origin of imperialism are to be found in the capitalist system itself (Brown 1978: 52-3). In order equally for capitalism to thrive it has to institute by its logic the law of uneven-development through which the core of capitalism advances in development disproportionate to its peripheries or extremities which generates revolutionary pressures or crises in the underdeveloped areas (Lenin 1983: 59-60; Marx and Engels 1977: 289; Ake 1981). The logicians of bourgeois colonial imperialism push false consciousness of a "civilising mission" to the fore but they equally recognised the bad aspects of colonialism which were the murderous exploitative colonial oppressive socio-economic relations. On this note Rodney (1972:223) rejected the two armed argument of the romanticist historians and social scientists and argued that colonialism possessed only arm, a one armed bandit. The fact that colonialism, neo-colonialism and indeed globalisation, have not provided the real structures in their former colonial

dependencies for peace and stability but structures of socio-economic violence and terrorism and in their consummation turns round to offer humanitarian services is indeed “the sourcerer’s choice”. The Nigerian Civil War presented a classic case in which imperialism caused the collapse of the commodity prices, the backbone of the Nigerian regional and national economy, which was deflected into ethnic chauvinism and turned round at both sides of the Civil War to offer humanitarian gestures. It was indeed a “sourcerer’s choice”.

There was equally the falsehood bandied around by imperialism in order to sell their arms to both sides in the war for Nigerians to destroy themselves. In the words of Okoye (1979: 129) the lessons of history and the habit of human nature are laced with lies in war and peace and the cases of lies in wars are criminally propagated. He thus said, “…when war is declared, truth is the first casualty.” “Such tragic mishaps occur because we as a people did not recognise the dual character of national liberation which is the fight for self-government in which the aim is to liquidate imperialism on the one hand and on the other hand to liquidate the feudal- capitalist order bolstered by imperialism as a condition for its own survival (Okoye 1979:130). Hence Okoye (1979:131) said that we have to wage war “…against capitalist imperialism which is responsible for the prevailing high prices and scarcity, excessive profits and dwindling purchasing power, colossal fraud and corruption, universal squalor and superstition, debilitating want and fear in our society.” However, contrary was the case between the two antagonistic leadership in the Nigerian Civil War whose actions were inflamed by passion rather than reason hence they both collaborated with imperialism, the greatest enemy of the Nigerian and indeed African peoples.

We have seen what was of interests to both the British and French imperialism in Nigeria during the Civil War, two key foreign powers that aided both sides of the war. Britain was the leading investor in Nigeria as the former colonial master. Outside Europe, North America, India and South Africa, Nigeria was a key investment out-post for British multinational corporations. France was equally increasing her investments in Nigeria especially in the oil industry that is the kingpin of modern capitalist industries

since in the 1920s when the United States multinational oil companies upstaged the British and French interest in the Middle–East oil, with the help of the US Government, the search for oil by these two European powers has been very frenetic (Tedheke1984). This was prior to the North Sea Oil discovery for Britain and as Cronje (1972: 23-4) had stated. After the Middle East War of 1967 when oil embargo was placed on her and other Western powers, by Middle-East producers, Nigeria's crude oil became very strategic especially as the Suez Canal was blocked on June 6, 1967, a month to the commencement of the Nigerian shooting war. The Nigeria's crude oil was therefore the major hope for Britain in her energy requirements as the oil shortage was already being felt as its budget went into deficit and her losses from the Middle-East situation as a whole was about 10 million pounds a month from July to September and doubled that level for the rest of the year. Since the transition from coal to crude oil by the industralised world since in the 1930s, crude oil has assumed the central stage in energy requirements in the Western industralised nations. The fact remains that the bulk of the crude oil was from the Third World countries and the bulk of the end users were the industralised capitalist countries (Tedheke 1984).

The French were said to be antagonistic to the interests of the British in Africa based on the traditional rivalry between both of them right from the period of the scramble for Africa. As the intra-imperialist rivalries between Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan resulted in the First and Second intra-imperialist World Wars, the rivalry between Britain and France after silencing Germany, Italy and Japan during the second intra-imperialist war made it possible for Charles de Gaulle's repeated veto of British application to join the European Common Market. The Biafran crude oil concocted deal with Rothschild by Ojukwu was played upon by the British and the Nigerian Government in order to whip into line the British out of their diplomatic wait and see attitude. The fact that the Rothschild story of the crude oil deal might not have been authentic but what is of import was British fears over her sources of energy supply from Nigeria. However, the fact that France was very pre-occupied with aiding Biafra did not totally exonerate her from her interest on Nigerian oil, which was mostly in the then Eastern Region or Republic of Biafra (Cronje 1972; 198). The Rothschild concoction

apart, France had existing interest in Nigeria crude oil as SAFRAP, a subsidiary of the state owned French company, ERAP, had valuable oil fields on both sides of the Civil War, and had suspended all operations in Biafra as well as on the Federal side (Cronje 1972 201-2).

The philosophy of the survival of the fittest which is the philosophical underpinning of capitalism and indeed its more deadly outgrowth imperialism always results in a life-and-death intra-imperialist struggles. These intra-imperialist struggles which are the results of the expanded reproduction of the surplus value resulting in the realisation problems lead to devastating wars among imperialist countries and turns capital of different nationalities as deadly enemies as such the classic cases were the First and Second intra-imperialist World Wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 respectively. The greed of individual capitalists an extension to the greed of national capitals would make the capitalist nations to fight each other at the European continental levels from the inception of capitalism in the 18th century to the First and Second World Wars in the 20th century (Lenin 1983). It was therefore not surprising that Britain and France took opposing positions in the Nigerian Civil War. As we have noted earlier, Suzanne Cronje said it was as a result of the historical antecendent of British and French rivalries in Africa. Whatever the convictions on both Nigerians and Biafrans at the time of the humanitarianism of these two great imperialist powers and their hangers on that aided both sides of the Civil War, it was selfish interest that was the underlining and not truly to help either sides of the Civil War.

Cronje (1972:92) said that the British policy on Nigeria during the Civil War was to ensure the continuation of British influence in Nigeria, to favour British interest and as a part of her wider African strategy. This predated Harold Wilson's Government, but on an official level attitudes towards the coups of 1966 and the outbreak of fighting in 1967 were directed towards fitting these developments into the grand design. It was no coincidence that Nigeria's war aims were in strict accord with this policy, and British military support for Lagos was part of it as a means of maintaining and consolidating British influence over Nigerian leadership-not, as some people naively thought as to

minimise suffering, but to ensure the emergence of a political framework which would promote British economic interests. The biggest threat to British policy on Nigeria's war efforts was public disapproval at home and elsewhere of her arms supplies for Nigeria's war efforts. As such the information which emanated from Lagos was carefully designed to answer humanitarian fears about the effects of the war and the good natured Federal military leadership. Hence Gowon was waxed into British propaganda with an image of a highly-principled Christian gentleman who unlike Ojukwu was not too clever by half. The aspects of arms supplies were more difficult, while the Nigerians had to be convinced that they were winning the war with British armament, public opinion at home had to be assured that Britain's contribution to the war effort was insignificant (Cronje 1972: 92-3).

Thus the British High Commissioner in Lagos Sir David Hunt, at the time was publicising the fact that, "We (British) have made available to the Federal Forces the means to continue the struggle' and that 'the bulk of the weapons in the hands of the Federal Forces have come from Britain" (BBCME 2631B/2, 24 November 1967; BBC, ME 2677/B/4, Kaduna Home Service, 22 January 1968 cited by Cronje 1972: 93). However, Government spokesmen in London declared that British arms supplies for Nigeria constituted only 15% of Federal Government total military purchases abroad. The utterances of Sir David Hunt were not publicised in Britain. Even the Foreign Office in London could not deny that while the war lasted there would be bloodshed and starvation. The general agenda by the combined disposition of world-wide imperialist exploits has been the congruence in their world view about the danger to them of the increasing population for the backward and underdeveloped countries. And wars and starvations are the key instruments for the reduction of the ever rising populations of the Third World. The Nigerian Civil War therefore fitted this grand design of world wide imperialist disposition in order to check population growth in Africa (Martins 2005), Nigeria being a very strategic imperialist outpost. According to Castro (1968; 246) in the 1960s one of the United States Secretaries of State was said to have declared that if science and technology fail to find a solution to the problem of geometrical population growth in the Third World, the world will find itself exposed to a thermonuclear

explosion (social revolution-my emphasis). This general agenda of imperialism was perhaps played out in Rwanda in the progrom that occurred there in the earlier part of 1995 (Ebo and Mondeh 1998:28).

The fundamental of African crises has always been ignored by the global order that emerged in the post-Cold War crises of the African continental situation. Before the demise of the Cold War international policies in the 1990s, Africa has been practically dependent on extra-African conflict management mechanisms (Ebo and Mondeh 1998). However, this unsatisfactory medication by the sourcerers was abandoned by the same actors that created the poisoning environment prior to the end of the Cold War. The abandonment of crisis management mechanism by imperialism leading to the wholesale massacre of the Tutsis by the Hutus in Rwanda was the crescendo of the imperialist design on the population issue in Africa. The intensity of conflicts increased in Africa from the Congo Kinshasa crisis of 1960 through the Nigerian Civil War, the Sudanese unendling crisis and so on. The African Liberation Wars provided the alibi of some of such schemes of imperialism in which they supplied weapons to the colonial authorities in Africa, especially to Portugal, the renegade colonial authority that collapsed in its colonial Africa in 1975. The aiding of apartheid in South Africa, the post-independence wars in Angola and Mozambique which were fuelled by imperialism principally by the emergent global dominant super power although taking the global ideological divide of the Cold War era were some of the deadly crises in Africa. These crises dovetailed into the post-Cold War crises in Africa. The post-Cold War conflicts in Africa intensified to such extent that the humiliation of the United States peace-keeping mission in Somalia made the only post-Cold War super power to learn her lessons. Thus this bitter experience in Somalia prevented American involvement in Rwanda, despite the mass massacre of the civilian population. The picture shown nationwide in US by CNN, of the corpse of an American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu influenced public opinion against direct use of American soldiers in conflicts where American interest are not directly involved (Ebo and Mondeh 1998: 28).

The lack of enthusiasm by Euro- American imperialism to keep the peace in Africa after one crisis or the other so incenced former Ghanian President and one time ECOWAS Chairman, Jerry Rawlings who said "...we cannot help being struck by the fact that the international community is willing to spend $5 million a day in Bosnia Herzegovina, but when we asked for a sum that represents 10-15 days of that bill to help those of us in Africa making every possible effort to assist ourselves with our meagre resources, there is deafening silence" (*West Africa*, 4-10 December 1995: 187). Rawlings lamentation would look as a recent change of hearts by the forces of imperialism from Europe and North America. The fact that Europe and North America would always turn their faces and attention the other way on Africa while the continent burns has been an issue of historical antecendent. The massacres of the Congolese by the forces of King Leopold of Belgium in the 19th century leading to the death of millions of Africans in the Congo (Rodney 1972; Martins 2005) was a case in point. The colonial wars or the "civilising missions" resulting in the death and dislocation of Africans and we should not forget about the three hundred years of the trans- Atlantic slave trade leading to the deaths of millions of Africans.The enslavement of other millions which equally had devastating effects on the continent. One would not be surprised at the action or responses of capital and the advance capitalist nations to crises in Africa. The issue being raise here is that like the sourcerer who casts a spell on its victim, the pains resulting from it is a sort of joy to the sourcerer. The sourcerer himself or herself is always too afraid of pains and death but enjoys it being afflicted on others. So is capital in war and peace and its outgrowth, imperialism, in instigating wars and inflicting pains and death. Shepherd (1968:2) said that if the West waits for too long millions of Ibos will perish. The same *Africa Today* which reported the foregoing had been suggesting for sometime that if such a tragedy were taking place in the Middle of Europe rather than among black Africans, Anglo-American society would be convulsed with demands for action (*Africa Today* 1968:2)

6.4.2 The Refugee Question, Women, Children, Death Tolls and the War.

The Nigerian Civil War generated such a large refugee population that the Foreign Minister of Canada had to write the Secretary General of the United Nations, U Thant

that Canadian public opinion, as well as opinion from other countries, could not understand why UN could fail to concern itself with the prevention of starvation in Nigeria (Alade 1975:3 cited by Okpoko 1986:39). In order to justify international non-intervention in the war between the antagonists, the World powers advanced two important arguments. Firstly, it was seen as a domestic issue and therefore not subject to outside mediation or other external action; secondly, it was viewed as an African affair and therefore within OAU's particular scope (Cronje 1972; 320). Particularly the US position that it could make no attempt to halt the Nigerian Civil War because interfering in the affairs of developing countries would be against its principles was hardly credible in a decade which had witnessed the escalation of the war in Vietnam, and also American manipulation of the UN in the Zairean (Congo Leopoldville now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) crisis (Cronje 1972:321). It follows therefore that Washington apparent helplessness in the face of an African opposition to international efforts to promote a Nigerian settlement was not quite convincing. It was, however, the State Department's view that Nigerian unity was important for African stability as a whole which view was based largely on considerations for British position in the area, not to talk of America's own considerable interests. The Americans were too busy with Vietman and the Middle-East to concern themselves with Nigeria, particularly as Soviet backing for the Federal side had been correctly assessed as an apparent rather than real threat (Cronje 1972: 321-2).

