

Reply To Chinua Achebe's There Was A Country

**CHINUA ACHEBE
THERE WAS A COUNTRY**

Reply To Chinua Achebe's There Was A Country

Chief [Dr] Chinua Achebe wrote a book titled "There Was a Country" which had sparked a lot of discussion on the pages of many of our National Newspapers of the present. The pity of it was that Achebe had touched on the raw parts of the Yoruba People of this country and many had commented promptly and appropriately.

My comment to you today, has very little or nothing to do with the tribal issues but as affecting the military, the 3MCDO operation area during the civil war and to Sector 3 of 3MCDO of which I was the commander in particular, from 1967 to 1969. I was also the Chief of Staff of 3MCDO during this same period.

This book will be out there forever, and I need to defend myself and my actions during the civil war for posterity.

Nothing but the truth will be good enough for today and tomorrow.

My account therefore will not be what I was told or what I heard as contained in many parts of Achebe's book. This is on the spot account of events described in Achebe's book. I have just completed reading it. Chief Achebe wrote about the following military situations, which I know are inconsistent with the truth:-

- a Asaba Massacre – Page 133
- b The Calabar Massacre –
Uyo – The brutality and blood lust of the Nigerian Soldiers Page 137
- c The capture of Afikpo
- d The Capture of PH – After several weeks of sustained air, land and sea pounding, a period *reportedly* characterized by military atrocities – rapes, looting, outright brigandry – Port Harcourt fell to the Nigerians on May 12, 1968. – Page 137
- e The Economic Blockade and starvation-
pages 209 – 210

I will therefore take these issues one by one and expect that there will be questions at the end of my discussions with you on the points made or generally on the book, since I have read it.

Asaba Massacre.

This was on the night of 8th August, 1967 at about 10pm. I was the commander of the Federal troops of 4th Area Command at Asaba. The Biafran troops broke the barricade on Niger River bridge and went straight to a place called "Ogbe Hausa" at the cable point; where the Hausa community lived. Biafran troops pounced on them and killed many of them. The few that escaped were moved down at Onitsha end, the people jubilated. Before my troops could reach me to report the situation, about 20 Biafran troops attacked me at the catering Rest House where I was living at the time. I fought my way through, and overpowered the 20

Biafran troops and reported the situation to my boss Major Henry Igboba at Agbor. The story of how I did that is contained in my book.

b) When the tide turned and the Federal Troops recaptured the Midwestern Region and Asaba, the Hausas among them retaliated by killing the people at Asaba. The Hausa who were there had never denied doing that.

c) Please read the excerpts of this story in a book written by a Midwestern Asaba Ibo author titled "The Blood on the Niger" - pages 26 and 62

Excerpts: *Lieutenant Wokocho of the invading forces awakened one of the commanders of the Midwest Fourth Area Command in Asaba, Major Alabi Isama from sleep at the Catering Rest House. Major Alabi escaped arrest by shooting his way through and headed straight to Agbor.....*

Elsewhere at the 'Ogbe Hausa' settlement (the equivalent name to the northern 'Sabon Gari' residential quarters of migrant elements living in the traditional Muslim Hausa states), a former teacher of 35 years experience, tells an equally hair-raising story. But before then, let us backup to the scenario at Ogbe Hausa the day Biafrans crossed the Niger. The Hausa settlement at the end of Cable Point is as old as Asaba Township itself. It developed during the trading boom of the Royal Niger Company. Trade on the Niger had brought a lot of Nigerians together buying, exchanging and selling goods. Most of these stranger elements from the North - Hausas, Fulanis, Nupes, Tivs and Igalas decided to stay on in Asaba. Many were born there and did not have deeper ties

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with their own Northern roots, and during the crisis, did not quite know where to run back to. These were the Nigerians that a group of brigands from Onitsha fell upon on the morning of 9th August, 1967. These youths, mainly aggrieved refugees from the North apparently had not forgotten the 1966 debacle in the North. In vengeance, they accompanied the Biafran Brigade and before the Asaba indigenes knew what was happening, a lot of damage had been done in Ogbe Hausa. Many were rescued and given safe conduct through Auchu by road while others proceeded by boat through the river Niger. This group never made it, for they were ambushed at Onono near Onitsha and dealt with. This was the situation as the Federal troops, now on the offensive and in command, approached Ogbe Hausa quarters, Asaba

*** In short the Hausas were all killed.**

The rest of the story is in my book now being published which hopefully should be launched in January / February 2013.

The Calabar Massacre – page 137 of Achebe's book.

