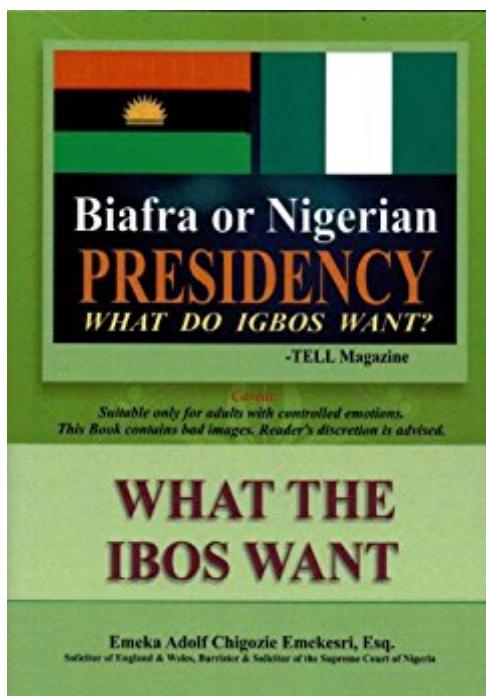


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Biafra Or Nigerian Presidency: What The Ibos Want



Synopsis

The Biafrans are indigenous people of Africa whose ancestors lived in the Niger-Congo basin before the coming of the Europeans. The ancient map of Africa in 1492-1729 showed the country of Biafra as a sovereign nation but the Europeans deleted the map at the Berlin Conference in Germany in 1884-1885 where they shared the lands of Africa among themselves for colonization. Upon the destruction of the map, the Europeans created new countries in Africa and merged incompatible tribes together. One of the new countries created by the Europeans was Nigeria which was given to Great Britain to colonize. By this arbitrary creation of new countries, some indigenous people of Biafra were carved into Nigeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Congo, Gabon, etc. At the moment, only the Ibos in Eastern Nigeria maintain their indigenous identity as Biafrans. In 1914, the British amalgamated the Biafrans with the Hausas and the Yorubas of the North and West respectively. The Biafrans tried their best to build up the new country. They imbibed the lifestyle of the Europeans and spread out to all parts of Nigeria believing in the unity of the country but the other tribes saw them as strangers from the east coming to dominate the north and the west. Their avid quest for western education and the rapidity with which they acquired wealth created jealousy in their neighbours as they soon dominated every sphere of the Nigerian economy by dint of hard work. The jealousy reached to a murderous hate waiting to be triggered off. Worse still, their land was blessed with oil which caused more jealousy from their neighbours. In 1966, an Ibo army officer, Major Chukwuma Nzeogwu and his colleagues staged a coup and ousted the corrupt regime of Alhaji Tafawa Balewa with the sole aim of installing Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the Prime Minister. Chief Awolowo was then in prison and knew about the plan to overthrow the government for his benefit. Many officers from the north were killed including the Prime Minister. This was the trigger event their neighbours had been waiting for! The army officers from the north staged a counter-coup and massacred the Ibos and threw them out of the north. Oddly enough, the Yoruba tribe joined the north and massacred the Ibos and threw them out of the west. Ironically, Chief Obafemi Awolowo who knew of the coup and that it was for him to be made the Prime Minister took side with the northerners against the Ibos! As the war was brewing, several efforts were made to avert it. The best was the Aburi Accord made in Ghana between the Biafrans and the Nigerians in which both parties agreed for a confederation where every region would be autonomous to govern itself within Nigeria. But General Yakubu Gowon, the leader of the Nigerians, violated the Aburi Accord and this led to war. In order to defend themselves, the Easterners revived their ancient country of Biafra and declared their region an independent nation. Nigeria attacked Biafra and the Biafrans fought like heroes with bare hands and locally manufactured weapons and overran the Nigerians. Within few

months, they had reached Ore in the west, marching to Lagos to capture the Nigerian Head of State. But the Commander of the Biafran Army was a Yoruba man called Victor Banjo. Chief Awolowo scolded him and said they would not want Yorubaland to become a battlefield. For one week, the Biafran Army could not move forward. This gave an opportunity to the Nigerians to regroup and launch attacks against the Biafrans. Yet, Nigeria could not defeat Biafra until Great Britain, Russia, Egypt, Sudan and all Arab countries came to help Nigeria in order to exploit the oil in Biafraland. Though the war has ended, the Ibos are still being killed, persecuted, hated, maltreated and marginalized like slaves in Nigeria. This has again rekindled in them the desire for independence as they are convinced that Nigeria does not regard them as equal citizens with the peoples of other tribes in Nigeria.

Book Information

File Size: 858 KB

Print Length: 350 pages

Publication Date: September 21, 2012

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B009FCOOAQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #967,605 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #104 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Africa > West Africa #108 in Books > History > Africa > Nigeria #360 in Books > History > Africa > West Africa

Customer Reviews

This is an interesting book to read. It continues to echo the sentiments of the Biafrans. A clear testament to the anguish of a defeated race of people in an anguished struggle for survival. The author lays down a clear case for the causes of the secession, but fails to make a case for continued agitation in today's circumstances. Parts of the book arouse curiosity. For example the argument that Ibos are descendants of Israelis from the tribe of Ephraim. The argument is based on a heroic stretch of the imagination. For example the statement that Biafra is derived from the

Ephramites which is based on B-Emphraim. I found some of the propositions amusing, as when the author suggests that we should be preaching Biafranism, just as Islam and other isms are preached. Personally, the connection between Igbo and Jews is dubious, in my opinion. Even if such a connection is made, what difference does it make to me today. Even when Biafra approached the Jewish State for assistance during the war, the Jewish would bear with Biafra, but would not bear Biafra, though many Jews reminded the Jewish Government about the parallels between the fate of Biafrans and the fate of Jews under Hitler. Overall, this is an exciting book to read. Lots of cogent arguments.

Very informative of the current geopolitical situation in Nigeria. There is so much truth that is hidden in plain sight if people would only endeavor to investigate beyond mainstream media rhetoric! Africa must depart from the path laid out by the colonial master. It is the only sustainable path to peace and greatness for all African peoples.

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