From the beginning to the end, the State Department and to a lesser extent, the White House held the view that the conflict fell within the British sphere of influence. With the US on its side, the British Government did not expect that its Nigeria policy would run into serious international opposition and it would not have if the war had been as brief as was generally expected. However, as the fighting dragged on, bringing with it reports of terrible starvation, London came under mounting criticism from Western Europe. For instance, public opinion in Switzerland was aroused to such an extent that a British trade fair in Basel had to be cancelled. London had to expend a considerable amount of diplomatic effort to keep some of the governments concerned from bringing up the issue at the UN, or openly supporting Biafra (Cronje 1972; 322). In shielding the

Nigerian conflict from international concern in the form of the discussions and effective UN involvement the British and indeed the United States helped the escalation of the crisis. Since Britain while shielding the crisis from the United Nations and yet intensifying arms supplies to Nigeria and on the opposing side France's arms supplies to Biafra, the two former colonial powers in Africa created the condition for the escalation of starvation in Biafra (Okpoko 1986; Cronje 1972; St Jorre 1977). Whether consciously or unconsciously, the imperialist powers have a common meeting ground, their universal philosophy or world view of seeing the rising population of the Third World as a common threat and the need to contain it in order to maintain the high living standard of the advance industrial world.

The idea, therefore, of the humanitarianism of Britain and France on both sides of the war were prone to suspect. It was not different from their "civilising mission" which from the Berlin Conference of 1884/5 threw Africa up for their grabs. Their purported "civilising mission" was to battle each other in order to create markets for capital to realise surplus value which was becoming increasingly difficult in their national markets in Europe at the time. In supporting the opposing sides during the Nigerian Civil War both Britain and France with their cohorts created the condition for the escalation of the war, starvation, the refugee question, the sufferings of women and children and the increased death tolls. A social analyst and a critique during his lecture on October 3, 2004 to commemorate the 70th birthday of the first Director General of the Nigerian Television Authority said that an American working for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) told him that what precipitated the pogrom against Ibos in the North in 1966 was report that the Ibos killed Northerners in the East which was false and that the news was planted by the powers that be in order to escalate the Nigerian crisis at the time (Kuka 2005). This agrees with Cronje's position that the British and American policy on the Nigerian Civil War was in congruence.

If the CIA and indeed the British had to favour crisis for Nigeria then those who view the Nigerian crisis as primordial have to rethink, they have to retrace their steps from such wrong tools of analysis. The most painful thing is that those who instigated and

nurtured the crisis that led to the Nigerian Civil War now turned round to offer humanitarian aid. What else was "the sourcerer's choice?" They instigated and nurtured the economic conditions of underdevelopment, the collapse of the First Republic that led to the coup and counter coup that heralded the Civil War. They instigated the propaganda of hate or the journalism of hate that set in motion tensed nerves that resulted onto the progrom setting the stage for seemingly irreconcilable antagonism that resulted onto the Civil War. They supplied weapons for us to kill ourselves and set the tone for the deepened crisis of starvation, the refugee question, the suffering of women and children and increased death tolls. Yet they set the tone for humanitarianism. What else is "the sourcerer's choice"? We have stated earlier *Africa Today* (1968: 2) that critically opined that "… if such a tragedy were taking place in the middle of Europe rather than among black Africans, Anglo-American society would be convulsed with demands for action". The Anglo-American society was actually convulsed but crude propaganda and selfish interest of their states. their bourgeoisie and indeed imperialism silenced the good conscience of their public opinion which considerably diverged from state policies on the Nigerian Civil War (Cronje 1972).

A Vatican (1969:8 cited by Cronje 1972) in a filed report states, "Widespread starvation in the small pocket of Biafra is a grim tragic reality." The very grim situation in Biafra forced Oxfam to declare thus "…lets get the stuff in, and to hell with ethics" (Cronje 1972:135 cited The Times 25 June 1968). As a result Oxfam's Director Leslie Kirkley flew to Biafra towards the end of June 1968. In its advertisement for donations Oxfam proclaimed: "We cannot sit and wait for a million people to die" (Cronje 1972: 135). When Kirkley returned from his trip to Biafra at the beginning of July, he said, "Unless we pull out all the stops… we will have a terrifying disaster by the end of August. By then two million may have died" (Cronje 1972: 135 cited The *Scotman* 2 July, 1968). It was certain that there were no reliable statistics on the death rates in Biafra but it was clear that large numbers had died, particularly children afflicted by malnutrition. Estimates suggest as high as 50% of the children between 2 to 5 years of age had died (Okpoko 1986: 10). As the Civil War prolonged, the refugee situation worsened as the land area that remained under Biafran control shrinked. The grim conditions of children

and women worsened as starvation intensified. On November 26, 1968 humanitarian agency officials estimated that half of the seven million people remaining in Biafra were in danger of starvation. The minimum food supply needed to prevent such massive starvation was estimated at 40,000 tons for the next month alone. On November 27, 1969 all of the Biafrans remaining (about 7 million people) would be threatened with starvation. A number of estimates placed the death toll so far at one million, mostly children and estimated that another one million might die by the end of the year if relief efforts were not stepped up. Estimates indicated that bare sustenance for the Biafran population would require 2,000 tons of food supplies daily. This minimum figure would require approximately 200 flights daily (Okpoko 1986: 10 cited Diggs and Herberts 1969: 19). The Nigerian Civil War caused huge internal refugee situation both in and outside Biafran war zones as a result of Nigeria's encirclement and suppression strategy or campaign. It escalated starvation on a massive scale which mostly affected children and women.

6.5 War and Nation Building

In the affairs of nations, wars have played very positive roles in social transformation, in reconstruction, nation building and wars have also played very negative roles in annihilation, destruction and tearing nations apart. There are wars that have resulted in the negation of oppressive material or property relations which are revolutionary wars. Mao (1972: 2)" said, we are engaged in a war, our war is a revolutionary war; and our revolutionary war is being waged in this semi-colonial and semi-feudal country… Therefore, we must study not only the laws of war in general, but the specific laws of a revolutionary war, and the even more specific laws of revolutionary war in China". In addition he said," It is well known that when you do anything, unless you understand its actual circumstances, its nature and its relations to other things, you will not know the laws governing it, or know how to do it, or be able to do it well." The Nigerian Civil War was not a revolutionary war and as such it was a war that aided the maintenance of the *status quo.* It aided the strengthening of imperialist stranglehold on Nigeria and indeed the maintenance of the tentacles of exploitation of our people and our nation by the forces of imperialism and their hangers on, the feudal and semi-feudal landed

aristocracy/comprador/rentier bourgeoisie. The Nigerian Civil War did not create the avenue for a second independence or economic liberation from the clutches of neo-colonial imperialism and indeed the negative forces of globalisation. Thus we have to know the laws that governed the Nigerian Civil War whether they were for nation building or for its opposite, the negation of it.

If the national landed/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie was simply incapable of bringing national unity into being, or building up the nation on a stable and productive basis, it then means that it could not and had not the capacity for creating the basis of national stability or nation building. Hence the various crises that resulted in the First Republic were not transformative enough to shake the foundations of the feudal, semi-feudal and imperialist coalition that heralded Nigeria's independence and indeed the First Republic. The colonial feudalisation of the republican elements of the pre-colonial Nigerian society and the encouragement and emergence of the landed/ rentier bourgeoisie as the dominant classes did not augur well for post-independence nation building strategies. Rather, the post-colonial Nigerian state that aided the Nigerian Civil War resulted from the negation of the forces of progress or the productive forces. It was retrogressive because it brought about the stagnation of society, and the stagnation of the nationalities preventing their development and fusing into a nation. It enhanced and strengthened false consciousness which has turned reality upside down by according secondary contradictions as the prominent/important contradictions whereas imperialism, the economy and economic interests and classes which are the basis of primary contradictions are seen to be non-prominent contradictions (Tedheke 2005; 441). True nation building is the ability of a people to construct infrastructures for national economic development.

Civil War and wars generally have been catalysts of development in human history depending on whether such wars were progressive or just wars or not. The Civil Wars that preceded and heralded the development of capitalism in England called the English Revolutionary Wars of 1640 to 1688 were transformative Civil Wars and were developmental. They were Civil Wars that led to the uprooting of feudalism by

capitalism. The same was true of the Civil War in France that uprooted feudalism and planted capitalism. The Civil War in the United States displaced the semi-feudal slave economy of the Confederate States and ethroned the capitalist economy of the Union States. It was a transformative Civil War because it engendered an advance on the semi-feudalism of the Confederate States of the South and not just only that, it overthrew the slave economy by emergent capitalism of New England which transformed the development of that state today into a giant and indeed a super power. Mao (1972:7) said, “All the laws for directing war develop as history develops and as war develops; nothing is changeless”. Ransom (1989) said that the Civil War in the United States which lasted from 1862-65 revolutionised technology four fold. In this respect therefore the American Civil War was not only progressive in the freeing of slaves but also in the freeing of bottled energies of the people of the United States. Lenin (1970; 4-5) said, “In history there have been numerous wars which, in spite of all the horrors, atrocities, distress and sufferings that inevitably accompany all wars were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy the exceptionally harmful and reactionary institutions (for example, autocracy or serfdom), the most barbarous despotisms in Europe (Turkish and Russia).

Lenin (1970:5-6) said that the Great French Revolution ushered in a new historical transformative epoch from 1789 when it occurred to 1871 of the Paris Commune. The whole of this period was an embodiment of one type of wars which were wars of a bourgeois-progressive, national liberating character. In other words, the chief content and historical significance of these wars were the overthrow of absolutism and feudalism, the undermining of these institutions, the overthrow of alien oppression. He stressed that these were progressive wars and during such wars, all honest revolutionary democrats and also all socialists, always sympathised with the success of that country (ie with that bourgeoisie), which had helped to overthrow, or sap, the most dangerous foundations of feudalism, absolutism and the oppression of other nations. Lenin further stressed that, the revolutionary wars waged by France contained an element of plunder and conquest of alien territory by the French, but this does not in the least alter the fundamental historical significance of these wars, which destroyed and

shattered feudalism and absolutism in the whole of old, serf-ridden Europe. In the Franco-Prussian War, Germany plundered France, but this does not alter the fundamental historical significance of this war, which liberated tens of millions of German people from feudal disintegration and from the oppression of two despots, the Russian Tsar and Napoleon III (Lenin 1970: 5-6). One looks for the liberating characteristics of the Nigerian Civil War without much in offer but the maintenance of the *status quo* which is the strengthening of the alliance of feudalism, semi-feudalism, the landed/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie in league with imperialism. We can see that the foregoing has seen the *status quo* maintained prior to and after independence in 1960. Okoye (1979:92) said of Nnamdi Azikwe thus:

> Of all Nigerian leaders, you only commanded the necessary loyalty, reputation and admiration to mobilise our people for a wholesale war against the forces that chained them-the forces of feudalism and capitalist-imperialism-but the young men who over the years rushed to the call of your trumpet came away frustrated because you betrayed them. Instead of honest and capable men you have chosen crooks and genuflecting mediocres to try to translate our dreams into reality...is it any wonder that you have trodden the path of cautious mediocrity rather than that of a revolutionary leader?

We have noted earlier in this project Baran's (1978: 368) view which held through that"… the split in the nationalist camp proceeds fast; its capitalist, bourgeois component, confronted at the early stage with the spectre of social revolution turns swiftly and resolutely against its fellow traveller of yesterday, its mortal enemy of tomorrow. Infact, it does not hesitate to make common cause with the feudal elements representing the main obstacle to its own development, with the imperialist just dislodged by the national liberation, and with the comprador groups threatened by the political retreat of their foreign principals". The fact that the heroes and the vanguished of the Nigerian Civil War cemented their relationship with imperialism was a common thread that runs against a second independence or national liberation and indeed nation building. We have traced in details the economic causation of the Nigerian Civil War from the collapse of the regional economic bases of agricultural produce in post-Korean War boom in 1955/ 56. If an economy based on shifting sand was the cause of

the collapse of the regional economies of the First Republic have we had a head way since the end of the Civil War? Did we really win the war or both the victors and vanguished are losers in the final analysis? How far has the Civil War eased geo-ethnic chauvinism? How far have we built the peace in post-Civil War Nigeria? If not what has gone wrong?

6.5.1 How Nigerians Lost the Civil War

Modern wars are fought under the dynamics of science and technology driven devices. In this respect, therefore, modern military has no option but to be based concretely on science and technology. Technology, through the ages, time and space provided mankind the leeway in various spheres of human endeavours, influencing and organising his future development or progress. The historical processes of science and technology break-through showed periods or epochs of significant progress which manifested in new ideas, strategic thoughts and products. Such periods of leap-forward have been marked mostly during times of war, extreme deprivations and needs; for example, the period before and immediately after the First and Second intra-imperialist World Wars. Countries must however be prepared, committed and dedicated to exploit such achievements in their internal development processes both for their military and civil uses. The rise in science which made its spectacular triumphs in the 17th century Europe resulting in modern technological development which followed, driven by the steam device in the wake of the industrial revolution in Europe and North America now underpins the most distinguished characteristics of the modern state based on state power which relates to its status of scientific and technological capabilities. Thus science and technology provided the advanced industrial countries of Europe, North America and Japan with enormous potentials for substantial productivity in agriculture, industrialisation, and functional technological infrastructures, military-industrial complexes which assured them of their present-technological, economic, military and industrial power (Sen 1984; Buzeuv 1985, Oragwu 1989; 213).

