

**THE
AHIARA DECLARATION
(The Principles of the Biafran Revolution)**

by

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INTRODUCTION

PROUD AND COURAGEOUS BIAFRANS,

FELLOW COUNTRY MEN AND WOMEN,

I salute you. Today, as I look back over our two years as a sovereign and independent nation, I am overwhelmed with the feeling of pride and satisfaction in our performance and achievement as a people. Our indomitable will, our courage, our endurance of the severest privations, our resourcefulness and inventiveness in the face of tremendous odds and dangers, have become proverbial in a world so bereft of heroism, and have become a source of frustration to Nigeria and her foreign masters. For this and for the many miracles of our time, let us give thanks to Almighty God. I congratulate all Biafrans at home and abroad. I thank you all the part you have played and have continued to play in this struggle, for your devotion to the high ideals and principles on which this Republic was founded.

I thank you for your absolute commitment to the cause for which our youth are making daily, the supreme sacrifice, and a cause for which we all have been dispossessed, blockaded, bombarded, starved and massacred. I salute you for your tenacity of purpose and amazing steadfastness under siege.

I salute the memory of the many patriots who have laid down their lives in defence of our Fatherland. I salute the memory of all Biafrans - men, women and children - who died victims of the Nigerian crime of genocide. We shall never forget them. Please God, their

sacrifice shall not be in vain. For the dead on the other side of this conflict, may their souls rest in peace. To our friends and well-wishers, to the growing band of men and women around the world who have, in spite of the vile propaganda mounted against us, identified themselves with the justice of our cause, in particular to our courageous friends, officers and staff of the Relief Agencies and humanitarian organisations, pilots who daily offer themselves in sacrifice that our people might be saved; to Governments, in particular Tanzania, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Zambia and Haiti. I give my warmest thanks and those of our entire people.

THE STRUGGLE

Fellow country men and women, for nearly two years we have been engaged in a war which threatens our people with total destruction. Our enemy has been unrelenting in his fury and has fought our defenceless people with a vast array of military hardware of a sophistication unknown to Africa. For two years we have withstood his assaults with nothing other than our stout hearts and bare hands. We have frustrated his diabolical intentions and have beaten his wicked mentors in their calculations and innovations. Shamelessly, our enemy has moved from deadline to deadline, seeking excuses justifying his failures to an ever credulous world. Today, I am happy and proud to report that, all the odds notwithstanding, the enemy, at great cost in lives and equipment, is nowhere near to his avowed objective.

In the Onitsha sector of the war, our gallant forces have kept the enemy confined in the town which they entered 15 months ago. Despite the fact that this sector has great strategic attraction for the vandal hordes, being a gate-way, as it is, to the now famous jungle strip of Biafra, and the scene of the bloodiest encounters of this war, it is significant that the enemy has made no gains throughout this long period.

In the Awka sector of the war, the story remains the same. The enemy is confined only to the highway between Enugu and Onitsha, not venturing north or south of that road.

In the Okigwe sector, from where the enemy made the thrust that brought him into Umuahia, the situation remains unchanged, with our troops making the entire enemy route from Okigwe to Umuahia no joy ride. In Umuahia town itself, fighting has continued in the township.

In the Ikot Ekpene, Azumini and Aba sectors of the war, the vandals, whilst maintaining their positions in Ikot Ekpene and Aba with our troops surrounding them, have continued to suffer heavy casualties in their attempt to hold firmly on to Azumini.

We now come to the Owerri/Port Harcourt sector. After the clearing of Owerri township and our rapid move towards Port Harcourt, our gallant forces are holding positions in Eleele town, in the outskirts of Igirita and forward of Omoku.

Across the Niger, the successes of our troops have been maintained despite numerous enemy counter-attacks. Our Navy has continued to support all operations along the Niger with good results. Our guerrillas have continued their magnificent work of harassing the

enemy and giving him no respite on our soil. I salute them all.

In the air, the Biafran Air Force has made a most dramatic re-entry into the war, and in a brilliant series of raids has all but paralyzed the Nigerian Air Force. In four days' operations, eleven operational planes of the enemy were put of action, three control towers in Port Harcourt, Enugu and Benin were set ablaze, the Airport building in Enugu, and the numerous gun positions were knocked out. The refinery in Port Harcourt was set on fire. And, more recently, three days ago, the Ughelli Power Station was put out of action. The brilliance of this performance, the precision of the strike, the genius of target selection, have left Nigeria in a daze and her friends bewildered. Another way of looking at this is that in four days of operation, the Biafran Air Force has destroyed more military targets than what the Nigerian Air Force has been able to do for two years.

In cost, probably twice what the Nigerian air raids have cost us in military equipment and installations. The only superiority left in the record of achievement of the Nigerian Air Force is the number of civilians and civilian targets their cowardly raids have destroyed. Proud Biafrans, I have kept my promise.

Diplomatically, our friends have increased and have remained steadfast to our cause; and despite the rantings of our detractors, indications are that their support will continue.

At home, our sufferings have continued. Scarcity and want have remained our companions. Yet, with fortitude, we seem to have overcome the once imminent danger of mass starvation and can now look forward to a period after the rains of comparative plenty. Our efforts in the Land Army programme give visible signs all over our land of imminent victory in the war against want.

Fellow countrymen and women, the signs are auspicious, the future fills us with less foreboding. I am confident. With the initiative in war now in our own hands, we have turned the last bend in our race to self-realisation and are now set on the home straight in this our struggle. We must not flag. The tape is in sight. What we need now is a final burst of speed to breast the tape and secure the victory which will ensure for us, for all time, glory and honour, peace and progress.

Fellow compatriots, today, being our Thanksgiving Day, it is most appropriate that we pause awhile to take stock, to consider our past, our successes notwithstanding; to consider our future, our aspirations and our fears. For two long years we have been locked in mortal combat with an enemy unequalled in viciousness; for two long years, defenceless and weak, we have withstood without respite the concerted assault of a determined foe. We have fought alone, we have fought with honour, we have fought in the highest traditions of christian civilization. Yet, the very custodians of this civilization and our one-time mentors, are the very self-same monsters who have vowed to devour us.

Fellow Biafrans, I have for a long time thought about this our predicament - the attitude of the civilized world to this our conflict. The more I think about it the more I am convinced

that our disability is racial. The root cause of our problem lies in the fact that we are black. If all the things that have happened to us had happened to another people who are not black, if other people who are not black had reacted in the way our people have reacted these two long years, the world's response would surely have been different.

In 1966, some 50,000 of us were slaughtered like cattle in Nigeria. In the course of this war, well over one million of us have been killed; yet the world is unimpressed and looks on in indifference. Last year, some blood-thirsty Nigerian troops for sport murdered the entire male population of a village. All the world did was to indulge in an academic argument whether the number was in hundreds or in thousands. Today, because a handful of white men collaborating with the enemy, fighting side by side with the enemy, were caught by our gallant troops, the entire world threatens to stop. For 18 white men, Europe is aroused. What have they said about our millions? 18 white men assisting the crime of genocide! What does Europe say about our murdered innocents? Have we not died enough? How many black dead make one missing white? Mathematicians, please answer me. Is it infinity?

Take another example. For two years we have been subjected to a total blockade. We all know how bitter, bloody and protracted the First and Second World Wars were. At no stage in those wars did the white belligerents carry out a total blockade of their fellow whites. In each case where a blockade was imposed, allowance was made for certain basic necessities of life in the interest of women, children and other non-combatants. Ours is the only example in recent history where a whole people have been so treated. What is it that makes our case different? Do we not have women, children and other non-combatants? Does the fact that they are black women, black children and black non-combatants make such a world of difference?

Nigeria embarked on a crime of genocide against our people by first mounting a total blockade against Biafra. To cover up their designs and deceive the black world, the white powers supporting Nigeria blame Biafrans for the continuation of the blockade and for the starvation and suffering which that entails. They uphold Nigerian proposals on relief which in any case they helped to formulate, as being "conciliatory" or "satisfactory". Knowing that these proposals would give Nigeria further military advantage, and compromise the basic cause for which we have struggled for two years, they turn round to condemn us for rejecting them. They accepted the total blockade against us as a legitimate weapon of war because it suits them and because we are black. Had we been white the inhuman and cruel blockade would long have been lifted.

The mass deaths of our citizens resulting from starvation and indiscriminate air raids and large despoliation of towns and villages are a mere continuation of this crime. That Nigeria has received complete support from Britain should surprise no one. For Britain is a country whose history is replete with instances of genocide.

In my address to you on the occasion of the first anniversary of our independence, I touched on a number of issues relevant to our struggle and to our hope for a prosperous,

just and happy society. I talked to you of the background to our struggle and on the visions and values which inspired us to found our own State.

THE MYTH ABOUT THE NEGRO

On this occasion of our second anniversary, I shall go further in the examination of the meaning and import of our revolution by discussing the wider issues involved and the character and structure of the new society we are determined and committed to build. Our enemies and their foreign sponsors have deliberately sought by false and ill-motivated propaganda to becloud the real issues which caused and still determine the course and character of our struggle. They have sought in various ways to dismiss our struggle as a tribal conflict. They have attributed it to the mad adventurism of a fictitious power-seeking clique anxious to carve out an empire to rule, dominate and exploit. But they have failed. Our cause is transparently just and no amount of propaganda can detract from it.

Our struggle has far-reaching significance. It is the latest recrudescence in our time of the age-old struggle of the black man for his full stature as man. We are the latest victims of a wicked collusion between the three traditional scourges of the black man - racism, Arab-Muslim expansionism and white economic imperialism. Playing a subsidiary role is Bolshevik Russia seeking for a place in the African sun. Our struggle is a total and vehement rejection of all those evils which blighted Nigeria, evils which were bound to lead to the disintegration of that ill-fated federation. Our struggle is not a mere resistance - that would be purely negative. It is a positive commitment to build a healthy, dynamic and progressive state, such as would be the pride of black men the world over.

For this reason, our struggle is a movement against racial prejudice, in particular against that tendency to regard the black man as culturally, morally, spiritually, intellectually, and physically inferior to the other two major races of the world - the yellow and the white races. This belief in the innate inferiority of the Negro and that his proper place in the world is that of the servant of the other races, has from early days coloured the attitude of the outside world to Negro problems. It still does today.

Not so long ago the fashion was to question the humanity of the Negro. Some white theorists attributed the creation to the Devil, others even identified the Devil as the first Negro. Later they derived the Negro from the accursed progeny of Ham. Nearer to us still in time, it became a topic for serious debate in learned circles in Europe whether the Negro was in fact a man; whether he had a soul; and if he had a soul, whether conversion to christianity could make any difference to his spiritual condition and destination. By the nineteenth century it had been reluctantly conceded that the Negro is in fact human, but a different kind of man, certainly not the same kind of man as the white. Pseudo-intellectuals went to work to prove that the Negro was a different kind of man from the white. They uncovered the abundant so-called anthropological evidence from archaeology which "proved" to them conclusively that the Negro was no more the same kind of man as the European

than a rat was a rabbit.

It is this myth about the Negro that still conditions the thinking and attitude of most white governments on all issues concerning black Africa and the black man; it explains the double standards which they apply to present-day world problems; it explains their stand on the whole question of independence and basic human rights for the black peoples of the world. These myths explain the stand of many of the world governments and organisations on our present struggle.

Our disagreement with the Nigerians arose in part from a conflict between two diametrically opposed conceptions of the end and purpose of the modern African state. It was, and still is, our firm conviction that a modern Negro African government worth the trust placed in it by the people, must build a progressive state that ensures the reign of social and economic justice, and of the rule of law. But the Nigerians, under the leadership of the Hausa-Fulani feudal aristocracy preferred anarchy and injustice.

Since in the thinking of many white powers a good, progressive and efficient government is good only for whites, our view was considered dangerous and pernicious: a point of view which explains but does not justify the blind support which these powers have given to uphold the Nigerian ideal of a corrupt, decadent and putrefying society. To them genocide is an appropriate answer to any group of black people who have the temerity to attempt to evolve their own social system.

When the Nigerians violated our basic human rights and liberties, we decided reluctantly but bravely to found our own state, to exercise our inalienable right to self-determination as our only remaining hope for survival as a people. Yet, because we are black, we are denied by the white powers the exercise of this right which they themselves have proclaimed inalienable. In our struggle we have learnt that the right of self-determination is inalienable, but only to the white man.

SELF-DETERMINATION

The right to self-determination was good for the Greeks in 1822, for the Belgians in 1830, and for the Central and Eastern Europeans and the Irish at the end of the First World War. Yet it is not good for Biafrans because we are black. When blacks claim that right, they are warned against dangers trumped up by the imperialists - "fragmentation" and "Balkanization", as if the trouble with the Balkans is the result of the application of the principle of self-determination. Were the Balkans a healthier place before they emerged from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire? Those who sustained the Ottoman Empire considered it a European necessity, for its Eastern European provinces stood as a buffer between two ambitious and mutually antagonistic empires - the Russian and the Austrian. For the peace and repose of Europe, it therefore became a major concern of European statesmen to preserve the integrity of that empire. But when it was discovered that

Ottoman rule was not only corrupt, oppressive and unprogressive, but also stubbornly irreformable, the happiness and well-being of its white populations came to be considered paramount. So by 1918 the integrity of that ancient and sprawling empire had been sacrificed to the well-being of the Eastern Europeans. Fellow Biafrans, that was in the white world.

But what do we find here in Negro Africa? The Federation of Nigeria is today as corrupt, as unprogressive and as oppressive and irreformable as the Ottoman Empire was in Eastern Europe over a century ago. And in contrast, the Nigerian Federation in the form it was constituted by the British cannot by any stretch of imagination be considered an African necessity. Yet we are being forced to sacrifice our very existence as a people to the integrity of that ramshackle creation that has no justification either in history or in the freely expressed wishes of the people. What other reason for this can there be than the fact that we are black?

In 1966, 50,000 Biafrans - men, women and children - were massacred in cold blood in Nigeria. Since July 6, 1967, hundreds of Biafrans have been killed daily by shelling, bombing, strafing and starvation advised, organised and supervised by Anglo-Saxon Britain. None of these atrocities has raised enough stir in many European capitals. But on the few occasions when a single white man died in Africa, even where he was a convicted bandit like the notorious case in the Congo, all the diplomatic chanceries of the world have been astir; the whole world has been shaken to its very foundations by the din of protest against the alleged atrocity and by the clamour for vengeance. This was the case when the Nigerian vandals turned their British-supplied rifles on white Red Cross workers in Okigwe. Recently this has been the case with the reported disappearance of some white oil technicians in the Republic of Benin. But when we are massacred in thousands, nobody cares, because we are black.

Fellow countrymen and women, the fact is that in spite of their open protestations to the contrary, the white peoples of the world are still far from accepting that what is good for them can also be good for blacks. The day they make this basic concession that day will the non-Anglo-Saxon nations tell Britain to her face that she is guilty of genocide against us; that day will they call a halt to this monstrous war.

Because the black man is considered inferior and servile to the white, he must accept his political, social and economic system and ideologies ready made from Europe, America or the Soviet Union. Within the confines of his nation he must accept a federation or confederation or unitary government if federation or confederation or unitary government suits the interests of his white masters; he must accept inept and unimaginative leadership because the contrary would hurt the interests of the master race; he must accept economic exploitation by alien commercial firms and companies because the whites benefit from it. Beyond the confines of his state, he must accept regional and continental organisations which provide a front for the manipulation of the imperialist powers; organisations which are therefore unable to respond to African problems in a truly African manner. For Africans to show a true independence is to ask for anathemization and total liquidation.

ARAB-MUSLIM EXPANSIONISM

The Biafran struggle is, on another plane, a resistance to the Arab-Muslim expansionism which has menaced and ravaged the African continent for twelve centuries. As early as the first quarter of the seventh century, the Arabs, a people from the Near-East, evolved Islam not just as a religion but as a cover for their insatiable territorial ambitions. By the tenth century they had overrun and occupied, among other places, Egypt and North Africa. Had they stopped there, we would not today be faced with the wicked and unholy collusion we are fighting against. On the contrary, they cast their hungry and envious eyes across the Sahara on to the land of the Negroes.

Our Biafran ancestors remained immune from the Islamic contagion. From the middle years of the last century Christianity was established in our land. In this way we came to be a predominantly Christian people. We came to stand out as a non-Muslim island in a raging Islamic sea. Throughout the period of the ill-fated Nigerian experiment, the Muslims hoped to infiltrate Biafra by peaceful means and quiet propaganda, but failed. Then the late Ahmadu Bello, the Sarduna of Sokoto tried, by political and economic blackmail and terrorism, to convert Biafrans settled in Northern Nigeria to Islam. His hope was that these Biafrans on dispersion would then carry Islam to Biafra, and by so doing give the religion political control of the area. The crises which agitated the so-called independent Nigeria from 1962 gave these aggressive proselytisers the chance to try converting us by force.

It is now evident why the fanatic Arab-Muslim states like Algeria, Egypt and the Sudan have come out openly and massively to support and aid Nigeria in her present war of genocide against us. These states see militant Arabism as a powerful instrument for attaining power in the world.