In the historical process it has always been the duty of the forces that bear historical progress to carry society and indeed civilisation to the next stage of human progress

(Engels in Marx1978:7). The forces that bore the tail of history have never advanced the progress of any society and have never contributed to societal development at the stage of historical transition but are rather agents of ruins or crises. The Nigerian situation has been catalogued by many social analysts in their tales of woes (Banguna, Mustapha and Adamu, 1986; Okoye 1979; Alli 2001; Ademoyega 1981; Oragwu 1989). The forces of material progress were responsible for the advance of England as they triumphed in the English Revolution of 1640s to 1688 (Hill 1983). The same was true of France during the Great French Revolution of 1789 through series of revolutions that ended with the Paris Commune of 1871 (Marx 1983; Marx 1979; Marx 1978). In the heat of revolutionary upheavals in Europe, the works of Afred Nobel (1833-1896) on nitro-glycerine and its safe handling in an inert material such as fuller's earth, or pulp which he started in a simple private laboratory, resulted later in the safe manufacture of various explosives. The electro-technical work of Guglielmo Marconi in his family estate on how far electro-magnetic waves could travel and his achievement of transmission distances of 1.5 miles in 1895 led to the conception of 'wireless' telegraph (Oragwu 1989:213-4). The American Civil War we were told revolutionised science and technology four-fold (Ransom 1989). The second intra-imperialist World War increased the tremendous developments in science and technology particularly in Europe and North America in such areas as radar, atomic weapons, production technology, electronics and so on which have increased their tremendous ability in use in physical scientific processes.

Nigeria, unfortunately, was not in the mainstream of thought and action in the remarkable strides made over these centuries in scientific and technological achievements. In this respect therefore, she was not in a position to harness such in her development even when the situation presented itself during the Civil War (Oragwu 1989:214). While the Nigerian side relied on the external dependence to aid its war efforts, the Biafran side out of the crisis of insufficient access to external sources for armed supplies turned inwards for local production of various crude weapons and petroleum refining for war needs (Oragwu 1989; Achuzia 1986; Madiebo 1981). The remarkable achievement by Biafra during the unfortunate thirty months of the shooting

war in scientific, technological and industrial innovations was one of the positive impacts of the war. Why this Biafra's ingenuity was lost was because the Nigeria state was a state based on prebendal political relations (Joseph 1999: 8-11). The forces that won the Civil War were forces of feudal and semi-feudal relations and they were forces of retrogression and in their nature were more proned to the maintenance of the *status quo* than to revolutionise it. Mohammed Chris Alli though was not clear cut on the foregoing but he hits the nail at the head. He thus said that "The 29 July, 1966 coup was strictly a regional and a Northern martial intervention designed to restore Northern spirit, meet Northern interest, and to redress the killings of the January 1966 coup". (Alli 2001:213-4).

Nigerians lost the Civil War because since the laws of war are developmental and follow the material development processes, a nation profits from a war only when the carnage subsides and it has something to show development wise. The greatest and most positive impact of the Nigerian Civil War was Biafra's scientific and technological feat which if it had been harnessed would have smoothened the victory of the Federal Nigerian Forces in war and peace. The tragedy of this technological neglect is a product of the nature of the forces that won the Nigerian Civil War and how their historical background played issues back on the victorious forces. Marx (1978:9) said "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves but under given circumstances, directly encountered and inherited from the past." Hence Mohammed Chris Alli was correct when he said that the counter coup of July 29, 1966 was to restore the Northern spirit which was the wounded feudo-aristocratic relations. However, the campaign of hate between the feudal aristocracy of the North and Eastern, especially, the Ibo landed/rentier bourgeoisie made it impossible for Gowon's 3^{rs}, that is, *Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction* to sink deep enough to harness Biafra's technological achievements during the Civil War.

One is not very sure whether Biafra if it had gone its way would equally not have abandoned its technological feat during the Civil War. Frank (1970) noted that because

of the isolating effects of the First and the Second intra-imperialist World Wars of the 20th century, Brazil developed some technological advance but when once these wars ended and Brazil became reintegrated into the world of dependence she lost all what was developed. In this respect, global economic power relations based on superior technologies killed Brazillian technological initiatives during the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 intra-imperialist World Wars. The survival of Biafra's technological adaptations may or may not have survived depending on class dynamics. The Biafran ruling class dynamics anchored on landed/rentier bourgeois classes was based on elements of semi-feudalism. It would have been a miracle if post-Civil War Biafra would have survived its technological innovations. Perhaps Biafrans would have lost equally what Nigerians have lost.

6.5.2 How Far Building the Peace in Post Civil War Nigeria

Building the peace means building the infrastructures of nation building which are products of national socio-economic development. The crises that led to the Nigerian Civil War were crises of economic underdevelopment. We have stressed all along this project that the crises were products of the collapse of the regional economies based on primary export crops production which had its starting point in the aftermath of the collapse of commodity prices in the post-Korean War of 1953. The survival of global dominant capital is based on uneven and spasmodic development, on capitalist global asymeretric economic and cultural relations (Rodney 1972; Lenin 1983; Tedheke 1998, Tedheke 2005). This contradiction of uneven-development leading to standstill in the development process in the backward societies is a law to maintain capital in its capital accumulation, especially primitive accumulation (Baran 1978). Being an inchoate nation in formation lacking the integrative economic processes that brought into being the core imperialist states of capital, Nigeria thus paid dearly for her stagnation in micro-national chauvinism, a product of a particular political economy of dependent/ backward capitalism, a capitalism of imperialist law of uneven-development. This political economy of backwardness of a state based on rent-seeking and of a rentier/landed bourgeois class is at the heart of stagnation or the impossibility of the nationalities to fuse into the nation and as such show-casing the micro-nationalism or

ethnic chauvinism instigated by British colonial imperialism and has been encouraged and exacerbated by the political economy of neo-colonial imperialism or globalisation. The differences exacerbated by the dynamics of imperialist economy of uneven and spasmodic development in backward societies have created and are still creating crises resulting in intense instabilities in neo-colonial Nigeria's pre and post-Civil War (Tedheke 2005) and indeed all over Africa.

It is of paramount importance that we have to get at both the internal and external forces weighing against national integration or nation building resulting in deadly cleavages in the Nigerian situation (Diamond 1988; Joseph 1999; Nnoli 1978). The political economy of cleavage politics is a product of the political economy of underdeveloped capitalism, a capitalism based on unorganised modern infrastructures of capitalist development which is supposed to be underpinned by science and technological infrastructures of development, if it is to see the light of the day. It is politics of a capitalism situated on a rent-seeking class, a capitalism that does not transform the productive forces. Without a dominant class that wants to transform the productive forces and create a dynamic industrial base situated in the constant revolution in science and technology, the basis for national peace and integration might be impossible. Thus imperialism did not just create the contradiction between national integration and cleavages of micro-national chauvinism, it equally created national economic structures that exacerbated these cleavages which have negated national unity or national building. This is the reason why Nigeria is a Federation in inherent crises. It is not surprising, therefore that Nigeria's ethnic cleavages assume lethal dimensions and exacerbate the *national question* always when there is global capitalist depression (Tedheke 2005:427).

The intensification of the political economy of underdevelopment and dependence on primary export crops economy and its crises have been plagueing the Nigerian state in the post-Civil War Nigeria. The process of nation building has to do with transcending the political economy of the nationality and placing in the historical progression the advancement and constant revolution of the economics of the productive forces. The

contrary has been the case of the post-Civil War Nigeria. Whether in primary agricultural export products of pre-Civil War Nigeria or the transition to a predominantly crude oil export economy, the Nigerian economy remains a non-transformative value economy. It could not provide the necessary integrative mechanism for national integration or the *resolution* of the *national question*. Unlike other nations of advance capitalism and others of revolutionary disposition that benefited from their Civil Wars in terms of scientific and technological revolutions (Ransom 1989, Sayer & Kahn 1975), Nigeria and indeed Nigerians lost the Civil War in the foregoing regard, thus loosing equally post-Civil War peace building instruments for national integration. We have noted earlier the brilliant examples of the Americans, the British, the French and the Germans that revolutionised their development processes as a result of wars. This support Karl Marx position that crises are the midwives of history. He said "But unheroic as bourgeois society is, it nevertheless took heroism, sacrifice, terror, civil war and the battle of the nations, to bring it into being (Marx 1978:11) . The fact that the Nigerian state and society did not benefit from the Civil War in the progressive transformation of the progressive forces as had happened in the other societies of capitalist and socialist disposition is now a known fact from our research findings.

The Nigeria military had ruled the Nigeria polity for some 28 years of the 47 years of this inchoate national existence. The break down of military discipline resulting into "…coups within coups have (not only) become a secondary growth industry in themselves" (Baynham 1968:9), they have also accentuated the premise of systemic violence (Nwankwo 1987:6). The absolute reliance on violence which was mostly a prop for vested interest, inflicted dislocations on the stability of the society in various ways .The development of unrestrained violence by the military into the political process bred contradictions within the military relations and as cleavages in civil-military relations and as such resulting in coup-proness in both situations which were quite enormous in post-Civil War Nigeria (Nwankwo 1987:6-7). In this respect, therefore…indiscipline within the security services had been a constant problem for all regimes, both civilian and military, that relied principally on force to survive (Baynham 1968:6). The coups and counter coups became endemic in post-Civil War Nigeria thus

orchestrating and legitimating the culture of violence not only in the military but also in civil society.

The only most damaging consequence of military indiscipline in post-Civil War Nigeria has been the "decentralisation" of corporate violence whose pellets penetrate every strata of social existence. The obvious response from each social crevice that has been so militarised is the counter-violence of the type underlined by Anini phenomenon. Larceny, rape of justice and hostility in intergroup relations are integral responses. Armed robbers, burglars and hired assasins give expression to the more negative dimensions of the trend towards the commercialisation of violence (Nwankwo 1987:7). The military in violence in Nigeria was not just from the blues. It has historical and class dimensions with evident reliance on structural and direct violence as twin instruments in the struggle for power and resources in Nigerian politics. The Nigerian political system was established and consolidated by soldiers (Zahar 1974:74). Colonial government sponsored looting of the Nigerian economy was made possible by the colonial army with its instruments of raw violence which it displayed. Thus through violence, the colonial state was able to provide the atmosphere for its own maintenance, and in protecting the interests of entrepreneurs and settlers within the victim society. The profit-propelled colonial regime elevated violence to the level of principle. Direct military conquest and occupation, forced labour, compulsory taxation and forceful seizure of land by government backed joint-stock companies became the objective indicators of violence by which the colonial cult was defined (Nwankwo 1987:8). Thus Zahar (1974:75-6) remarked:

> The violence, by which the colonial structures were imposed, now became an integral part of colonial system. Not only did it show its imprint on the institutional framework but it also entered human relations.

Prior to independence in the 1960s, the colonial regime made strenuous efforts to camouflage the contradictions inherent in its reliance on violence by isolating soldiers in barracks. However, the class character of the military was maintained by the colonial regime in making the indigenous officer corps aware as the representatives of the ruling

class. Henceforth, the relationship between the officers and the rank-and-file was made to reflect the class relations in colonial and neo-colonial society-the relations of domination and subordination. The bourgeois officer corps of the post-colonial state, understandably, endeavoured to train their soldiers and direct their actions in the interests of the ruling class. The motive of this corps was to make soldiers the bearers of bourgeois ideology and politics. The all side indoctrination of the rank-and-file was intended to ensure their unwavering role as willing tools of the neo-colonial state. The Nigerian Armed Forces is, therefore, a basic instrument of state policy. And its social nature is determined by the same correlation of class forces within the nation. As such, it is as dependent and malintegrated as the political system in which it is situated. The Nigerian Armed Forces is equally fractured on a multiplicity of planes-ethnic, religious and ideological. Its fractionalisation mirrors society's own cleavages, seething with an array of intra-bourgeois rivalries and tensions in intra-class relations. The Nigerian Armed Forces, therefore, is an important element of the superstructure and the relations of production which shape the development of the Nigerian state and society. It is the foregoing and the class dynamics of the neo-colonial socio-economic structures that the armed forces derived its morphology, its purpose as well as the principles underlying its development (Nwankwo 1987:9-10)

In most cases, military rulers demonstrate a poor understanding of the African condition because they ignore the structural contradictions and crisis of hegemony which promote upheaval in society (Nwankwo 1987:23). The failures of government to provide social security and employment opportunities for the restive youths because of the structural dynamics of neo-colonial political economy are some of the crisis producing elements (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985:5). Falola and Ihonvbere (1985:6) further stressed that in a "… distorted crisis ridden and backward peripheral capitalist society… where it has been the tradition of the dominant class to (localise) the unequal and exploitative relations of production and exchange, the state can hardly meet the basic needs of people". They correctly noted that"…the intense intra-bourgeois class struggle to win access to the state and thus preside over the allocation of public funds prompts the manipulation of the means of coercion, politicisation of the bureaucracy and armed

forces, and the use of ethnic, state and religious chauvinism" (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985).

In the foregoing respect, therefore, there exists a correlation between the peripheralisation of the economy in the neo-colonial society and the unregulated use of coercion in order to maintain the *status quo.* The coups and counter coups of post-Civil War Nigeria are products of economic degenerations, of economic dependency and of unequal exchange and deepening peripheralisation of a backward political economy. The same was true of the crisis of the First Republic which was a product of the collapse of the economic basis of the regions which were delicately perched on export crops. The collapse and indeed overthrow of Gowon's regime in 1975 was a product of the economic down-turn, the same was true of the emergence of Mohammadu Buhari. The oil glut or plot of 1983 by imperialism leading to the collapse of crude oil prices produced the Buhari coup and indeed Babaginda counter coup (Tedheke 1984; 2005). The lingering crisis made Babaginda to introduce the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) that intensified crisis after crisis in various shades (Tedheke 2005).

Despite the enormous oil wealth at its disposal the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie and their state have not found recourse to initiate a productive economy based on science, technology, technological infrastructures and industralisation. The post-Civil War political economy that witnessed the complete collapse of the nation's export agricultural produce and the impact of the Civil War on the militarisation of the Nigerian state gave birth to a lot of aberrations or mishaps. It gave rise to a lot of critical issues in the *national question* such as problems of *fiscal federalism*, the *minority question*, the *deconstructing of Nigerian federalism* or "unitary federalism," *internal colonialism*, the *Niger Delta question* and so on. The consequences were the reinvigoration of indentity politics (Jega 2003). Capitalism without productive capital would escalate struggles for political power at the level of the state and at the level of civil society it would give rise to micro-nationalism. Under military rule, suppression, marginalisation, domination, injustice, inequity and misrule of prolonged military government usually hijacked by a section of the country, generated

feelings which led to the formation of different groups most of which border on nationalities. Civil society and its popular struggles in favour of substantive interest had mushroomed so much by the mid-1990s that all shades of interest whether ethnic, cultural, communal, environmental, professional, commercial, youth, gender and others were organised. With the birth of representative democracy since 1999, most of the civil society groups, if not all, have turned to local, sectional and regional interests. Since then most of these groups have acquired a less national and less broad outline outlook (Ikelegbe 2000).

The sudden switch from civil society agitation to sectional interests, mostly bordering on micro-national chauvinism is not surprising. Theoretically and empirically, our ossification at the level of nationality is a product of the situation in Nigeria's socio-economic movement or development. In the peculiar Nigerian situation, it is the product of the poverty of leadership and its economic philosophy of development. This is why we have refused to become the cultural "melting pot". Since 1999, crisis after crisis have engulfed the Nigerian state system in the forms of the Niger Delta crisis, the minority question, the Sharia religious question, the settler/ indigene question, the extra ordinary youth crisis, the economic development issues and so on. These crises are products of the development of underdevelopment, imperialism and the leadership question all bordering on a neo-colonial backward capitalist economy. These same crises resulted in the Civil War and have made Nigeria prone to mini-Civil Wars which are products of micro-national chauvinism. The Nigerian state has been so prone because it habours the elements of a failed state which are its lack of being rooted in science and technology and modern industrial processes which are the hallmarks of modern states. It has failed so far because its dominant class, the landed aristocracy/ rentier/comprador bourgeoisie have not been able to transform themselves into a progressive industrial bourgeoisie. This is a clear invitation to endemic crises and a lingering one which the Nigerian state experiment has been witnessing since independence to date.

6.6 Summary

The impacts of the Nigerian Civil War are numerous. They range from the nature of the dominant class leading to the inevitable externalisation of the war. If the externalisation was just for moral backing, it would not have been a problem but it made both sides rely on imperialism for arms and ammunitions. The desperations of the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie at both sides of the war made what one might call negative internationalisation of the war possible. Nwankwo (1987:23) said that… military rulers demonstrate a poor understanding of the African condition by ignoring the structural contradictions and the crisis of hegemony which promote upheavals in civil-military relations, thereby prompting military coups. One would say with all amount of certainty that equally the dependent dominant aristocracy/ rentier/comprador bourgeois classes equally demonstrate total ignorance of the infrastructures of violence based on the incapacities of the political economy to arrive at the *resolution* of the *national question.* The issues in the *national question* have been tasked by the military outside its fundamental which is supposed to be based on the productive forces of the nation. Thus military and the Nigerian aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie believe in the continuous splintering of Nigeria into states or provinces as the solution to the Nigeria unity project. So far, the needed national unity has not materialised. The rentier state and its military because of their historical origin are actually the bane of *national integration*.

The foregoing has made the impossibility of the post-Civil War reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction not to be deep-rooted. It was not deep-rooted because the Nigerian Civil War was not a progressive war. It was not a war to revolutionise society and economy, more so since it relied on imperialism in collaboration with the feudal and semi-feudal landed classes. Since the war was not fought between the feudal /semi feudal forces on the one hand and the progressive revolutionary forces on the other, the impact on society has been preponderantly negative and non-transformative. Hence Nigerians and indeed Nigeria lost the war. Progressive wars or just wars were fought in history for the advancement of the historical process or progression. Apart from keeping Nigeria ‘one’ in a very tenuous unity held together by

the force of arms, the *resolution* of the *national question* or the realisation of a deepened national unity is far from the agenda. The old structures of ethnicity and regionalism are still very much intact despite the post-Civil War presidential system of government. Nigerians lost the Civil War as we could not realise the technological devices of the war; in the enormous sacrifices we made in men and materials on both sides; we equally lost in death tolls. The resolution of the Nigerian Civil War has only brought a tenuous national unity devoid of content. The form of national unity which has been our lot since independence can only be transformed in national economic integration, which characterised other nations in the advance capitalist countries and the erst-while socialist countries. History has informed us that this is the only road to national integration and it must be rooted in our people and not foreigners.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

7.0 Conclusion: The Civil War in Nigeria - Removing the Veil Over Primary Causal Variables

The problems of the studies of the Nigerian Civil War are that most of the approaches adopted the secondary geo-ethnic variables as the important and prominent variables which is nothing but turning reality upside down. This is thinking that stagnates and the end result is to strengthen the reactionary forces and hide imperialism including its locally created social classes, the landed/rentier bourgeois classes. Castro (1968:43) said "… the worst of sacrileges is to stagnate in thinking. Thinking that stagnates is thinking that rots. And we must not permit our thinking to stagnate much less to rot". It is in order not to have our thoughts in stagnation not to talk of having them in rots that we have decided not to take a recourse to geo-ethnic analysis of the Nigerian crises that led to the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted. According to Nafziger (1983:2) on the Civil War, "… economic factors including international economic context, need to be considered implies that several prevailing approaches are not adequate. In the most frequently used approach (the "ethnic model" of internal political violence) language, race, tribe, religion, national origin, or some other cultural sense of identity is considered the primary factor contributing to the conflict."

In using the geo-ethnic analysis as the primary causal variable will limit the causation of the crises that resulted in the fall of the First Republic and the collapse of that democratic experiment to primordial sentiments. It is to blame the victims of the imperialist world division of labour and make them to condemn themselves alone in ignorance. According to Cabral (1980:129) " In the case of so-called neo-colonialism, whether the majority of the colonised population is aborigin or of exotic origin, imperialist action takes the form of creating a local bourgeoisie in fee to the ruling class of the dominating country." This relationship between the Nigerian landed

aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie and imperialism that goes soured when economic crises occur but deflected always into ethnicity is the key to the understanding of the crises of the First Republic and of others that have attracted our analysis as the cause of the Nigerian Civil War and sustained it while it lasted.

7.1 The Civil War- Politics of Primary Causal Variable

In their analysis of the causation of the Nigerian Civil War, the primacy of ethnicity or geo-ethnic primordial variables as a model of analysis appealed much as a better tool of analysis to the Nigerian landed ruling aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes and their intellectual megaphones. We see the foregoing model of analysis to be very inadequate hence we take to the economic causation as our primary tool of explanation based on the political economy perspective. The right wing elements are convinced beyond doubt that ethnic politics is primary in the political equation of their analysis which they see as the greatest evil that played itself out in other secondary variables resulting in the national crises that heralded the Civil War. In this blind ally of obscurantism mystification and agnosticism, the underlying historical, economic and class forces are consciously or inadvertently being disregarded as of little or no consequence. The primacy of ethnicity in the explanation of the Nigerian crises prior to the Civil War, the Civil War itself and indeed every other conflict generally in Nigeria were posited by Obasanjo (1980:144) as the key explanatory model.

The foregoing position of Olusegun Obasanjo on the primacy of ethnicity or primordialism has dominated the pre-Civil War and post-War studies of the Nigerian political crises which have gone some distance to distort the historical factors and forces that are principally economic and class forces but not exclusively so which instigated, dynamited and propelled the Nigerian crises onto the Civil War. In ideological congruence Olusegun Obansanjo's position agrees with earlier one on the Nigerian crises by Post and Vickers (1971:1) who said that, "foremost among the proffered explanations have been the destructive twins of tribalism (sic) and regionalism." The conventional social scientists/ bourgeois intellectuals or apologists though talk about classes in watered down concepts of elite and so on but ethnicity,

ethnic politics and politics of regionalism appealed to them as better tools of analysis. Thus all shades of bourgeois opinion moulders have forced down our throats the geo-ethnic variables as primary causal variables of the crises that resulted in the collapse of the First Republic, which ended in heralding the Civil War.

Post and Vickers (1971) despite their antipathy to class as analytical tool like Olusegun Obasanjo and other Nigerian right wing analysts of the Nigerian Civil War and the crises that heralded it, betrayed their ideological biases in their adoption of the line of convenience or of least resistance and of less rigor which is a disservice to nation building. On a close examination of Olusegun Obasanjo's position of the primacy of ethnicity in the analysis of the Nigerian crises that heralded the Civil War, one is surprised to see him inadvertently pushing the primacy of class but the nature and the character he may not understand. He said that "… the Nigerian intellectual and elite are worst peddlers of tribalism (sic)… for their personal aggrandisement. In order to gain power and prosperity; the Nigerian elite and the politicians played politics of division and patronage and ultimately destruction." This confusion, fuzziness and vacillation in analysis is not restricted to Olusegun Obasanjo alone but encapsulates his class and their social and ideological cohorts both internally and externally who inundate us with very fuzzy and truncated national consciousness, with wrong tools or at best secondary tools of analysis.

Research is meant to unearth facts that were not quite clear to common sense deductions and it is an endeavour to develop explanatory generalisations or theories about complex social existence for the development or advancement of society for the good life. For a social researcher, therefore, his contributions to humanity's progress is to unravel the paradox surrounding what seems to be societal confusions in the historical process. A researcher is not supposed to add to such confusions and inflame the dilemma begging for scientific explanations. This is what those who choose to stagnate at the level of analyses using the geo-ethnic tools or models have generally done to Nigerians' psyche. The confusions in Post and Vickers (1971:6) and others who are bent on using other models as primary is to create distortions in national

consciousness and indeed crises in nation building. As a result such bourgeois intellectuals had negated the processes that could enhance national cohesion since consciously or unconsciously they stimulate centrifugal forces instead of those of centripetal dynamics. As we have seen it is a product of the lack of depth in intellectual endeavour, inarticulate intellectual work and so on.

The negation with the stroke of the pen of such very vital alternative instruments of scientific explanation or analysis such as class and indeed imperialism would blur the analytical clarity of those who use the geo-ethnic perspectives to explain the dynamics of the crises that led to and precipitated the Civil War. Consciously or unconsciously there is some degree of intellectual dishonesty. Such intellectual acrobatics aid the ideological soil upon which the Nigerian ruling landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie stand and imperialist capital operates and profits from our blood and sweat. The poverty of Post and Vickers position and their collaborators such as Olusegun Obasanjo and others in the usage of the geo-ethnic tradition is the isolationist view treating Nigeria as given. Those who refuse to take into the reanalysis of received ideas and facts would suffer from jaundiced historical presentations from the position of other peoples' world view which would certainly negate the historical processes of socio-economic development they are trying to explain.

Cabral (1980:70) said, "Our struggle demands enlightened leadership… the best sons and daughters of land must lead." He further stressed, "…the pace of our struggle depends basically on our capacity for analysis, decision and initiative, and on efforts and sacrifices we are determined to make (Cabral 1980:207). From what we have seen so far and have concretely confirmed in this research dissertation, the geo-ethnic contradictions are secondary or intervening variables to such primary or independent variables of class formation and imperialism based on the political economy analysis. By excluding imperialism and the dimension of class which Post and Vickers confessed "… we have treated Nigeria virtually as an isolated unit, ignoring its external linkages, economic and otherwise and accepting that… we have not made the dimension of

class central to our analysis, (1971:6)" made the geo-ethnic perspectives or models inappropriate in explaining the Nigerian crises that heralded the Civil War and the war itself. This does not negate the analytic import of the national or ethnic question bordering on the lack of national unity resulting from the ossification at the nationality of the national economic movement (Fedoseyev 1977; Cohen 1982:94; Tedheke 2005).

7.1.1 A Political Economy of Ethnicity in the First Republic.

In making the geo-ethnic issues strategic in their explanation of the crises leading to and culminating in the Nigerian Civil War, Post and Vickers and/their intellectual bed fellows have given vent to very fuzzy analytical tools and have made Nigerians not to grasp properly the root causes of the national crises in Nigeria and by extension African continental crises. Thus by holding as a taboo the explanatory tools of imperialism and its dimension of class formation in a peripheral capitalist social formation, and by consistently hi-lighting geo-ethnic variables as primary and indeed prominent contradictions in the explanation of the Nigerian crises prior to the Civil War and after, makes it possible for the adherents of these schools to provoke consciously and unconsciously geo-ethnic consciousness which aids imperialism's exploitative relations detrimental to nation building and national consciousness. It fuels divisive politics based on ethnic, regional or state (provincial) chauvinism. It equally obstructs a people's view in getting grip of the forces that profit from the chauvinistic tendencies and the strategies their protagonists adopt to maintain the status quo. In this respect, therefore, the exclusion of the concepts of class and imperialism in their analysis of the Nigerian situation is a disservice to Nigerians in particular and to Africans and the third world in general.

The misrepresentations and distortions of realities do not favour only the imperialists but also their local cohorts who profit from ethnic chauvinism. The fact that the *national question* is not being tackled properly but hypocritically resulting in the post- Civil War escalations of crises in Nigeria thus exposing the *unity question* is a case in point. However, we have noted in this project how the foundation of ethnic and primordial chauvinism were laid by colonialism and strengthened by the nationalist leaders whose

shoulders independence was thrusted. The nationalist leaders in a very tragic symphony orchestrated ethnicity/ sectionalism or what divided us rather than what united us. Zik in 1940 identified a tribalist (sic) thus: " A tribalist believes his tribe (sic) is destined to be the only tribe worthy of its name ...in his selfishness he sees his tribe only, his tribe alone as the greatest of tribes right or wrong." Yet in 1949 Zik said, "Every body knows Zik the politician, the leader of the Ibos, and the newspaper owner, he is an Ibo of the Ibos." He also said at the First Annual General Conference of Ibo State Union chaired by Z. C Obi at Aba on June 25, 1949 that "… it would appear that the God of Africa has especially created the Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of ages" (oral account by Ikoro 1987). Ikoro (1987) further said that Justice Onyeama also remarked at a cocktail and cigarette party at Lagos Island Club that " Ibo domination was a matter of time."