Biafra is one of the few African states untainted by Islam. Therefore, to militant Arabism, Biafra is a stumbling block to their plan for controlling the whole continent. This control is fast becoming manifest in the Organisation of African Unity. On the question of the Middle East, the Sudanese crisis, in the war between Nigeria and Biafra, militant Arabism has succeeded in imposing its point of view through blackmail and bluster. It has threatened African leaders and governments with inciting their Muslim minorities to rebellion if the governments adopted an independent line on these questions. In this way an O.A.U. that has not felt itself able to discuss the genocide in the Sudan and Biafra, an O.A.U. that has again and again advertised its ineptitude as a peace-maker, has rushed into open condemnation of Israel over the Middle East dispute. Indeed in recent times, by its performance, the O.A.U. might well be an Organisation of Arab Unity.

AFRICA EXPLOITED

Our struggle, in an even more fundamental sense, is the culmination of the confrontation between Negro nationalism and white imperialism. It is a movement designed to ensure the

realization of man's full stature in Africa.

Ever since the 15th century, the European world has treated the African continent as a field for exploitation. Their policies in Africa have for so long been determined to a very great extent by their greed for economic gain. For over three and half centuries, it suited them to transport and transplant millions of the flower of our manhood for the purpose of exploiting the Americas and the West Indies. They did so with no uneasiness of conscience. They justified this trade in men by reference to biblical passages violently torn out of context.

When it became no longer profitable to them to continue with the depopulation and uncontrolled spoilage of Negro Africa, their need of the moment became to exploit the natural resources of the continent, using Negro labour. In response to this need they evolved their informal empire in the 19th century under which they controlled and exploited Negro Africa through their missionaries and monopolist mercantile companies. As time went on they discarded the empire of informal sway as unsatisfactory and established the direct empire as the most effective means of exploiting our homeland. It was at this stage that with cynical imperturbability they carved up the African continent, and boxed up the native populations in artificial states designed purely to minister to white economic interests.

This brutal and unprecedented rape of a whole continent was a violent challenge to Negro self-respect. Not surprisingly, within half a century the theory and practice of empire ran into stiff opposition from Negro nationalism. In the face of the movement for Negro freedom the white imperialists changed tactics. They decided to install puppet African administrations to create the illusion of political independence, while retaining the control of the economy. And this they quickly did between 1957 and 1965. The direct empire was transformed into an indirect empire, that regime of fraud and exploitation which African nationalists aptly describe as Neo-Colonialism.

Nigeria was a classic example of a neo-colonialist state, and what is left of it, still is. The militant nationalism of the late forties and early fifties had caught the British imperialists unawares. They hurried to accommodate it by installing the ignorant, decadent and feudalistic Hausa-Fulani oligarchy in power. For the British, the credentials of the Hausa-Fulani were that not having emerged from the Middle Ages they knew nothing about the modern state and the powerful forces that now rule men's minds. Owing their position to the British, they were servile and submissive. The result was that while Nigerians lived in the illusion of independence, they were still in fact being ruled from Number 10 Downing Street. The British still enjoyed a stranglehold on their economy.

The crises which rocked Nigeria from the morrow of "independence" were brought about by the efforts of progressive nationalists to achieve true independence for themselves and for posterity. For their part in this effort, Biafrans were stigmatised and singled out for extermination. In imperialist thinking, only phoney independence is good for blacks. The sponsorship of Nigeria by white imperialism has not been disinterested. They are only concerned with the preservation of that corrupt and rickety structure of Nigeria in a perpetual state of powerlessness to check foreign exploitation. I am certain that if

tomorrow I should promise that Biafra is going to be a servile and sycophantic state, these self-appointed upholders of the territorial integrity of African states will sing a different tune. No...I shall not oblige them. Biafra will not betray the black man. No matter the odds, we will fight with all our might until black men everywhere can, with pride, point to this Republic, standing dignified and defiant, as an example of African nationalism triumphant over its many and age-old enemies.

Fellow countrymen and women, we have seen in proper perspective the diabolical roles which the British Government and the foreign companies have played and are playing in our war with Nigeria. We now see why in spite of Britain's tottering economy Harold Wilson's Government insists on financing Nigeria's futile war against us. We see why the Shell-BP led the Nigerian hordes into Bonny, pays Biafran oil royalties to Nigeria, and provided the Nigerian Army with all the help it needed for its attack on Port Harcourt. We see why the West African Conference Lines readily and meekly co-operate with Gowon in the imposition of total blockade against us. We see why the oil and trading companies in Nigeria still finance this war and why they risk the life and limb of their staff in the war zones.

RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM

And now, Bolshevik Russia. Russia is a late arrival in the race for world empire. Since the end of the Second World War she has fought hard to gain a foothold in Africa recognising, like the other imperialist powers before her, the strategic importance of Africa in the quest for world domination. She first tried to enter into alliance with African nationalism. Later finding that African nationalism has been thwarted, at least temporarily, by the collusion between imperialism and the decadent forces in African society, Russia quickly changed her strategy and identified herself with those very conservative forces which she had earlier denounced. Here she met with quick success.

In North Africa and Egypt, Russian influence has taken firm root and is growing. With her success in Egypt and Algeria, Russia developed even keener appetite for more territory in Africa, particularly the areas occupied by the Negroes. Her early efforts in the Congo and Ghana proved still-born. The Nigeria-Biafra conflict offered an opportunity for another beach-head in Africa.

It is not Russia's intention to make Nigeria a better place for Nigerians or indeed any other part of Africa a better place for Africans. Her interest is strategic. In her challenge to the United States and the Western World, she needs vantage points in Africa. With her entrenched position in Northern Nigeria, the Central Sudan of the historians and geographers, Russia is in a position to co-ordinate her strategy for West and North Africa. We are all familiar with the ancient and historic cultural, linguistic and religious links between North Africa and the Central Sudan. We know that the Hausa language is a lingua franca for over two-thirds of this area. We know how far afield a wandering Imam preaching Islam and Bolshevism can go. When Russia gives the Nigerians Illyushin jets to bomb us,

the MiGs to strafe and rocket us and AK-47 rifles to mow us down, we should see all this in proper light that Russia, like other imperialist powers, has no regard for the Negro. To her, what is important is to gain a vantage point in Negro-land from which to challenge American and Western European world power and influence. The Arabs also in this find further attraction in that it gives to them a back-door entry eventually into Israel. In this jungle game for world domination and black man's life, let alone his well-being, counts for nothing.

Fellow Biafrans, these are the evil and titanic forces with which we are engaged in a life and death struggle. These are the obstacles to the Negro's efforts to realise himself. These are the forces which the Biafran Revolution must sweep aside to succeed.

ANGLO-SAXON GENOCIDE

If the white race has sinned against the world, the Anglo-Saxon branch of that race has been, and still is, the worst sinner of all. The Anglo-Saxon British committed genocide against the American Indians. They committed genocide against the Caribbs. They committed genocide against the Australian Blackfellows. They committed genocide against the native Tasmanians and the Maoris of New Zealand. During the era of the slave trade, they topped the list and led the genocidal attempt against the Negro race as a whole. Today, they are engaged in committing genocide against us. The unprejudiced observer is forced in consternation to wonder whether genocide is not a way of life of the Anglo-Saxon British. Luckily, all white people are not like the Anglo-Saxon British.

NEGRO RENAISSANCE

Luckily too, all African states not like Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt and Sudan, sworn enemies of the Negro, willing tools of white racism, white economic imperialism and Arab-Muslim expansionism. We salute the shining and enduring examples of Negro renaissance throughout the world. To Tanzania, to Gabon, to the Ivory Coast, to Zambia and Haiti, we wish more success in their soldiering for all that is right, just and honourable.

We do not claim that the Biafran Revolution is the first attempt in history by the Negro to assert his identity, to claim his right and proper place as a human being on a basis of equality with the white and yellow races. We are aware of the Negro's past and present efforts to prove his ability at home and abroad. We are familiar with his achievements in prehistory; we are familiar with his achievements in exploring and taming the African and American continents; we are familiar with his achievements in political organisations; we are familiar with his contributions to the world store of art and culture. The Negro's white oppressors are not unaware of all these.

But in spite of their awareness they are not prepared to admit that the Negro is an man and

a brother. This is why we in Biafra are convinced that the Negro can never come to his own until he is able to build modern states (whether national or multi-national) based on a compelling African ideology, enjoying real rather than sham independence, able to give scope to the full development of the human spirit in the arts and sciences, able to engage in dialogue with the white states on a basis of transparent equality and able to introduce a new dimension into international statecraft.