The same tune was set in motion in the North whose leadership saw 1914 as a mistake (Dudley 1969:166). Thus the Northern leadership in the 1950s began the exclusion of non-Northerners from the job opportunities because of the Northernisation policy. As a result, apart from expatriates non- Northerners of the South were employed on contract basis. The Sardauna referred to it as a policy, which was aimed to have " Northerners gain control of everything in the country" (cited by Dudley 1968:220; cited by Nnoli 1978:191). Awolowo in 1951 said in his presidential address at an Action Group rally at Glover Memorial Hall on 20th August that, "it is our belief that any overall Nigerian unity which does not give due regard to the peculiarities and solidities of the various ethnic groups in the country is bound to fail as it has done in the past. The Action Group believes in the solidarity of West as a means to the federal unity of Nigeria" (Awolowo 1951 cited by Dudley 1968).

The foregoing agreed with a political commentator who said that, "The old politicians had accepted, at least in the beginning, Zik's political philosophy of seeing tribalism (sic) as a pragmatic instrument for national unity (Quest Magazine August 1979:112). The acceptance of the foregoing worldview of ethnic politics as the norm was very clear when all the major political parties in country since late 1940s to the end of the First

Republic were either ethnically or sectionally based and indeed rose from ethno-cultural groups. Thus making politics of inter-ethnic and inter-sectional struggles both the danger and foundation of Nigerian politics in the First Republic. The Action Group (AG) rose from the socio-cultural group of Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the same with the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) that rose from the socio-cultural group of Jamiyyar Mutanen Arewa and the National Congress of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC) which had a strong Ibo State Union connection of which Nnamidi Azikiwe was at one time or the other its president.

As the British policy of divide-and-rule did not exist in neutrality but had very serious economic undertone, so also "… ethnicity does not exist in a pure form. It is always closely associated with political, juridical, religious and other social views, which constitutes its important ingredients as well (Nnoli 1978:8). The beneficiaries of ethnic polities did not hesitate to heighten the fears of the domination of one ethnic group by the other. As a result of the foregoing, the people of a particular ethnic group began to see their ethnic entrepreneurs as their messiahs. Nnoli (1978:30) said: "As a result of their successes in ethnic polities, the present leaders now occupy political and economic positions of power and privilege in the inherited colonial structures which gave rise to and continues to reinforce these politics. Therefore, they have an objective interest in maintaining the ethnic pattern of activities and the imperialist structures both of which are inimical to inter-ethnic harmony." Ethnic politics, therefore, destroyed harmonious inter-ethnic relations in the First Republic. It negatively impacted on national consciousness. *National unity* or the *resolution* of the *national question* could only happen through an emergent integrated national economy as demonstrated by the cases of Western Europe, North America and Japan. But Nigeria and indeed Africa have a problem of the benefits of economic integration through industrailisation. In the words of Walshe (1992: 19-20):

> If Africa is not going through an industrial revolution that can bind civil society together, if it's going to be a much slower process than anything we could call a revolution, and if it's going to be compounded by the major problems of polarisation. Then … we are facing in Africa a values vacuum. The undermining of traditional society, the weak nature of civil society, the erosion of the sense of the common good by a decadent elite have produced a moral vacuum.

The moral vacuum resulting from greed of an elite steeped in primitive accumulation of a landed rentier/comprador bourgeoisie but its greed of class turned into ethnic and sectional chauvinism was what plunged the First Republic into crisis after crisis, the coup and counter coup and down the precipice into a needless Civil War.

7.1.2 The Material Origin of the Nationality Crises in Nigeria's First Republic.

The crises which greeted our country from flag independence as we have noted in this research work are products of the political economy of cleavages, the perpetuation of national disunity or division thus working against inter-ethnic harmony. These tendencies are not neutral as we have confirmed in this dissertation but products of colonial and indeed neo-colonial political economy of a rentier state and its dominant classes. It is a landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois class that has not developed the dynamism for an endogenous socio-economic transformation thus restricting the integrative transformative values of an industrial economy and its hegemonic class which can force into united nations such as have been the cases of Western Europe, North America and Japan (Laborde 1968:56-7, Sills (ed.) 1972). The ossification of the nascent Nigerian economic movement at the level of the nationality giving vent to the enclave economy with its disintegrative features (Nnoli 1978, Fedoseyer 1977; Tedheke 2005) laid the foundation for the nationality crises and as such it worked against inter-ethnic harmony and gave vent to ethnic and regionalised political parties in the First Republic. Thus the lack of integrative and indeed dynamic national economic foundations and infrastructures, the absence of a relative economic autonomy caused the crises of Nigeria's national integration (Sen 1984; Laborde 1968; Sills (ed.) 1972; Tedheke 2005).

The fact that the national economic crises that resulted in the collapse of commodity prices in the world market after the post-Korean War boom in 1953/54 informed the place of a dynamic economy in *national integration* or the *resolution* of the *national question.* The Nigerian situation at independence contradicted the foregoing as there were serious contradictions between production and reward distribution. The struggles

at both the regional and the national levels were over the distribution of the euphemistic national cake and its baking was not their concern. In this respect, therefore, all the arms in the arsenals of the political rulers (many of whom doubled as landed aristocracy comprador/rentier/landed bourgeois classes were deployed) ranging from ethnicity, sectionalism, regionalism and cultural differences and so on were used. The politics of reward distribution based on primitive accumulation of capital in the process of class formation became the order of the day as it is still prevalent today forty-seven years after independence (Tedheke 2005: 436; Joseph 1999:5-7).

The phenomenon of reward distribution without an organised modern indigenous authentic capitalist production has been the characteristic feature of the Nigerian political economy from the late 1940s when authentic nationalism was lost to political opportunism under the regionalised Nigerian political tin-gods and their landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeaisie. It compromised the independence struggle thus political opportunism won the day. With the birth of politics of opportunism, importance of the state to capture state power in order to enhance reward distribution among the opportunists made the struggles for political power at the local, regional and national levels a do-or-die affair or a life and death matter (Ake 1976; Turner in Cohen and Daniel ed. 1981: 155-168; Tedheke 2005:437). This becomes more dangerous when capitalism is organised as a caricature capitalism with predominance of the pre-capitalist modes of production that are called to the aid of a dependent, backward and unproductive capitalist social formation that is based on the land or feudal relations. This gave birth to the development and strengthening of the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie who are not in the capitalist development framework of their metroplitan mentors but are dependent on the fall outs from the rentier state and indeed from their masters' table for primitive accumulation, that is accumulation without] organised productive capitalist enterprises.

In the foregoing respect, therefore, the whole of the Nigerian state/ superstructure or avenue of class domination was and has been built on and first around the surpluses from the peasantries. When this source collapsed in the post-Korean War in the middle

of the 1950s it resulted in the deadly inter and intra-class struggle that resulted in the First Republic crises and the Civil War. In the second place the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes equally depended on the extractive material industries from the sweats of the working classes in these industries. In the foregoing respect, therefore, the class formation in Nigeria has been built on and around primitive accumulation of surpluses from the peasantries and the mine workers by the emergent, first of all regionalised, now ethno-religious landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes, through their oppressive dominant pseudo-capitalist production relations. With the regionalisation of the colonial enclave economy carried over to the post-colonial Nigerian state, the ruling comprador engaged in deadly intra-class struggles that assumed the hue of ethnicity and sectionalism which became the ideological weapon for primitive accumulation in the process of class formation. In the words of Joseph (1999:5) "… the most problematic of this discussion will be the delineation of ethnicity, since the ways class interests are pursued will be shown to involve to an important degree the emphasising of ethnic symbols and boundaries in the struggle for wealth and power."

It is very important to note that primitive or backward capitalism and its landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes have been working against *national integration* or the *resolution* of the *national question*. Thus impeding the progressive development of the nationalities from transition to Nigerian nationhood. The struggle for wealth and power under unproductive parasitic landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador capital takes various dimensions in Nigeria and all are deadly. At the ideological level, i t takes the form of primordial sentiments based on ethnicity, regionalism, cultural and religious differences and so on. At the level of the economy, it takes the form of cornering commercial activities by the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes trying to access foreigners to local markets based principally on the share of the sectionalist dominant landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie. The unproductive capitalists or coupon clippers profit from sectionalism or micro-national chauvinism and hence the state was thus choked under sectionalist ideological hue as such negating *national integration* or the *resolution* of the *national question*. Why the

resolution of the *national question* is not being realised or resolved has been because of the stagnation of the economic dynamics unable to transform the nationalities to a Nigerian nationhood. It is quite impossible to stimulate national unity or put in place the unity project without relative national economic autonomy (Sen 1984; Laborde 1968; Sills 1968 & 1972; Tedheke 2005). *National integration* becomes a ruse under a class that took over the colonial state who are essentially predatory, non- productive, inefficient in productive oganisation but using the state as a milk cow and in collaboration with imperialism's unequal exchange have worked for Africa's deadly impoverishment (Walshe 1992: 17, 29).

7.1.3 Imperialism, Orientation of Landed Aristocarcy/Rentier/Comprador Bourgeois Classes and the Crises of the First Republic.

As a result of the crises of leadership and because of their developmental poverty, the profiteers of micro-ethnic nationalism made their 'scientific' discoveries in stereotypes and in name-calling based on antagonistic relations principally among the three major ethnic groups and between them and the minority ethnic groups in the regions. The struggles between the three major ethnic groups were to capture and control federal power in the wake of the collapse of the pre-independence regional economies which crippled their various administrations. While other world leaders in the Third World were linking their predicaments to imperialism and their cohorts in the various backward countries, Nigerian leaders were seeing ethnicity as the cause. Hence the overheating of the political space of the First Republic and making the situation to look as if ethnicity or ethnic politics was the cause. Whereas it was the economic crises resulting from the collapse of the world commodity prices after the Korean War boom in the middle of the 1950s and the crises continued to the First Republic. The dynamics of this economy that led to the crises of the First Republic was put in focus by two prominent Federal Ministers, Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim (Economic Development) and Zanna Buka Diphcharima (Trade). They frankly exposed the political economy of the Nigerian rentier state and the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes in the November 1961 House of Representatives debate on Government proposals for the 1962-68 National Development Plan and were against rapid economic changes (Osoba 1978: 64-9).

From the foregoing, the orientation of the Nigerian political economy from colonialism to the post-colonial Nigerian state has been based on a *rentier state* and on a landed aristocracy/*rentier/comprador landed bourgeois classes*. The *rentier or userer economy* is a product of capitalist imperialism referring to a situation which more or less completely isolates the *rentier /landed bourgeois classes* from organisation of production proper and sets the seal of parasitism on a whole country (Lenin 1983: 94-7). Thus the whole situation made Nigeria to be proned to crises in the First Republic and even till today. It is a product of capitalism of uneven-development. A crisis always initiated in the core of capital but nevertheless having more devastating impacts on the periphery of capital or the dependencies.

Marx (1983:34) gave two examples of two economic world events, which resulted in general discontent in continental Europe of his time. The first was the *potato blight* and *crop failures* of 1845 and 1846, which increased the general ferment among the people resulting in the dearth of 1847, which called forth bloody conflicts in France as well as on the rest of the continent. The second great economic event, which hastened the outbreak of revolution, was *a general commercial and industrial crisis* in England. Engels (1983) said with Marx's discovery, " A new revolution is possible only in the wake of a new crisis. It is, however, just as certain as this crisis." In the context of revolutionary Europe of the 18th and the 19th centuries, economic recessions led to revolutionary ferment but that was when there was in expectation a revolutionary transformative process. In such situations, an advance class bearing revolutionary transformatory values was struggling to unchain itself from the fetters of the old society to assume the vanguard of a new society about to be born. In all of Western Europe the battles against feudalism by nascent capitalism were on the ascendancy and that was why the revolutionary tradition was a progressive one. However, the contrary was the case in a neo-colonial society like Nigeria that was not revolutionising, whose landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie are very conservative and are very dependent on imperialism or the capitalist world system that has been through history, the bane of African development. Since the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie are not the bearers of transformative values, the global imperialist

economic crises lead to national crises that are always deflected into sectional crises such as ethnic, religious and crisis of cultural differences.

In Nigeria, the world trade crisis of 1955/56 leading to the collapse of regional commodity prices in the world market was the mother of the First Republic crises. The fact that it was deflected into geo-ethnic crises leading to the coup and counter coup of 1966 were not the issues but its economic undertone. The fact that our sectional leaders did not highlight the substance/content which is economic crisis but rather highlighted the form in ethno-regional crisis tells the types of leaders we had in the First Republic and even today. Bowen (1996:3) said that recent discourse of international affairs focused on misleading assumption that the world is fraught with primordial ethnic conflicts. He stated emphatically that although "… some of these conflicts involve ethnic or cultural identity, but most (if not all-my emphasis) are about getting more power, and other resources. They do not result from ethnic diversity, thinking that they do sends us in pursuit of wrong policies, tolerating rulers, who incite and suppress ethnic differences".

The wrong policies that the Nigerian rulership pursued in the First Republic made us not to comprehend the root cause of the crises of that Republic. It made Nigerians not to grasp the economic undertone of those crises but rather we went for the secondary or intervening variables which the Nigerian rulership of the First Republic turned into prominent contradictions. The problem of a visionless leadership, a leadership that was sectional and indeed geo-ethnic made that Republic to be divided in itself and against itself. Thus they traded in turning secondary contradictions into prominent/important contradictions and as such obscuring the political consciousness of our people, hence the enemy imperialism was taken as friend. The Anglo Nigerian Defence Pact of 1960 which showed that as we were getting out of direct colonialism we were also submitting to neo-colonialism was a case in point. The fact that the general policy and the defence policy of the First Republic Federal Nigerian Government were anti-communist and anti-radical African governments (Asobie 1988) was a proof of lack of depth of the leadership orientation in governance. The fact that

they ossified at the *nationality question* instead of the *resolution* of the *national question* was a case of malfunctioned leadership hence they accepted the parameter of ethnic politics as their ideological tool. Cabral (1979:53) said that the Portugese counted on using ethnicity in order to divide-and- rule the Guinea-Bisssau people but they failed. The contrary was the case in Nigeria as the British who used it succeeded to divide-and-rule us and the batton was handed over to the so-called nationalists who took paper independence and became regional or ethnic overlords to weaken the independence we won.

Cabral (1979: 53) said that Portuguese may be surprised that they consider the contradictions between the ethnic groups of Guinea Bissau people as secondary and not primary contradiction. He said that there are more contradictions between what one might call the economic tribes in the advance capitalist countries than there are among ethnic groups in Guinea. Cabral warned that it does not mean that we should not pay attention to this contradiction. He concluded that this problem must be constantly kept in mind; …and other measures must be taken to ensure that this contradiction does not explode and become a more important contradiction. The nationalist leaders in Nigeria who took power did not comprehend what Amilcar Cabral saw as secondary contradiction that must be kept in view through social engineering in order to prevent it's explosion into a prominent/important contradiction. The fact remains that the economic crisis resulting from the post-Korea War commodity prices collapse in the global market resulting in the collapse of the economies in the regions of Nigeria's First Republic. Instead of seeing this crisis from what it was as economic crisis but was deflected into geo-ethnic political crisis was a case in point. It made the ethnic and indeed sectional phenomenon to explode and became a more important and as it were prominent contradiction resulting in the coup and counter coup of 1966 and the collapse of Nigeria's first democratic experiment. Those who neglect the economic dimension which was the primary contradiction that stimulated other secondary or intervening contradictions that resulted in the Nigerian crises of the First Republic that midwife the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted are doing a disservice to Nigeria

and Nigerians. It did not make us to comprehend the deadly landmines of imperialism and their local collaborators who have made ossification of Nigerian nationalities not to have the structures of the necessary economic movement and dynamics to give birth to the nation or the national unity project.

7.1.4 Beyond Ethnicity, Coup and Counter Coup as Causations of the Civil War

One of the problems of Nigeria and Nigerians apart from very few in the wilderness is the problem of lack of an indepth social education and indeed critical social science and arts education. It was not therefore surprising that the main actors in the Nigeria Civil War picked on ethnicity and also individual characters or *dramatis personae* as the cause of the Nigerian Civil War. Some writers even say that it was the coup and counter coup as primary variable that caused the Civil War. Others attributed the cause of the Civil War to the declaration of succession and yet others would say because Yakubu Gowon launched his "Police Action" on July 6, 1967. The interpretations on the primary causal variable depends on the side of the fence one belongs during the Nigerian crises of the First Republic and during the Civil War. The fact that each of these events played some intervening and or dependent roles in stimulating the crisis and pushing us down the precipice and in the process even acquiring a seeming independent life of their own is not in doubt. Ultimately, the primary causal variable is rooted in the nature of the post-colonial Nigerian economy, the nature of classes, the type of state, the nature of external economic domination or imperialism and the inter and intra-class struggle. The down trodden or masses in this country were thus decieved that it was the secondary contradictions turned prominent or important contradictions by ethnic or geo-ethnic entreprenuers that caused the Civil War. In the words of Lawhead (2003 :5):

> Words give us a grasp of our fundamental concepts, which govern our thinking, and our thinking in turn guides the way we deal with reality, the actions and the decisions we take.

The politics of the First Republic and even throughout our existence since independence has been based on the dynamics of a failed state and a failed national

dominant class. Since independence till now, we as a people have failed to examine critically the key sources of threat to Nigerian security. As we have ossified in our threat analysis and threat perception within low intensity conflicts bordering on inter-ethnic, inter-religious, inter-regional and indeed criminally obscurantist, mystification and agnostic and therefore jaundiced or else what will make Nigerians be stereotypical about each other believing that the Ibo man is the enemy, the Hausa man is the enemy and the Yoruba man is the enemy and so on? In the words of Nafzigar (1983:30), … the Nigerian Civil War can be traced to the colonial interference in the internal political and economic dynamics which affected intra-national boundaries, the social structure and resource allocation within them, contributed to Nigeria's post-colonial instability. This was reflected in the uneven penetration of Nigeria by British which worked favourably for British imperialism's divide-and-rule strategy.

The fact that the economic interest of the colonialists was better protected in divide-and-rule strategy was not in doubt. The fact remains that this strategy had universal application under colonial and neo-colonial imperialism in all the backward countries. Mahmood Mamdani, showed how the British colonial economic reforms in Uganda and the East African countries under British rule in 1940s and 1950s pushed the *national question,* that is, issues of national integration into the background while raising the banner of the *nationality question* or ethnicity into the foreground. In emulating the colonialists in raising the issues of the *nationality question* or ethnicity into the front burner, the aspiring comprador bourgeoisie in the post-colonial state set the people against each other and hid the actual enemy from them. Unlike militant nationalists, they did not even point out the agents of colonialism. Instead of pointing at the repressive colonial army, they talk of Northerners as the enemy, instead of indicating colonial chiefs as the problem, they point at the Baganda as the enemy, instead of singling out the compradors, they define 'Asians' as the enemy. They divided the people and set them against one another and the colonialists came in and played referee again (Mamdani 1983:20-1).

The foregoing situation was equally taking place in Nigeria. As a result Nafziger

(1983:35) observed that from 1951 to 1960 each major political party in Nigeria played leading roles in regional unification, mobilising the socio-economic elite and each achieving security and hegemony in their respective regions only. In the foregoing respect, therefore, the *nationality question* or ethnicity or geo-ethnic politics assumed a deadly dimension as against the *resolution* of the *national question.* In other words, the issues of national unity gave way to sectionalism and this was transformed into prominent or important contradictions. The resultant crisis intensified when sectionalist struggles assumed a more deadly political dimension with the census crisis of 1962-63 which shifted population concentration to the South which alarmed the Northern dominant aristocratic class and its ruling political party the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC). This was quickly followed by the 1964, Federal Election crisis, the West Regional Election crisis of 1965 all rigged by the dominant NPC leading to precipitate crises that resulted in the January 15, 1966 coup. Thus Nigeria became polarised (Nafziger 1983:39-42).

Nafziger (1983: 52-8) saw the linkages between the Nigerian crises and the decline of commerce in the 1950s as a product of Nigeria's economic dependence. The problem he saw as having emanated from an economy based on foreign interests, piloted by foreign companies and thus the emergent comprador/rentier classes who profited from the linkages were just intermediaries to foreign interest. Imperialism of Britain other western capitalist nations and the United States, therefore, encouraged the type of Nigerian unity that was merely to enhance their trading or their *realisation of surplus value.* It was not to enhance Nigeria's structural, scientific and industrial transformation which are the bedrock of *national unity* or the *resolution of* the *national question.* In this respect, Nafziger,(1983: 65) said, " British foreign policy consistently supported an economically integrated Nigerian Federation open to international trade and investment."

The oil connection was of much importance to Britain and equally to France in the wake of the Arab-Isreali War of 1967 and the disruptions of oil supplies from West Asia as the Arabs placed oil embargo on the Western industrialised nations. It is in the foregoing

respect that the 1967 Bonny sea assault aided by the British must be viewed. The success of the sea assault convinced the British Government and Shell-B.P. that their interest lay with the Federal Nigerian Government (Nafziger 1983:66 – 7).

The non-inclusion of economic dimensions of wars in general and Civil Wars in particular would bring out a very fuzzy analysis of such wars. The fact that antagonists in conflicts use ideological cover to express their positions would not exclude the class and economic dimensions or the materialist interpretations of wars and indeed Civil Wars. Randall and Theobald (1985:50) saw the economy and class dimensions as the fundamental tools for the explanations and understanding of the causes of the Nigerian Civil War. In their view, limiting explanation of the Civil War to ethnic irredentism is distortive and detrimental to the explanations of the causes of the Civil War. In their opinion, such distortion and obscurantism can be viewed from two ways. In the first place, they said that those who propel the ethnic thesis "… would not discuss the strong relationship between the regionalisation of Nigeria and the exigencies of the colonial economy. A brief acquaintance with the historical emergence of the state of Nigeria readily indicates that the nature of colonial penetration in that part of West Africa was such as to create series of economic enclaves linked not to each other but to Europe… In this way a low level of economic integration worked to compartmentalise the ethnic groups who came to compose the independent state of Nigeria. Accordingly, the unequal modernisation… (seen) as the cause of subsequent communal conflicts was rather a symptom of the structure of the colonial economy. The second way in which the economic dimension is neglected can be seen in the tendency to view the Biafran debacle almost entirely through the ethnic lens."

Randall and Theobald though only mentioned the political economy and Nigerian intra-class struggle as the primary casual variables of the First Republic crises in passing as the cause of the Civil War, however, they hit the nail at the head. They rejected the primacy of ethnicity, primordial or geo-ethnic variables as the primary causal variables of the Civil War but rather situated their analysis on the nature of the colonial political

economy and the class character as issues to be focused on in the Nigerian Civil War as primary casual variables. Nwankwo (1987:16) said that our problem lies in the acceptance of the misinterpretations of African realities by Euro-American conventional social science which lags behind the essential features of the African condition. As such the amorphous nature of categories used by Euro-American reactionary social science for explaining the African condition has been uncritically plagiarised by African ruling class and their intellectual megaphones who employ such concepts which are inappropriate but juxtaposed on the African reality.

Falola and Ihonvbere (1985:6) have observed that in a distortive crises ridden and backward peripheral capitalist society …where it has been the tradition of the dominant class to (localise) the unequal and exploitative relations of production, exchange and distribution, the state can hardly meet the basic needs of the people. Hence they correctly assert that, "… the intra-bourgeois class struggle to win access to the state and thus preside over the allocation of public funds prompts the manipulation of the means of coercion, politicisation of the bureaucracy and armed forces, and the use of ethnic, state and religious chauvinism." Nwankwo (1987:19) noted that arising from the foregoing is a correlation between peripheralisation of a socio-economic formation in a neo-colonial society and the regulated use of coercion in order to perpetuate the *status quo*. Arthur Nwankwo asserts that the armed forces is part and parcel of the class dynamics in society. Thus the violence which neo-colonial society unleashes to perpetuate itself is equally capable of generating counter force for its own destruction (Nwankwo 1987:9 cited Falola and Ihonvbere 1985:6).

Thus the coup and counter coup of 1966 which were products of economics of imperialism, of the crises of peripheral capitalism and intra-bourgeois class struggles of the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes split the military within down the middle and sent the country down the precipice onto a Civil War. In other countries like Uganda, Somalia, The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC former Zaire), Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi, Rwanda and Cote d' Ivoire the militaries

destroyed themselves in the dialectics of neo-colonial violence. The Nigerian and indeed African militaries have a poor understanding of the African condition as they ignore the structural contradictions and the crises of hegemony which promotes upheavals, violent crises thereby prompting military coups and counter (insurgency) forces (Nwankwo 1987: 23). In Nigeria, an aspect of the structural contradictions is the nature of the Nigerian dependent, very weak peripheral capitalism based on an enclave economy which perpetuates centrifugal forces. Another aspect of the contradictions of the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes that are heavily dependent on imperialism that has envolved heavily asymmetrical relations of exploitation leading to economic crises creates the foundation for political crises and violence in a dependent capitalist social formation.

We have thus proved our thesis that "under dependent capitalism, the intense intra-class struggles between the metropolitan bourgeoisie or imperialism and the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie of peripheral capitalism of a backward society like Nigeria lead to crises, violence and or wars in the peripheral social formation. Arising from the foregoing is the intra- aristocracy/rentier/comprador class struggles for the fall out from the state which intensifies and becomes a do-or-die affair or a life-and death matter, this is moreso, especially, in periods of economic down turns conditioned by Euro-American imperialism in their transition from one strategic raw material demand to another. The transition in 1950s from agricultural produce to crude oil in Nigeria was a case in point. In European crises of Karl Marx's time, England had political and economic stability being the core of capital then, while mainland Western Europe had crisis after crisis or revolutions and counter revolutions from the 18th century to 1871 of the Paris Commune. Thus Engels (1983:9) stressed that in 1850 Marx… took up the economic history of the last ten years which gave the secrete that, the world trade crisis of 1847 had been the true mother of the February and March revolution. And also that the industrial prosperity, which had been returning gradually since the middle of 1848 and attained full bloom in 1849 and 1850, was the revitalising force of the newly strengthened European reaction.

In Nigeria the world trade crisis of the 1955-56 after the Korean War boom caused the pre-independence and post-independence upheavals from the 1950s to 1966 resulting in very deadly intra-landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois class struggle among the comprador peripheral Nigerian bourgeoisie for the control of state power for the allocation of public funds since the Nigerian state has been an allocation state and not a productive state (Ibrahim 2003:50). The struggles to control the centre of allocation forced on the agenda the Action Group (AG) crises of 1962/63, the realignment of political forces leading to the birth of the two grand alliances. The remaking of the Nigerian politics and political party map from the decomposition of the post-independence coalition between Northern Region's Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and the Eastern Region's National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) to Northern Region's NPC in coalition with Western Region's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) in the formation of the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The Eastern Region's NCNC was in alliance with the weakened Western Region's AG in the formation of the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). These were the changes in Nigerian political terrain from the politics of sharing the national cake. These reconfiguration of Nigerian politics were the products of the collapse of the regional enclave economies which gave birth to increased deadly power struggles by the regionalised landed aristocracy/ rentier/comprador classes for Federal power giving vent to the AG's 1962 crisis, the 1962/63 census crisis, the 1964/65 election crisis, the 1966 coup and counter coup and pushing the country down the precipice onto a Civil War.