In the world context, this is Biafra - the plight of the black struggling to be man. From this derives our deep conviction that the Biafran Revolution is not just a movement of Igbo, Ibibio, Ijaw and Ogoja. It is a movement of true and patriotic Africans. It is African nationalism conscious of itself and fully aware of the powers with which it is contending. From this derives our belief that history and humanity are on our side, and that the Biafran Revolution is indestructible and eternal. From here derives the support we enjoy from the brave and proud peoples of Tanzania, Gabon, the Ivory Coast, Zambia and Haiti who share these ideals and visions with us and who are already engaged in realising them.

We have indeed come a long way. We were once Nigerians, today we are Biafrans. We are Biafrans because on 30th May, 1967, we finally said no to the evils and injustices in which Nigeria was steeped. Nigeria was made up of peoples and groups with very little in common. As everyone knows, Biafrans were in the fore-front among those who tried to make Nigeria a nation. It is ironic that some ill-informed and mischievous people today will accuse us of breaking up a united African country. Only those who do not know the facts or deliberately ignore them can hold such an opinion. We know the facts because we were there and the things that happened, happened to us.

NIGERIAN CORRUPTION

Nigeria was indeed a very wicked and corrupt country in spite of the glorious image given her in the European press. We know why Nigeria was given that image. It was her reward for serving the economic and political interests of her European masters. Nigeria is a stooge of Europe. Her independence was and is a lie. Even her Prime Minister was a Knight of the British Empire! But worse than her total subservience to foreign political and economic interests, Nigeria committed many crimes against her nationals which in the end made complete nonsense of her claim to unity. Nigeria persecuted and slaughtered her minorities; Nigerian justice was a farce; her elections, her census, her politics - her everything - was corrupt. Qualification, merit and experience were discounted in public service. In one area of Nigeria, for instance, they preferred to turn a nurse who had worked for five years into a doctor rather than employ a qualified doctor from another part of Nigeria; barely literate clerks were made Permanent Secretaries; a university Vice-Chancellor was sacked because he belonged to the wrong tribe.

Bribery, corruption and nepotism were so widespread that people began to wonder openly whether any country in the world could compare with Nigeria in corruption and abuse of

power. All the modern institutions - the Legislature, the Civil Service, the Army, the Police, the Judiciary, the Universities, the Trade Unions and the organs of mass information - were devalued and made the tools of corrupt political power. There was complete neglect and impoverishment of the people. Whatever prosperity there was, was deceptive. Unemployment was growing. Thousands of young school-leavers were drifting away from the villages which had nothing to offer them into towns with no employment openings. There was despair in many hearts and the number of suicides was growing every day. The farmers were very hard-hit, their standard of living had fallen steeply. The soils were perishing from over-farming and lack of scientific husbandry. The towns like the soils were wastelands into which people put in too much exertion for too little reward. There were crime waves and people lived in fear of their lives. Business speculation, rack-renting, worship of money and sharp practices left a few extremely rich at the expense of the many, and these few flaunted their wealth before the many and talked about sharing the national cake. Foreign interests did roaring business spreading consumer goods and wares among a people who had not developed a habit of thrift and who fell prey to lying advertisements. Inequality of the sexes was actively promoted in Nigeria. Rather than aspire to equality with men, women were encouraged to accept the status of inferiority and to become the mistresses of successful politicians and business executives, or they were married off at the age of fourteen as the fifteenth wives of the new rich. That was the glorious Nigeria, the mythical Nigeria, celebrated in the European press.

Then worst of all came the genocide in which over 50,000 of our kith and kin were slaughtered in cold blood all over Nigeria, and nobody asked questions, nobody showed regret, nobody showed remorse. Thus, Nigeria had become a jungle with no safety, no justice and no hope for our people. We decided then to found a new place, a human habitation away from the Nigerian jungle. That was the origin of our Revolution.

RE-DISCOVERING INDEPENDENCE

From the moment we assumed the illustrious name of the ancient kingdom of Biafra, we were re-discovering the original independence of a great African people. We accepted by this revolutionary act the glory, as well as the sacrifice of true independence and freedom. We knew that we had challenged the many forces and interests which had conspired to keep Africa and the Black Race in subjection forever. We knew they were going to be ruthless and implacable in defence of their age-old imposition on us and exploitation of our people. But we were prepared and remain prepared to pay any price for our freedom and dignity.

And in this we were not mistaken. Five weeks after we had proclaimed our independence Nigeria, goaded by her foreign masters, declared war on us.

For two years now we have fought a difficult war in defence of our Fatherland. From the beginning we have never been in doubt about our ultimate victory. But, seeing the odds

ranged against us, the world did not believe that we had any chance of success whatever the merit of our case. Perhaps our determination and persistence are making the world think again. Biafra today is no longer a lost cause. For us, Biafra's eventual triumph has never been in doubt: Biafra has always been the shining light at the end of our dark tunnel. In the two years of our grim struggle, we have learned important lessons about ourselves, about our society and about the world. In some ways this struggle has been a journey in self-discovery and self-realisation.

Our Revolution is a historic opportunity given to us to establish a just society; to revive the dignity of our people at home and the dignity of the Black-man in the world. We realise that in order to achieve those ends we must remove those weaknesses in our institutions and organisations and those disabilities in foreign relations which have tended to degrade this dignity. This means that we must reject Nigerianism in all its guises.

THE PEOPLE

Fellow countrymen, are we going to say no to Nigerianism and then let a few unpatriotic people among us soil our Revolution with the stain of Nigeria? Are we going to watch the very disease which caused the demise of Nigeria take root in our new Biafra? Are we prepared to embark on another revolution perhaps more bloody to put right the inevitable disaster? I ask you, my countrymen, can we afford another spell of strife when this one is over to correct social inequalities in our Fatherland? I say NO. A thousand times no. The ordinary Biafran says no. When I speak of the ordinary Biafran I speak of the People. The Biafran Revolution is the People's Revolution. Who are the People? you ask. The farmer, the trader, the clerk, the business man, the housewife, the student, the civil servant, the soldier, you and I are the people. Is there anyone here who is not of the people? Is there anyone here afraid of the People - anyone suspicious of the People? Is there anyone despising the People? Such a man has no place in our Revolution. If he is a leader, he has no right to leadership because all power, all sovereignty, belongs to the People. In Biafra the People are supreme; the People are master; the leader is servant. You see, you make a mistake when you greet me with shouts of "Power, Power". I am not power - you are. My name is Emeka. I am your servant, that is all.

SHAKING OFF NIGERIANISM

Fellow countrymen, we pride ourselves on our honesty. Let us admit to ourselves that when we left Nigeria, some of us did not shake off every particle of Nigerianism. We say that Nigerians are corrupt and 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" bribe. We accuse Nigerians of inordinate love of money, ostentatious living and irresponsibility, but here, even while we are engaged in a war of national survival, even while the very life of our

nation hangs in the balance, we see some public servants who throw huge parties to entertain their friends; who kill cows to christen their babies. We have members of the Armed Forces who carry on "attack" trade instead of fighting the enemy. We have traders who hoard essential goods and inflate prices thereby increasing the people's hardship. We have "money-mongers" who aspire to build hundreds of plots on land as yet unreclaimed from the enemy; who plan to buy scores of lorries and buses and to become agents for those very foreign businessmen who have brought their country to grief. We have some civil servants who think of themselves as masters rather than servants of the people. We see doctors who stay idle in their villages while their countrymen and women suffer and die. When we see all these things, they remind us that not every Biafran has yet absorbed the spirit of the Revolution. They tell us that we still have among us a member of people whose attitudes and outlooks are Nigerian. It is clear that if our Revolution is to succeed, we must reclaim these wayward Biafrans. We must Biafranize them. We must prepare all our people for the glorious roles which await them in the Revolution. If after we shall have tried to reclaim them and have failed then they must be swept aside. The people's revolution must stride ahead and like a battering ram, clearing all obstacles in its path. Fortunately, a vast majority of Biafrans are prepared for these roles.

When we think of our Revolution, therefore, we think about these things. We think about our ancient heritage, we think about the challenge of today and the promise of the future. We think about the changes which are taking place at this very moment in our personal lives and in our society. We see Biafrans from different parts of the country living together, working together, suffering together and pursuing together a common cause. We see our doctors, scientists, engineers and technologists responding to the demands of the Revolution with brilliant inventions and innovations. We see our Armed Forces with their severely limited resources holding back an aggressor who is massively equipped by the neo-imperialist enemies of African freedom. We see men of learning and mass information spreading with patriotic zeal the true story and significance of the Biafran struggle. We see our farmers determined to win the war against starvation imposed on us by the enemy. We see our ordinary men and women - the people - pursuing, in their different but essential ways, the great task of our national survival. We see every sign that this struggle is purifying and elevating the masses of our people. Every day of the struggle bears witness to actions by our countrymen and women which reveal high ideals of patriotic courage, service and sacrifice; actions which show the will and determination of our people to remain free and independent but also to create a new and better order of society for the benefit of all.