7.1.5 Landed Aristocracy, Comprador Bourgeois Classes at War-Police Action to Total War

The winner takes all politics in a rentier political economy takes very deadly struggles resulting in a do-or-die affair or a life-and-death matter. It will not be surprising to see the antagonists developing all the arms in their arsenals or armoury in their political battles which more often than not slips into armed conflicts. Those who are of the strong opinion that the geo-ethnic variables are primary in the Nigerian political and

armed conflicts should look a little afar at Somalia where the same ethnic Somalis, speaking the same language and having the same religion have been battling themselves since the collapse of Said Bare's regime over a decade now. The same has been true of Burundi and Rwanda where Tutsis and Hutus speak the same language and are of the same religion, Catholic and yet an internecine Civil War engulfed them leading into a pogrom undreamt of in the African continent only equaled in the world by Pol Pot's slaughters in former Cambodia now Campucia all in a backward comprador/rentier/landed political economy.

Since the enclave economy in Nigeria was regionalised and as each region could possibly organise on their own without a recourse to other regions to function economically, thus the economic ossifications along the nationalities hence the dangerous ethnic, sectional and regional politics of the First Republic (Nnoli 1978; Joseph 1998; Diamond 1988). The fact that the coup and counter coup of 1966 took the foregoing orientations in which in the Nzeogwu coup no prominent Ibo person was killed and in the July counter coup equally no prominent Northerner was killed was a testimony to the depth of sectionalism in the post-independence Nigerian military. This hardened positions such that the Nigerian military was torn down the middle and its pretensions as an apolitical military became revealed. This would affect negatively the peace moves prior to the Civil War and hence Nigeria was plunged into a Civil War.

The failure of the Aburi Accord of 1967 in which the Northern landed/ rentier classes felt outwitted by its Eastern counterparts gave vent to the escalation of emotions on both sides which drove Nigerians imperceptibly into the Civil War. As all efforts failed to have peaceful solutions to the Nigerian crisis after the coup and counter coup of 1966, Nigeria and Nigerians were pushed down the precipice to a Civil War first code named "Police Action" and later transformed into a full scale war or "Total War." The shooting war began on July 6, 1967 after the declaration of secession by Odumegwu Ojukwu on the 30th May 1967. After evading all entreaties of peace and after evading much reason that was required to avoid war, emotions and the political economy of greed of the

landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes drove Nigerians into an avoidable Civil War. The First shots were fired on July 6, 1967 and a Civil War began that would last for thirty agonising months and took almost two million lives, 'thanks' to hunger as a war weapon. When once the first shots were fired at Garkem and Obudu axis and the staccato of gunfire acknowledged at the Nsukka, Obollo Afo and Obollo Eke axis a Civil War initially code name "Police Action" had begun. At the inception the war was between the Northern aristocratic landed classes and their Eastern comprador counterparts and as such the battle front was restricted to northern Biafra, which was the boundary between Northern Nigeria and the secessionist enclave of Eastern Nigeria then declared the secessionist Republic of Biafra.

At this stage, the Civil War was thus restricted and was initially fought between the Northern Region which had six states and the Eastern Region which had three states on May 27, 1967. This master stroke was to rally the minorities in the East that had been given a *partial resolution* of the *national question* on the side of Northern led Federal Nigeria Government (Ademoyega 1981). State creation initially diluted the Civil War from a purely North against the East as large elements of Eastern minorities came on the side of Lagos and indeed the Northern controlled Federal Military Government. The foregoing notwithstanding, the war had not yet taken the full picture of a truly Nigerian Civil War at this stage. It was still a war between the former Northern Region and the former Eastern Region that were ironically the two regions in coalition that received paper independence for Nigeria on October 1, 1960. The fact that the two members of the post-1959 Federal elections coalition had to go for each others jugular not quite two years after independence: first in the census of 1962/63, followed by the 1964 Federal Election crisis, the Western Region's Election crisis in 1965, the coup and counter coup which took regional character, that is, Eastern and Northern bent and by July 6, 1967 a shooting war was a testimony to the political economy of a landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois class and their state, a political economy that has as its superstructure an allocation state and not a production state and hence the life and death struggle for the fall outs from the state which made the East and the

North to path ways in their First Republic coalition that dragged on and pushed us onto a Civil War.

Meanwhile the war drums when once rolled out took a momentum of their own in swollen ego and emotions of the antagonists with little or no room for reason. The famous Colonel Hassan Usman Katsina's prediction of crushing the rebellion in "forty eight hours" and Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu's famous statement "No force in black Africa can subdue Biafra", all rang out with captivating emotions that held all in mental prison. Myths were woven around and about the two personalities, that is, Colonel Yakubu Gowon and Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu by both sides of the Civil War. When once music of war has taken hold in the psyche of people they began to appreciate the music of death rather than that of life. Thus the North moblised in men and materials which poured into battles stretching from Obudu to Nsukka and Biafra did no less. With some stalemate and some progress, Garkem, Nsukka, Ogoja, Obudu, Obollo Afor, and Obollo Eke fell to Northern controlled Nigerian Army. As a result pressure mounted on Enugu, the secessionist capital of Biafra. The I Brigade that transformed into One Division under the command of Colonel Mohammed Shuwa as the General Officer Commanding had northern Biafra as its war theatre and Enugu as its main objective. Thus the pressure on Enugu mounted to the utter discomfort of the secessionist Biafra.

As a result of the foregoing war reverses and utter discomfort on the side of Biafra, the secessionist forces made plans to reverse their war misfortunes in their northern fronts. They had to alter their strategic calculations in order to open a western front through Onitsha to invade Mid-West, the only region in the four regional structure prior to state creation that was seen as having the resolve in overcoming the nationality crisis and therefore a "true federation" within the Federation. The events prior to and of August 9, 1967 proved otherwise as Mid-West became betrayed and the polarisation of what seems to St. Jorre (1977) to be the epitome of a "federation" within a Federation and a clear testimony of "unity in diversity", became rather a testimony of micro-national chauvinism. Fedoseyev (1977) had stated that the level of nationality or ethnicity is the

level of the ossification of national economic movement. Those who read history upside down were disappointed at what happened in the Mid-West on August 9, 1967. They were disappointed because Mid-West was in their eyes an epitome of the "true" Nigerian unity project but they were disappointed and jolted off-balance and they could not believe themselves that the Mid-West that was the only region /state that stood firmly for "One Nigeria" in the post-July 29, 1966 coup crisis could be so easily ripped through the middle like a pack of cards. The pretentious unity of the region/ state as the bedrock of what remained of "One Nigeria" at the time was shattered by the betrayal of the state not by the ordinary Mid-West Ibo people but by their kits and kins in the high places especially, in the Mid-West 4th Area Command of the heavily divided Nigerian Army at the time.

The Mid-West August 9, 1967 incursion by 11 Division of Biafran Army otherwise christened "Liberation Army" by Biafra tore through the state like a torrent and accomplished its first mission objective of taking Mid-West and to release the pressure on Enugu, the secessionist capital. No matter the momentary relief Biafra got, this misadventure compounded the situation for the Biafran Forces. It over-stretched their defences and it equally moblised the entire Nigerian landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeois classes outside Biafra against them. This became the waterloo of Biafra as the momentary releaf gained in their Mid-West invasion vanished within a twinkle of an eye. The invasion led to the formation of the 2 Division and the elements of 3 Marine Commando which invaded Bonny on July 26, 1967 on a sea landing assault joined forces with 2 Division on their counter offensive against Biafra's invading forces. The rapidly knocked together 2 Division after the rebel invasion of Mid-West and threat on Lagos state and Western state and with the declaration of "Total War" by General Yakubu Gowon, the character of the war was changed to a truly Nigerian Civil War. With the same thrust with which Baifran Forces tore through Mid-West state, 2 Division under the command of Colonel Murtala Mohammed took the same flurry across the state and by October 5 Asaba was in Federal hands.

The motion of the war against the rebel forces took a very rapid turn as 3 Marine Commando Division was formed to make a sea assault on Calabar. As Nigerian Federal Forces moved to complete the liberation of Mid-West by October 5, 1967, Enugu fell a day earlier on October 4, 1967 to troops of I Division of the Nigerian Army. Although the lull resulting from Biafran occupation of Mid-West affected 3 Marine Commando, the Division aided 2 Division to clear the water fronts of Mid-West and got prepared for the sea assault on Calarbar on October 18, 1967 (Momoh (ed.) 2000). The taking of Calabar prepared the way for the complete encirclement of Biafra as 3 Marine Commando linked with I Division by taking Ikom and Afikpo which the Division handed over to I Division (Momoh (ed) 2000:101). The 3 Marine Division progressed fast as its 16 and 17 Commando Brigades landed at Oron through an amphibious assault on 19 March, 1968 from Calabar a distance of 15 nautical miles. In the process the towns surrounding Oron were taken one after the other resulting in the advance on Opobo (Ikot Abasi) which fell to Nigerian Forces on 29 March 1968 (Momoh (ed.) 2000).

The progression of the 3 Marine Commando Division under the Command of Colonel Benjamin Adekunle took a lightening speed across the minority areas of the Eastern states. The Division had its own portion of Onitsha disaster at Onne when it had the intention of taking Port Harcourt through a sea borne operation which made its 15 Brigade under Lieutenant Colonel Alani Akirinade had a serious disaster. The Commandos equally had another disaster at Arochukwu but the movement through the minority areas was swift and steady as Port Harcourt fell on May 19, 1968 (Momoh (ed.) 2000: 103). The difficult task of taking Onitsha by 2 Division was accomplished when the town fell to Nigerian Forces after three disasterous landings when the liberation of Mid-West was completed by 2 Division on October 5, 1967. The commercial city was, however, taken by a land route operation through Idah, Udi, Oji River, Ogidi, Abagana and Awka to Onitsha which fell on 21 March 1968 (Momoh (ed.) 2000). The Nigeria troops progressed to take Aba on September 4, 1968 and Owerri fell on September 16, 1968. However, the battle for Ibo heart land took a turn for the

worse as Biafran resistance increased and Owerri fell back to rebel forces on 25 April, 1969. Prior to the retaking of Owerri by the Biafran Forces, Umuahia had fallen to the troops of I Division on 13 April, 1969 (Momoh (ed.) 2000). After the reorganisation of the divisions in which command changed hands, the final push code-named operation "Tail Wind" was embacked on leading to the end of the war as 3 Marine Commando Division under the command of Colonel Olusegun Obasanjo took the famous Uli-Ihiala air strip leading to the surrender of the rebel forces on 12 January, 1970 (Momoh (ed) 2000:110)

7.2 Summary of Findings

1. In a dependent rentier political economy a crisis in the advance capitalist system in their realisation problem poses economic and security threat to the backward socio-economic formations. This happened in the 1950s through to the First Republic leading to its collapse in the January 15, coup. The same thing was the product of the collapse of Nigeria's Second Republic resulting in the December 31, 1983 Major Generals Buhari and Idiagbon coup.

2. There is a great danger of having a rentier/landed comprador bourgeois classes as a dominant class who only believe in the sharing of the euphemistic national cake instead of baking it. An allocation or a rentier state and rentier class pose a danger to national security.

3. The leaders of the First Republic did not tell Nigerians the true nature of the crisis that confronted that Republic. In this respect, they cannot be taken as leaders because a leader is supposed to advance the material well being of his people. A leader should not take to micro-national chauvinism as such their behaviour turned secondary contradictions into prominent or important contradictions which was a disservice to nation building.

4. As a result of the lack of understanding of the political economy of imperialism the Nigerian rentier/ landed comprador classes took the enemy as friend hence the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact of 1961. The Biafran did not do less as they

embraced French imperialism during the Civil War.

5. The coup makers of January and July 1966 did not understand the structural contradictions of the Nigerian situation hence they happed on populism (January 15 coup) and hegemonism (July 29 coup) none of which could bring compromise but all blind ally.

6. The so-called leadership of the First Republic and the military that took over from them and indeed even including today's Nigerian leadership did not understand the nature of the struggles between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the landed/ rentier comprador classes in the extractive enclave economy that breeds crises and in most cases Civil Wars whose origin is always in metropolitan capitalism.

7. Nigerian economy has been structured as a rentier political economy whose only dynamics is economic and social crises which is detrimental to national security.

8. Peace is a product of economic development and the whole of Western Europe, the United States, Japan were able to attain *national unity* or the *resolution* of the *national question* through industrialisation. National unity is not a moral thing, it is not a product of the spiritual that can be obtained through prayers by faithfuls in churches and mosques, it is a material product of national economic development.

9. An enclave economy breeds and supports micro-nationalism through the ossification of the national economic movement resulting equally in preventing the fusing together of nationalities into a nation thus entrenching micro-national chauvinism or ethnicity. This is the bane of the Nigerian nationhood and indeed of national unity.

10. The Nigerian military is not nationalistic which equally goes for civil society which breeds crises as we see issues from our ethnic lens and it is very dangerous for national security and survival.

11. From our study the cogency of the political economy and indeed the class perspective in the analysis of the Nigerian Civil War can be verified as the most viable model in trying to understand the Nigerian crises that resulted in the Nigerian Civil War and beyond.

12. Nigerian politics right from the First Republic has been politics of self-interest and self-enrichment and not politics of national development and this leads to a life and death struggle resulting occasionally to national crises. It produced the Nigerian Civil War.

13. Following from the foregoing the so-called Nigerian leaders are the greatest sources of threat to Nigeria's national security since politics of the winner takes all is the game. This resulted in the First Republic crises and the Civil War.