In the last five or six months, I have devised one additional way of learning at first had how the ordinary men and women of our country see the Revolution. I have established a practice of meeting every Wednesday with a different cross-section of our people to discuss the problems of the Revolution. These meetings have brought home to me the great desire for change among the generality of our people. I have heard a number of criticisms and complaints by people against certain things; I have also noticed groups forming themselves and trying to put right some of the ills of society. All this indicates both that there is a

change in progress and need for more change. Thus, the Biafran Revolution is not dreamt up by an elite; it is the will of the People. The People want it. They are fighting and dying to defend it. Their immediate concern is to defeat the Nigerian aggressor and so safeguard the Biafran Revolution.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REVOLUTION

I stand before you tonight not to launch the Biafran Revolution, because it is already in existence. It came into being two years ago when we proclaimed to all the world that we had finally extricated ourselves from the sea of mud that was, and is, Nigeria. I stand before you to proclaim formally the commitment of the Biafran State to the Principles of the Revolution and to enunciate those Principles.

Some people are frightened when they hear the word Revolution. They say: Revolution? Heaven help us! It is too dangerous. It means mobs rushing around destroying property, killing people and upsetting everything.

But these people do not understand the real meaning of revolution. For us, a revolution is a change - a quick change, a change for the better. Every society is changing all the time. It is changing for the better or for the worse; it is either moving forward or moving backwards; it cannot stand absolutely still. A revolution is a forward movement. It is a rapid, forward movement which improves a people's standard of living and their material circumstance and purifies and raises their moral tone. It transforms for the better those institutions which are still relevant, and discards those which stand in the way of progress.

The Biafran Revolution believes in the sanctity of human life and the dignity of the human person. The Biafran sees the wilful and wanton destruction of human life not only as a grave crime but as an abominable sin. In our society every human life is holy, every individual person counts. No Biafran wants to be taken for granted or ignored, neither does he ignore or take others for granted. This explains why such degrading practices as begging for alms were unknown in Biafran society. Therefore, all forms of disabilities and inequalities which reduce the dignity of the individual or destroy his sense of person have no place in the New Biafran Social Order. The Biafran Revolution upholds the dignity of man.

The Biafran Revolution stands firmly against Genocide - against any attempt to destroy a people, its security, its right to life, property and progress. Any attempt to deprive a community of its identity is abhorrent to the Biafran people. Having ourselves suffered genocide, we are all the more determined to take a clear stand now and at all times against this crime.

The new Biafran Social Order places a high premium on Patriotism - Love and Devotion to the Fatherland. Every true Biafran must love Biafra; must have faith in Biafra and its people, and must strive for its greater unity. He must find his salvation here in Biafra. He must be prepared to work for Biafra, to stand up for Biafra and, if necessary, to die for

Biafra. He must be prepared to defend the sovereignty of Biafra wherever and by whomsoever it is challenged. Biafran patriots do all this already, and Biafra expects all her sons and daughters of today and tomorrow, to emulate their noble example. Diplomats who treat insults to the Fatherland and the Leadership of our struggle with levity are not patriotic. That young man who sneaks about the village, avoiding service in his country's Armed Forces is unpatriotic; that young, able-bodied school teacher who prefers to distribute relief when he should be fighting his country's war, is not only unpatriotic but is doing a woman's work. Those who help these loafers to dodge their civic duties should henceforth re-examine themselves.

All Biafrans are brothers and sisters bound together by ties of geography, trade, inter-marriage and culture and their common misfortune in Nigeria and their present experience of the armed struggle. Biafrans are even more united by the desire to create a new and better order of society which will satisfy their needs and aspirations. Therefore, there is no justification for anyone to introduce into the Biafran Fatherland divisions based on ethnic origin, sex or religion. To do so would be unpatriotic.

Every true Biafran must know and demand his civic rights. Furthermore, he must recognize the rights of other Biafrans and be prepared to defend them when necessary. So often people complain that they have been ill-treated by the Police or some other public servant. But the truth very often is that we allow ourselves to be bullied because we are not man enough to demand and stand up for our rights, and that fellow citizens around do not assist us when we demand our rights.

In the New Biafran Social Order sovereignty and power belong to the People. Those who exercise power do so on behalf of the people. Those who govern must not tyrannize over the people. They carry a sacred trust of the people and must use their authority strictly in accordance with the will of the people. The true test of success in public life is that the People - who are the real masters - are contented and happy. The rulers must satisfy the People at all times.

But it is no use saying that power belongs to the People unless we are prepared to make it work in practice. Even in the old political days, the oppressors of the People were among those who shouted loudest that power belonged to the People. The Biafran Revolution will constantly and honestly seek methods of making this concept a fact rather than a pious fiction.

Arising out of the Biafran's belief that power belongs to the People is the principle of public accountability. Those who exercise power are accountable to the people for the way they use that power. The People retain the right to renew or terminate their mandate. Every individual servant of the People, whether in the Legislature, the Civil Service, the Judiciary, the Police, the Armed Forces, in business or in any other walks of life, is accountable at all times for his work or the work of those under his charge. Where, therefore, a ministry or department runs inefficiently or improperly, its head must accept personal responsibility for such a situation and, depending on the gravity of the failure, must resign or be removed.

And where he is proved to have misused his position or trust to enrich himself, the principle of public accountability requires that he be punished severely and his ill-gotten gains taken from him.

THE TASK OF A LEADER

Those who aspire to lead must bear in mind the fact that they are servants and as such cannot ever be greater than the People, their masters. Every leader in the Biafran Revolution is the embodiment of the ideals of the Revolution. Part of his role as a leader is to keep the revolutionary spirit alive, to be a friend of the People and protector of their Revolution. He should have right judgement both of people and of situations and the ability to attract to himself the right kind of lieutenants who can best further the interests of the People and of the Revolution. The leader must not only say but always demonstrate that the power he exercises is derived from the People. Therefore, like every other Biafran public servant, he is accountable to the People for the use he makes of their mandate. He must get out when the People tell him to get out. The more power the leader is given by the People, the less is his personal freedom and the greater his responsibility for the good of the People. He should never allow his high office to separate him from the People. He must be fanatical for their welfare.

A leader in the Biafran Revolution must at all times stand for justice in dealing with the People. He should be the symbol of justice which is the supreme guarantee of good government. He should be ready, if need be, to lay down his life in pursuit of this ideal. He must have physical and moral courage and must be able to inspire the people out of despondency.

He should never strive towards the perpetuation of his office or devise means to cling to office beyond the clear mandate of the People. He should resist the temptation to erect memorials to himself in his life-time, to have his head embossed on the coin, name streets and institutions after himself, or convert government into a family business. A leader who serves his people well will be enshrined in their hearts and minds. This is all the reward he can expect in his life-time. He will be to the People the symbol of excellence, the quintessence of the Revolution. He will be BIAFRAN.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

One of the corner-stones of the Biafran Revolution is Social Justice. We believe that there should be equal opportunity for all, that appreciation and just reward should be given for honest work and that society should show concern and special care for the weak and infirm. Our people reject all forms of social inequalities and disabilities and all class and sectional privileges. Biafrans believe that society should treat all its members with impartiality and fairness. Therefore, the Biafran State must not apportion special privileges or favours to

some citizens and deny them to others. For example, how can we talk of Social Justice in a situation where a highly-paid public servant gets his salt free and the poor housewife in the village pays five pounds for a cup? The State should not create a situation favourable to the exploitation of some citizens by others. The State is the Father of all, the source of security, the reliable agent which helps all to realise their legitimate hopes and aspirations. Without Social Justice, harmony and stability within society disappear and antagonisms between various sections of the community take their place. Our Revolution will uphold Social Justice at all times. The Biafran State will be the Fountain of Justice.

PROPERTY AND THE COMMUNITY

In the New Biafra, all property belongs to the Community. Every individual must consider all he has, whether in talent or material wealth, as belonging to the community for which he holds it in trust. This principle does not mean the abolition of personal property but it implies that the State, acting on behalf of the community, can intervene in the disposition of property to the greater advantage of all. Over-acquisitiveness or the inordinate desire to amass wealth is a factor liable to threaten social stability, especially in an under-developed society in which there are not enough material goods to go round.

This creates lop-sided development, breeds antagonisms between the haves and the have-nots and undermines the peace and unity of the people.

While the Biafran Revolution will foster private economic enterprise and initiative, it should remain constantly alive to the dangers of some citizens accumulating large private fortunes. Property-grabbing, if unchecked by the State, will set the pattern of behaviour for the whole society which begins to attach undue value to money and property. Thus a wealthy man, even if he is known to be a crook, is accorded greater respect than an honest citizen who is not so well off. A society where this happens is doomed to rot and decay. Moreover, the danger is always there of a small group of powerful property-owners using their influence to deflect the State from performing its duties to the citizens as a whole and thereby destroying the democratic basis of society. This happens in many countries and it is one of the duties of our Revolution to prevent its occurrence in Biafra.

Finally, the Biafran Revolution will create possibilities for citizens with talent in business, administration, management and technology to fulfil themselves and receive due appreciation and reward in the service of the State, as has indeed happened in our total mobilization to prosecute the present war.

AN EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

The Biafran Revolution is committed to creating a society not torn by class consciousness and class antagonisms. Biafran society is traditionally egalitarian. The possibility for social

mobility is always present in our society. The New Biafran Social Order rejects all rigid classifications of society. Anyone with imagination, anyone with integrity, anyone who works hard, can rise to any height. Thus, the son of a truck-pusher can become the Head of State of Biafra. The Biafran Revolution will provide opportunities for Biafrans to aspire and to achieve their legitimate desires. Those who find themselves below at any particular moment must have the opportunity to rise to the top.

Our New Society is open and progressive. The people of Biafra have always striven to achieve a workable balance between the claims of tradition and the demand for change and betterment. We are adaptable because as a people we are convinced that in the world "no condition is permanent". And we believe that human effort and will are necessary to bring about changes and improvements in the condition of the individual and of society. The Biafran would thus make the effort to improve his lot and the material well-being of his community. He has the will to transform his society into a modern progressive community. In this process of rapid transformation he will retain and cherish the best elements of his culture, drawing sustenance as well as moral and psychological stability from them. But being a Biafran he will never be afraid to adapt what needs to be adapted or change what has to be changed.

PUTTING THE REVOLUTION INTO PRACTICE

The Biafran Revolution will continue to discover and develop local talent and to use progressive foreign ideas and skills so long as they do not destroy the identity of our culture or detract from the sovereignty of our Fatherland. The Biafrans Revolution will also ensure through education that the positive aspects of Biafran traditional culture, especially those which are likely to be swamped out of existence by introduced foreign influences, are conserved. The indiscriminating absorption of new ideas and attitudes will be discouraged. Biafrans can, in the final analysis, only validly express their nation's personality and enhance their corporate identity Biafran culture, through Biafran art and literature, music, dancing and drama, and through peculiar gestures and social habits which distinguish them from all other people.

Those then are the main principles of our Revolution. They are not abstract formulations but arise out of the traditional background and the present temper of our people. They grow out of our native soil and are the product of our peculiar climate. They belong to us. If anyone here doubts the validity of these principles let him go out into the streets and into the villages, let him ask the ordinary Biafran. Let him go to the Army, ask the rank and file and he will find, as I have found, that they have very clear ideas about the kind of society we should build here. They will not put them in the same words I have used tonight but the meaning will be the same. From today, let no Biafran pretend that he or she does not know the main-spring of our national action, let him or her not plead ignorant when found indulging in un-Biafran activities. The principles of our Revolution are hereby clearly set out for everyone to see. They are now the property of every Biafran and the instrument for

interpreting our national life.

But principles are principles. They can only be transformed into reality through the institutions of society, otherwise they remain inert and useless. It is my firm conviction that in the Biafran Revolution principles and practice will go hand in hand. It is my duty and the duty of all of you to bring this about.

Looking at the institutions of our society, the very vehicles for carrying out our Revolutionary principles, what do you find? We find old, jaded and rusty machines creaking along most inefficiently and delaying the People's progress and the progress of the Revolution. The problem of our institutions is partly that they were designed by other people, in other times and for other purposes. Their most fundamental weakness is that they came into being during the colonial period when the relationship between the colonial administrators and the people was that of master and servant. Our public servants, as heirs of the colonial masters, are apt to treat the People today with arrogance and condescension. In the New Biafran Social Order, we say that power belongs to the People, but this central principle tends to elude many of the public servants who continue to behave in a manner which shows that they consider themselves masters - the People their servants. The message of the Revolution has tended to fly over their heads. Let them beware, the Revolution, gathering momentum like a flood, washes clear all impediments on its way.

Take any of the institutions and the history is the same. First, it was fashioned for the British Colonial Service, then it saw service in that ill-fated country called Nigeria. It would be a miracle, fellow countrymen, if it should be found to be adequate for the need of revolutionary Biafra. What is surprising is not that these institutions fail us today but that there should be Biafrans, and some of them apparently very intelligent people, who sit back and expect good results from them. The fact is that one does not require extraordinary common-sense or insight to see the need for overhauling these machines and discarding those that are obsolescent.

THE LEGISLATURE

For example, the Legislature, which should be the primary instrument for effecting the will of the People, was too often in the past used to frustrate the People. As I have said over and over again, power derives from the People. Ideally, all the People should be involved in the actual process of law-making. As a matter of fact, in our traditional society all adults who had attained the age of reason were directly involved in discussion, debate and decision-making on all things affecting the whole people. That was the original government by consensus. That was possible when the community was small and compact. With the emergence of the nation-state which is larger and heterogenous, this ideal procedure became impracticable. Therefore, the process of delegation of power was evolved to meet a practical need. But this does not invalidate the original principle that power belongs to the

People. A man who is delegated by the People to represent their interests, therefore, is acting on behalf of the People and ceases to act for them the moment they withdraw their mandate. Like the ideal leader, the People's representative should get out when the People tell him to get out. He must constantly reassure the People that he is acting in their best interest.

In the past, the People's representatives, while paying lip-service to the primacy of the People and the supremacy of their interest, made sure that in actual practice their own personal will prevailed over the will of the People and their own personal interest over the interest of the nation. Thus we had politicians who spent their time amassing wealth, who did everything conceivable to remain in office, who would kill, loot, throw acid and do anything to remain in power. The will of the People meant nothing to them.

In the New Biafra, the Legislature must be constituted to reflect the spirit and the Principles of the Revolution.

Legislators must understand that responsibility goes with power. Those who wield power must appreciate the responsibility attached to that power. The legislator is a servant of the People given special powers to enable him discharge special responsibilities. Power is not given to him to turn him into a big man, to enable him sit inside huge American cars and build himself palaces. The conscientious legislator who strives to carry out his responsibility will find no time to pursue his own lucrative interests. He will find no time for membership of boards of corporations and directorships of public and private companies, or for doing deals with foreign business interests.

POLITICS AND THE REVOLUTION

In revolutionary Biafra, certain basic reforms in politics and political institutions are necessary in order to safeguard the liberty of the People and protect their interest. For example, it will be imperative to separate the functions of the Legislature from those of the Executive. A member of the Legislature cannot at the same time be a member of the Executive. In the past, it was possible for a legislator to be a minister of state which is an executive post, in which case he neglected either his duty to his constituency or his duty to the state. Very often he neglected both.

In revolutionary Biafra there will be an executive leader elected by the people with full powers to choose his lieutenants. If he chooses a legislator or a public servant, such a person must resign his original appointment.

Another important principle is that people should be free to vote and be voted for wherever they live in Biafra. An Ikot Ekpene man living at Etiti should be free to vote and be voted for at Etiti. He does not have to go to Ikot Ekpene to vote or be voted for as happened in the past.

The principle of delegation of power from the People is so important that every revolutionary government of Biafra must encourage Democratically organised groups of youths, students, women, workers, farmers, professional bodies, managerial and business organisations, traders and others to participate actively in political debate and discussion. The Revolution belongs to them.

Then, let us look at our Civil Service. It is too rigid and inflexible, too slow and ponderous for the needs of today. Too often when quick action and initiative are called for, what the public gets is cold, formal and aloof treatment. What is required in the future is a modernised and energised Civil Service, a Service which will fit into our Revolution and become the instrument of change. Its members must embody the spirit of the New Order by identifying with the values of change and progress and promoting these values in the conduct of public affairs.

THE JUDICIARY

Since our Revolution has its foundation in the Rule of Law, the Judiciary becomes a most important arm of the State. It is the instrument for the protection and defence of our people's liberties, for interpreting the will of our Revolution and for promoting the values of the New Order. It will be necessary, in the first place, to review our body of laws and bring it into line with the values and concepts of the New Order. It will be essential to stream-line this machinery so as to facilitate its processes and make legal redress available to all citizens. Every Biafran should find it possible and easy to have recourse to law courts when his rights or liberties are interfered with or threatened. In this he should be able to count on the support of his fellow citizens.