14. An economy that is dependent on raw material or primary product exports is an economy and polity in danger and a serious threat to national security. This nature of economy in any world trade crises leads to national crisis and conflict. The fact that Nigeria is still dependent on raw materials and primary product exports is a great danger to national security and survival.

15. Nigeria's superstructure (the state) and substructure (the economy) are seriously disoriented and do not have the congruence to create the environment for a stable nation or national unity.

16. Nigeria and Nigerians lost the Civil War because the technical progress of the war, especially secessionist improvisations were not harnessed for national development. For example the American Civil War 1861-1865 it was said that technology was revolutionised four fold.

17. The Nigerian Civil War was only progressive to the extent that states were created for the minorities who were removed from the hegemonic domination by the First Republic Regional ethnic majorities. Beyond that it was not progressive

hence the dominant elements at victory did not harness the transformative values of the war.

18. The interest of both Britain and France in supporting either side of the Civil War was not humanitarian but economic interest. For them the oil and indeed other resources that Nigeria could provide them was deep down their actions.

19. Any nation that does not have an organising productive industrial bourgeoisie is doomed to crisis. The fact that Nigeria still experiences mini-Civil Wars or low intensity conflicts is a case in point.

20. A nation that depends on other nations completely lacking institutionalised education whose population is peace loving to a fault and are receptive to the influence of foreign culture to the point of suicide must be a nation proned to crises (Morgenthau 1985: 544). The Nigerian state and its comprador leaders have made Nigerians to ape foreign cultures to a point of suicide which is detrimental to national security.

21. Geo-ethnic variables are ideological weapons and are secondary casual variables to the Nigerian crises generally and the crises resulting into the Nigerian Civil War while the economy is the primary casual variable.

22. The comprador rentier/landed bourgeoisie profited from the ideology of geo-ethnicity since they are not in the mainstream of the ideology of nationalism and nation building hence their interest is in instigating ethnic chauvinism and crises.

7.3 Contributions to Knowledge

Ones major contribution to knowledge springs from the fact that “Political Economy Explanation of the Nigerian Civil War” to the best of one’s knowledge is a new perspective in the analysis and interpretation of the activities that generated the political crises of the First Republic leading to the coup and counter coup of 1966 which heralded the Civil War. The only material available tittled *The Economics of Political*

Instability: *The Nigerian – Biafran War* authored by Nafziger, though rejected other perspectives based on primordial causations as primary could not give us the clear dimensions of political economy perspective based on rigorous material class relations. It was only Randall and Theobald (1985:50) that examined the nature of colonial penetration in Nigeria which created series of economic enclaves as one of the negative aspects resulting in the causation of the Nigeria Civil War. They equally looked at most literature on the Nigerian Civil War on their criminal silence on intra – bourgeois struggles or the silence on the question of class in manipulating ethnic sentiments for their own ends. The inadequacy of the foregoing work of Randall and Theobald was because they did not focus sufficiently on Nigeria but on Third World Politics. They, therefore, just made their points in the passing. However, Nnoli (1978:127), Diamond (1988:16) Sklar (1963,1979) saw class as the underpinning of ethnic politics which gave us the fundamental of class analysis in Nigeria and as such the relevance of political economy in the study of the Nigerian Civil War. This is one's greatest and most valuable contribution to the Nigerian Civil War literature.

Following the foregoing as a major contribution to knowledge in this dissertation is the fact that it is a work based on class analysis which was rejected as a mode of analysis of the crises of the First Republic by Post and Vickers (1971:1) and Obasanjo (1980:144). In Obasanjo's view in political conflict in Nigeria, ethnicity retains primacy over class because of the nature of the Nigerian social structure; this will remain so for some-time to come. In the views of Post and Vickers "foremost among the explanations have been destructive twins of tribalism (sic) and 'regionalism'." They further stressed '… we have not made dimension of class central to our analysis. This is not because we would argue that in terms of objective conditions classes did not exist. The problem here is that insufficient work has been done by scholars to make a full class analysis possible.' We have seen the flaws in such analysis which focuses on geo-ethnic factors as the primary causal variables responsible for the crises of the First Republic and the Civil War. In excluding the dynamics of imperialism which Post and Vickers (1973:6) confessed, " … we have treated Nigeria virtually as an isolated unit, ignoring its external linkages, economic and otherwise … accepting that … we have not made

the dimension of class central to our analysis", made the geo-ethnic model inappropriate in explaining the Nigeria crises and the Civil War that followed. In making the geo-ethnic variables primary in the explanations of the Nigerian crises, this tradition has given vent to obscurantism, mystification and agnosticism and has made us not to get at the root causes of the historical materialist forces foisted on us that are crises prone. The fact that other explanatory models are still needed notwithstanding, the class model and indeed the Marxian methodology of political economy and its class underpinnings which has been applied in this research is the most fundamental contribution to the literature of the Nigerian Civil War.

Modern nation building is a product of many factors without which the *resolution* of the *national question* is impossible. The *resolution* of the *national question* is a matter of *national integration* and it is a product of the primacy of economic development. Rodney (1972:29) defined economic development as the capacity for self sustaining growth, an icreasing capacity to produce tied with the prevailing relations of production. Fedoseyev (1977), Glazerman (1980) Sills (1968) Laborde (1968) and Nodia (1994) on various accounts of the *resolution* of the *national question* or the issue of *national integration* confirmed that the economy is primary and sermonisation on inter-ethnic, inter-regional, intra-state and inter-religious harmony is secondary. Nodia (1994) said that prior to the Great French Capitalist Revolution of 1789, not all rural France could speak French. It was capitalism that forced the different nationalities and sub-nationalities to fuse into a united entity which is today called France. It was the same Ransom (1989) said of the Civil War and post Civil War United States how emergent capitalism forged *national unity* for that giant of a state. For England, Germany, Russia and Japan *national unity* or the *resolution* of the *national question* has been a product of the dynamics of economic developemt based on science, technology and modern industrialisation.

Fedoseyev (1977) said that in the contemporary backward dependent social formations *national integration* is hampered by ossification of the national economic movement at the level of nationality giving birth to ethnic chauvinism or the *nationality question.* In

other words, the lack of economic development retards *national integration* or the *resolution* of the *national question.* Randall and Theobald (1985) said that the uneven-modernisation of Nigeria in what Nnoli (1978) referred to as the enclave economy or what Fedoseyev (1977) referred to as the ossification of the national economic movement at the level of the nationality, is the foundation of the nationality or ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria's nation building. As a matter of fact, building national disunity benefits the forces of colonialism, neo-colonialism now globalisation and their internal collaborators. The dependent economy arising from the forgoing gave birth to the Nigerian national crises that heralded the Civil War and sustained it while it lasted. In order to overcome these crises generating factors and forces, the following contributions to knowledge have been made for effective nation building in order to enhance and strengthen the national unity project.

From the foregoing, particularly for Nigeria and Africa, it follows that the *resolution of the national question or question of national integration* is not an abstract product to be solicited for in Churches and Mosques or is it a moral issue of appealing to peoples conscience. It is rather a product of economic development, of science and technology and indeed industrialisation in this age of capitalist imperialism or globalisation. What resulted in the crises of the First Republic and indeed has laced the crises in the post Civil War Nigeria and indeed Africa has been the fact that they have not developed the capacity to retain the surpluses generated by their population. As a result they have equally been unable to counter the drains on its resources by imperialism and its local Nigerian collaborators hence the incessant economic crises leading to political, ethno – religious crises. The *resolution of the national question* or issue of *national integration/* nation building is a product of socio – economic development devoid of the trappings of imperialism and their collaborators, the local landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeoisie. The greatest threat to Nigerian and indeed Africa security or the *resolution of the national question* is the fetter created by imperialism reinforced by the landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeoisie blocking the way in the *resolution of the national question* or preventing nation building or *national integration.*

The disparate nature of Nafziger's political economy would not afford us the clear–cut analysis of the Marxian political economy based on the dynamics of the relations of production and inter–class and the intra–class struggles that breed conflicts in society and possibly wars. The author's political economy model makes him assert that "…the probability of domestic political violence is partly a function of internal domestic factors … regional economic rivalries, conflicts among elite groups, class conflicts, economic inequality and domestic economic policy – all of which depend, to a degree on international variables. And the explanations of the relationship rely in part upon economic analysis…" (Nfziger 1983:19). This economic analysis must rely on the social structure and indeed the nature of the state and its social classes. It must not simply take its departure from disparate economic issues in conflict but must take into consideration the nature of the state, its class character, economic structure and its inter–linkages or otherwise nationally and internationally. Thus, we have brought out clearly in our conceptual framework detailing the rentier state, the rentier/landed classes and their place in the world capitalist system. We have sufficiently explained that the relationship of dominance and subordination between the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie of the dependencies create crises and conflicts which filter into societies of the dependencies (Popov 1984).

Yet another major contribution one has made in this study is that the lack of national progress and indeed nation building in Nigeria is because we have not cultivated a progressive national bourgeoisie that has faith in science, technology and industrialisation. The problem of Nigeria and indeed Africa is a product of the nature of the dominant class which is just a landed aristocracy/comprador bourgeoisie that has not found its feet and perhaps may not find its feet in creating the infrastructures of national and continental economic development. The fact that this bourgeoisie since it is stung up to defend its immediate interests, and sees no further than the end of its nose, reveals itself incapable of bringing national unity into being. Thus the national front which has forced colonialism to withdraw cracks up, and wastes the victory it has gained (Fanon 1983:128). The nature of colonial and neo-colonial political economy

created an avenue for the development of a parasitic economy of landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie that depend on the state for primitive accumulation hence the intense struggles for state power or what President Olusegun Obasanjo calls “a do – or – die affair” which has always resulted in crises. These have resulted in the various contradictions between the pre-colonial and the colonial political economy, between the feudal aristocracy in the North, the reminants in the west and teh emergent comprador bourgeoisie in the East, between the landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie and the working class and working people and these contradictions were not transformative but led to a common ruins in the Civil War

We have stressed further in our examination of the dialectical forces or contradictions that have made it impossible for national unity to emerge which can be clearly understood when we examine the various nature of the dialectical contradictions that confront the Nigerian unity project. First of all, there is the dialectical contradiction between the pre-colonial and the colonial political economy or social formation. The emergence of the colonial social formation in Nigeria and indeed all the colonial countries was to impose a metropolitan commercial bourgeoisie that created apparatus through which it could exercise dominion over all the indigenous social classes in the colony (Alivi 1979:40-1). This exercise of dominion over all the indigenous social classes of the pre – colonial social formation has created a problem of national economic stagnation making it impossible for the emergence of economic forces for nation building to progress in a way to bring about centripetal forces hence the ruling class in Nigeria has stagnated along regional and nationality or ethnic lines. This has created the basis for the entrenchment of centrifugal forces, to be precise a factionalised landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie that profits from the intensification of ethnic, regional, cultural and religious differences or the nationality crises as ideological tools (Tedheke 2005:438 – 9).

Also we have made a clear – cut location of the dialectical contradictions between the

dependent landed aristocracy/rentier/comprador bourgeoisie and the international capital or bourgeoisie. We have noted earlier Mark and Engels' (1977) position that the crises in the heart and extremities of the bourgeois body first produce revolutions and crises in the extremities because the possibilities of adjustment is greater in the heart (metropoles) than in the extremities (peripheries). This major contradiction between the comprador bourgeoisie of the peripheries and the metropolitan bourgeoisie of the core capitalist states in generating crises and Civil Wars in the periphery is always side tracked in the analysis of Third World and indeed Nigerian and African crises of accumulation between the landed aristocracy/rentier comprador bourgeoisie on the one hand and the metropolitan bourgeoisie on the other. This type of capitalist crisis is sharper at the point of the problem of realisation of surplus value by metropolitan capital in the accumulation process. It is always deflected into secondary contradictions such as ethnicity, cultural, religious differences and political bitterness in the peripheries (Tedheke 2005:439).

As a follow-up is the dialectical contradictions between the feudal aristocracy in the North and their remnants in the West on the one hand and the emergent, dependent neo–colonial landed aristocracy//rentier class or comprador bourgeoisie based principally in the East, dominant in the West and with some elements of it in the North on the other hand. This contradiction was expressed in the alignment and realignment of forces, the rigging of census figures, rigging of elections in 1964/65 resulting in the declaration of state of emergency in 1965 in the West (Tedheke 2005:440). Thus the intra-class struggles that ensued between the dominant classes led to the collapse of the First Republic culminating in the coup and counter coup of 1966 and consequently the Civil War. The intra-class struggles between the feudo-comprador bourgeoie of the North and its remnants in the West and the puritan comprador/landed/rentier bourgeoisie principally of the East, dominant in the West with remnants in the North always create crises situation leading to low intensity conflicts between ethno – religious groups always.

It is of importance to note that the various dialectical contradictions leading to the

crises of the First Republic were not transformative enough to bring about a synthesis or change. The fact that these contradictions are not transformative gave sectional coloration to societal dynamics and turned them from secondary contradictions into important or prominent contradictions which arose from the negation of the forces of progress or the productive forces. Such contradictions were retrogressive as it brought about the stagnation of society and the stagnation of the progress of the nationalities preventing their development into a nation. Such enhanced false consciousness which thus turns reality upside down by according secondary contradictions such as ethnicity, regionalism, cultural and religious differences as the prominent/important contradictions whereas imperialism, the economy, economic interests, classes and class struggles which are primary contradictions are seen to be non – prominent contradictions (Cabral 1979:53; Ake 1986; Tedheke 2005). There is a tragedy in some of us Africans especially the media men and intellectuals in the way we look at issues, "who now rationalise upside –down way of looking at Africa; according to which 'abnormal is viewed as normal and the normal is viewed as abnormal,' we should always refuse to rationalise the upside – down way of looking at Africa (Mbeki 2004:245 Ngugi wa Thiongo 1986).

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