In the past, justice and its processes were often very remote from the life of the ordinary citizen. The ways of justice were beyond his understanding. And yet justice was meant to exist for his benefit. In revolutionary Biafra, the citizen should understand what law and justice are about. Our Revolution, therefore, aims at involving the citizen in the process of justice so that he will participate actively in the protection of his life and liberties and in the defence of the integrity, stability, and moral health of the nation.

THE POLICE FORCE

Like the Judiciary, the Police Force is a very important institution, very important because it is given the special responsibility of maintaining law and order and guarding the security of the People and the nation. Like other institutions of our society, the Police Force needs to be reformed so that it can better fulfil its function in the Revolution. Its members must absorb the ideals of the New Biafran Social Order. The Police have often been criticised by the public. They have been accused of corruption, bribery and inefficiency. We say that some of these evils and weaknesses can be traced to the fact that the Police Force, like many other

institutions of our society, had a colonial beginning and was vitiated in Nigeria. Today we are involved in a task of building a New Society with new values and new outlooks. Our Police Force must be part of this New Order. It must promote the ideals of the New Order - ideals of change and progress. The conduct of its members must, in the spirit of the Revolution, be scrupulously honest. The Biafran Police must be a People's Police, that is to say, a champion of the People's rights. The Policeman is not there simply to arrest criminals. He is also there to help people avoid going wrong. He must never exploit the People's ignorance of their civic rights. On the contrary, it is his duty, where such ignorance exists, to teach the citizen his rights. Above all, he must be a dedicated patriot fanatically devoted to prosecuting the safety and security of the State. Fortunately, we know there are members of our Police Force who are imbued with these ideals. It is on them that the Force will be rebuilt.

THE ARMED SERVICES

The Biafran Armed Forces hold a key position in the Biafran Revolution. They have been rightly in the front-line defence of the Biafran nation and the People in the past two years. They have performed this task creditably, for which the Nation is indebted to them. But like the others, our military institutions carry the stamp of their Colonial and Nigerian origin. For our Revolution, the Biafran Armed Forces must be transformed into a true People's Army.

The New Biafran Armed Forces should have love, unity and co-operation between the officers and other ranks, between them and the People.

They must rid themselves of the starchiness and rigid class distinctions which are the hallmark of an establishment army; they should always ensure that their members never maltreat fellow citizens; that they never loot or "liberate" the People's property; that they treat Biafran womanhood with respect and decorum; and that they pay fair price for whatever they buy and return whatever they borrow from the People.

The Biafran Armed Forces must unite with the People to build the New Society and must share with the People the Biafran ideology which sustains the Revolution.

THE PUBLIC SERVICES

What emerges from our examination of the public services is that the public servant is yet to learn that he is a servant of the People, not their master; that he must love the People and seek their welfare. There is no room in the New Biafra for the public servant who is arrogant, insolent and overbearing. The Public Service is created to provide an efficient service for the People. It is the responsibility of the public servant to provide this efficient service. There is no room in evolutionary Biafra for the inefficient or indolent public servant, for that man who sits at his desk filling out football coupons; for that woman who makes endless telephone calls, or for that worker who comes late and watches the clock for an hour before closing time. There is no room for the public servant who is corrupt or who

uses public facilities to promote his private ends. I think of that man who uses official transport to evacuate his personal belongings and abandons the property of the State to the enemy. I think of that public servant in the Ministry of Lands who allocates State land to himself, his wife and his friends. I think of that Army officer who drives past in any empty car, leaving a wounded soldier to bleed to death. I see these things and I say to myself: these men have yet to grasp the lesson of our Revolution or else sooner or later the Revolution will grasp them.

I ask myself: what can be done to bring the lesson home to them? Nothing at all, unless they are ready to do something for themselves. The revolution cannot wait for the indolent, inefficient and corrupt public servant. He has to catch up with the Revolution, or the Revolution will catch up with him. The public servant who cannot, or will not, do the work for which he is hired, will be fired. It is no good saying: I have been in this job for twenty years. The Revolution cannot go into your long record. We repeat that if you cannot do the job of the Revolution, someone else will be found to do it.

However, we recognize that some devoted public servants may be inefficient simply because they have not received the right and adequate training for what they are required to do. In this respect, our Revolution will do one of two things. Either move them to a job they can do, or provide the right training-on-the-job if this is likely to produce worthwhile results.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Our experience during this struggle has brought home to us the need for versatility. Many of our citizens have found themselves having to do emergency duties different from their normal peace-time jobs. In the years after the present armed conflict, we may find that in the defence of the Revolution the general state of mobilization and alertness will remain. One of the ways of preparing ourselves for this emergency will be to ensure that every citizen will be trained in two jobs - his normal peace-time occupation and a different skill which will be called into play during a national emergency. Thus, for example, a clerk may be given training to enable him to operate as an ambulance-driver during an emergency, or a university lecturer as a post-master or a Signal Sergeant in one of the Armed Forces.

We realize here that the problem is more than that of providing narrow technical training. It has to do with re-orientation of attitudes. It has to do with the cultivation of the right kind of civic virtue and loyalty to Biafra. We all stand in need of this.

It is quite clear that to attain the goals of the Biafran Revolution will require extensive political and civic education of our People. To this effect, we will, in near future, set up a National Orientation College (N.O.C) which will undertake the needful function of formally inculcating the Biafran ideology and the Principles of the Revolution. We will also pursue this vital task of education through seminars, mass rallies, formal and informal address by the

leaders and standard-bearers of the Revolution. All Biafrans who are going to play a role in the promotion of the Revolution, especially those who are going to operate the institutions of the New Society, must first of all expose themselves to the ideology of the Revolution.

The full realisation of the Biafran ideology and the promise of the Biafran Revolution will have the important effect of drawing the People of Biafra into close unity with the Biafran State. The Biafran State and the Biafran People thus become one. The People jealously defend and protect the integrity of the State. The State guarantees the People certain basic rights and welfare. In this third year of our independence, we re-state those basic rights and welfare obligations which the revolutionary State of Biafra guarantees to the People.

THE RIGHT TO WORK

In the field of employment and labour, the Biafran Revolution guarantees every able Biafran the right to work. All those who are lazy or refuse to work forfeit their right to this guarantee. "He who does not work should not eat" is an important principle in Biafra.

Our Revolution provides equal opportunities for employment and labour for all Biafrans irrespective of sex. For equal output a woman must receive the same remuneration as a man.

Our revolutionary Biafran State will guarantee a rational system of remuneration of labour. Merit and output shall be the criteria for reward in labour. "To each according to his ability, to each ability according to its product" shall be our motto in Biafra.

Our Revolution guarantees security for workers who have been incapacitated by physical injury, old age or disease. It will be the duty of the Biafran State to raise the standard of living of the Biafran People, to provide them with improved living conditions and to afford them modern amenities that enhance their human dignity and self-esteem. We recognize at all times the great contributions made by the farmers, the craftsmen and other toilers of the Revolution to our national progress. It will be a cardinal point of our economic policy to keep their welfare constantly in view. The Biafran Revolution will promulgate a Workers' Charter which will codify and establish workers' rights.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

The maintenance of the health and physical well-being of the Biafran citizen must be the concern and the responsibility of the State. The revolutionary Biafran State will at all times strive to provide medical service for all its citizens in accordance with the resources available to it; it will wage a continuous struggle against epidemic and endemic diseases; and will promote among the People knowledge of hygienic living. It will develop social and preventive medicine, set up sanatoriums for incurable and infectious diseases and mental

cases, and a net-work of maternity homes for ante- and post-natal care of Biafran mothers. Furthermore, Biafra will set great store by the purity of the air which its People breathe. We have a right to live in a clean, pollution-free atmosphere.

CULTURE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Our Revolution recognises the vital importance of the mental and emotional needs of the Biafran People. To this end, the Biafran State will pay great attention to Religion, Education, Culture and the Arts. We shall aim at elevating our cultural institutions and promoting educational reforms which will foster a sense of national and racial pride among our People and discourage ideas which inspire a feeling of inferiority and dependence on foreigners and foreign interests. We must produce the kind of manpower that will nurture the Biafran Revolution. It will be the prime duty of the revolutionary Biafran State to eradicate illiteracy from our society, to guarantee free education to all Biafran children to a stage limited only by existing resources. Our nation will encourage the training of scientists, technicians and skilled workers needed for quick industrialisation and the modernisation of our agriculture. We will ensure the development of higher education and technological training for our People, encourage our intellectuals, writers, artists and scientists to research, create and invent in the service of the State and the People. We must prepare our People to contribute significantly to knowledge and world culture.

Finally, the present armed struggle, in which many of our countrymen and women have distinguished themselves and made numerous sacrifices in defence of the Fatherland and the Revolution, has imposed on the state of Biafra extra responsibility for the welfare of its People. Biafra will give special care and assistance to soldiers and civilians disabled in the course of the pogrom and the war; it will develop special schemes for resettlement and rehabilitation. The nation will assume responsibility for the dependants of the heroes of the Revolution who have lost their lives in defence of the Fatherland.

In talking about the rights of the Biafrans and the welfare obligations the State owes to them, I have had cause to refer to our limited resources. These limitations are particularly severe at the moment as a result of the war. But even without the war we would be short of adequate resources for putting into effect all the principles and policies for transforming our society. This is partly because of the wrong economic policies of the past, policies that we must immediately tackle if the Revolution is to fulfil its promise to the People; for the Revolution is also the servant of the People.

SELF-RELIANCE

One of the key problems of the economy of under-developed countries is the fact that they are controlled and exploited by foreign monopoly interests. Under-developed countries cannot advance unless they break the strangle-hold of the foreign monopolies. The only

hope of success lies in the state pursuing an active policy of self-reliance in putting its own economic house in order. But it cannot do this unless it takes control of the main springs of the economy - the means of production, distribution and exchange. This will ensure central mobilization of the national economy through proper planning and control. This is what Biafra must do; this is what African countries must do; this is what the under-developed world must do, if they are to save themselves.

As primary producers, we are economically at the mercy of the industrialized countries. We are obliged to sell our products cheap to them and to buy their manufactures dear from them. Like other under-developed countries, our economy is fragile, and because we do not earn enough for what we produce we remain poor and cannot improve the standard of living of our people. And because we are poor we cannot develop our economy. How then can we break this vicious circle? If we try to unite with other primary producers to obtain better terms of trade, we find that because of our poverty we cannot hold out long enough against the aggressive policies of these rich industrialized countries.

Here, as in all other spheres of our Revolution, the answer must come from within, from ourselves. We must pursue an enlightened dynamic policy which will concentrate on employing our primary products in various domestic manufactures. The present war has already opened our eyes to what we can do by relying on our own resources in material and men. It is unthinkable that after the war we shall return to the old system of selling our primary products to someone in Europe at his own price so that he can turn them into manufactured goods and sell back to us, again at his own price. Our primary products shall henceforth be used mainly to feed Biafra's growing industries.

Another economic goal of the Biafran Revolution is self-sufficiency in food production. Our experience during the present war has emphasized to us the importance of this. The work of the Biafra Land Army has also shown us the tremendous possibilities that exist for a major agrarian revolution. The Biafran Revolution will intervene actively to end the exploitation of the countryside by the town - a baneful process which is often easily lost sight of. The Biafran Revolution will encourage farmers, craftsmen and tradesmen to form co-operatives and communes, and will make them take pride in their work by according them the recognition and prestige they deserve. The programme for industrial progress in revolutionary Biafra will achieve balanced development between industry and agriculture, between regions or provinces within Biafra, between town and country and finally between Biafra and other African countries who desire to do business with us.

Again and again, in stating the Principles of our Revolution, we have spoken of the People. We have spoken of the primacy of the People, of the belief that power belongs to the People; that the Revolution is the servant of the People. We make no apologies for speaking so constantly about the People, because we believe in the People; we have faith in the People. They are the bastion of the Nation, the makers of its culture and history.

THE QUALITIES OF THE INDIVIDUAL

But in talking about the People we must never lose sight of the individuals who make up the People. The single individual is the final, irreducible unit of the People. In Biafra that single individual counts. The Biafran Revolution cannot lose sight of this fact.

The desirable changes which the Revolution aims to bring to the lives of the People will first manifest themselves in the lives of individual Biafrans. The success of the Biafran Revolution will depend on the quality of individuals within the State. Therefore, the calibre of the individual is of the utmost importance to the Revolution. To build the New Society we will require new men who are in tune with the spirit of the New Order. What then should be the qualities of this Biafran of the New Order?

He is patriotic, loyal to his State, his Government and its leadership; he must not do anything which undermines the security of his State or gives advantage to the enemies of his country. He must not indulge in such evil practices as tribalism and nepotism which weaken the loyalty of their victims to the state. He should be prepared, if need be, to give up his life in defence of the Nation.

He must be his brother's keeper; he must help all Biafrans in difficulty, whether or not they are related to him by blood; he must avoid, at all costs, doing anything which is capable of bringing distress and hardship to other Biafrans. A man who hoards money or goods is not his brother's keeper because he brings distress and hardship to his fellow citizens.

He must be honourable; he must be a person who keeps his promise and the promise of his office, a person who can always be trusted.

He must be truthful: he must not cheat his neighbour, his fellow citizens and his country. He must not give or receive bribes or corruptly advance himself or his interests.

He must be responsible: he must not push across to others the task which properly belongs to him, or let others receive the blame or punishment for his own failings. A responsible man keeps secrets. A Biafran who is in a position to know what our troops are planning and talks about it is irresponsible. The information he gives out will spread and reach the ear of the enemy. A responsible man minds his own business; he does not show off.

He must be brave and courageous: he must never allow himself to be attacked by others without fighting back to defend himself and his rights. He must be ready to tackle tasks which other people might regard as impossible.

He must be law-abiding: he obeys the laws of the land and does nothing to undermine the due processes of law.

He must be freedom-loving: he must stand up resolutely against all forms of injustice,

oppression and suppression. He must never be afraid to demand his rights. For example, a true Biafran at a post office or bank counter will insist on being served in his turn.

He must be progressive: he should not slavishly and blindly adhere to old ways of doing things; he must be prepared to make changes in his way of life in the light of our new revolutionary experience.

He is industrious, resourceful and inventive; he must not fold his arms and wait for the Government to do everything for him; he must also help himself.

CONCLUSION

My fellow countrymen and women, proud and courageous Biafrans, two years ago, faced with the threat of total extermination, we met in circumstances not unlike today's. At that August gathering, the entire leaders of our people being present, we as a people decided that we had to take our destiny into our own hand, to plan and decide our future and to stand by these decisions no matter the vicissitude of this war which by then was already imminent. At that time, our major pre-occupation was how to remain alive, how to restrain an implacable enemy from destroying us in our own homes. In that moment of crisis we decided to resume our sovereignty.

In my statement to the leaders of our community before that decision was made, I spoke about the difficulties. I explained that the road which we were about to tread was to be carved through a jungle of thorns and that our ability to emerge through this jungle was, to say the least, uncertain. Since that fateful decision, the very worst has happened. Our people have continually been subjected to genocide. The entire conspiracy of neo-colonialism has joined hands to stifle our nascent independence. Yet, undaunted by the odds, proud in the fact of our manhood, encouraged by the companionship of the Almighty, we have fought to this day with honour, with pride, with glory so that today, as I stand before you, I see a proud people acknowledged by the world. I see a heroic people, men with heart-beats as regular and blood as red as the best on earth.

On that fateful day two years ago, you mandated me to do everything within my power to avert the dangers that loomed ahead, the threat of extermination. Little did we, you and I, know how long the battle was to be, how complex its attendant problems. From then on, what have been achieved are there for the entire world to see and have only been possible because of the solidarity and support of our people. For this I thank you all. I must have made certain mistakes in the course of this journey but I am sure that whatever mistakes I have made are mistakes of the head and never of the heart. I have tackled the sudden problems as they unfold before my eyes and I have tackled them to the best of my ability with the greater interest of our people in mind.

Today, I am glad that our problems are less than they were a year ago; that arms alone can no longer destroy us; that our victory, the fulfilment of our dreams, is very much in sight.

We have forced a stalemate on the enemy and this is likely to continue, with any advances likely to be on our side. If we fail, which God forbid, it can only be because of certain inner weakness in our being. It is in order to avoid these pitfalls that I have today proclaimed before you the Principles of the Biafran Revolution.

We in Biafra are convinced that the Black man can never come into his own until he is able to build modern states based on indigenous African ideologies, to enjoy true independence, to be able to make his mark in the arts and sciences and to engage in meaningful dialogue with the white man on a basis of equality. When he achieves this, he will have brought a new dimension into international affairs.

Biafra will not betray the Black man. No matter the odds, we will fight with all our might until Black men everywhere can point with pride to this Republic, standing dignified and defiant, an example of African nationalism triumphant over its many and age-old enemies.

We believe that God, humanity and history are on our side, and that the Biafran Revolution is indestructible and eternal.

OH GOD, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE FOREVER.

<Ojukwu's signature>

Ahiara Village, Biafra.

1st June 1969.