I was the Chief of Staff of 3MCDO and Col Benjamin Adekunle was the commander. Achebe's story here was that the Nigerian forces over ran Calabar in early 1968 without much resistance or investment. He further wrote that the Nigerian Forces decided to purge the city of its Igbo inhabitants and that by the time the Nigerians were done, at least 1,000 and perhaps 2,000 Ibos had been killed.

a. This is a very unfortunate comment. Intelligence report showed that Biafran troops had alienated the Efik people of Calabar, did not recruit many into the Biafran Army and had lousily defended the town and the beach area of Atimbo. 3MDCO therefore led by Col Adekunle had an amphibious landing at Calabar which proved that the town and the beaches were not defended by Biafran troops with the seriousness that it deserved; and the natives welcomed 3MCDO with all the enthusiasm and the support it deserved.

b. I landed 3 days after the amphibious landing and the natives gave us all the support we needed - medical, casualty evacuation, food, off loading the ship of our supplies and heavy weapons. These stories and relevant pictures are contained in my book.

c. Achebe then said, on the same page 137 that the Nigerian forces opened fire and murdered fourteen nurses and the patients in the wards in Uyo.

Here is an excerpts from a book titled "The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War" by Alexander A. Madiebo, the commander of Biafran Forces on page 240 and 242 of his book.

...On the 9th of March the enemy landed at Oron and from then on, no one including the Brigade Commander Aniebo, really knew what was happening until Ikot-Ekpene, 50 miles from Oron, also fell. However, within hours of enemy landing, there was firing in many towns and villages between Oron and Uyo. Thereafter, wherever our troops tried to deploy in the area, they fell into an ambush.

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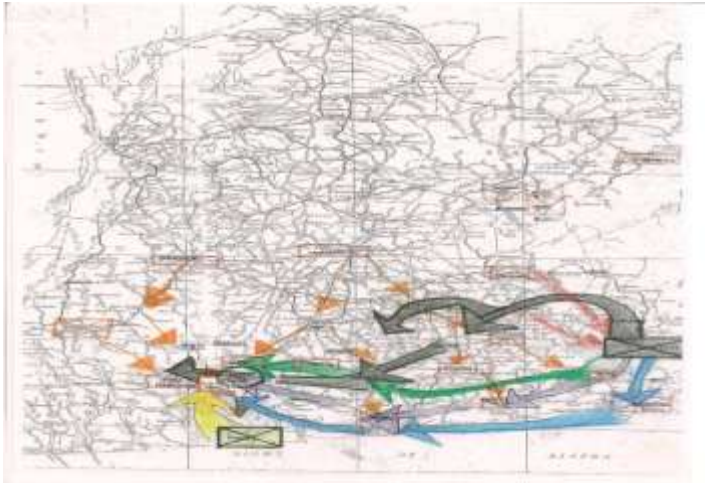
That confusion continued until the 11th when firing started inside Uyo town and we soon discovered that the "enemy," whoever he might be, was there. In short Uyo had fallen! Our own troops were pulling back in disarray, absolutely unable to establish a defensive position anywhere along the route. Having lost complete control of his brigade with no prospects of regaining it, Colonel Aniebo was dismissed from command and summoned to appear before the Head of State, Ojukwu..

b) Biafran troops atrocities on people of Uyo and Annang – picture on page 123 of my book



Biafran Troops Killed and destroyed many homes of Annang people 1968.

c) Map of plan and strategy that shocked Biafran Troops – page 186 of my book. “The Scorpion Strategy” The sting is in the tail.



2] Here also is an excerpt of the book titled "Nigeria and Biafra my Story" by Phillip Effiong, the Chief of Defence Staff of the Biafran Armed Forces on page 220 and 221 of his book:

.....When I visited the Brigade shortly before the invasion, particularly in Uyo and Calabar areas, I received a lot of complaints from the local people about unsavoury treatment by our [Biafran] troops. I drew Colonel Eze's attention to these complaints and urged him to improve relations with the civilians. At Uyo, military/civilian relations were so strained that I had to personally intervene to release a local newspaper editor from detention. Such acts on my part were not just a question of feeling alone for my people, but also a question of justice and sense of belonging in an emergent Biafran State. Were these arrests, false accusations, and detentions a sign of things to come in an independent Biafra? These

issues bothered me as they would anyone else in my position then....

.... With the fall of Calabar, Itu , Uyo and Ikot Ekpene the rest of the mainland was militarily threatened. Before this threat became imminent, I had strongly suggested to Ojukwu that as Ikot Ekpene was a vital junction town. It should be strongly defended. All he did was to sarcastically remind me that in fact we should also put a battalion at Nnewi. Nnewi was Ojukwu's hometown as Ikot Ekpene was supposed to be mine, because I lived and grew up there. However, I am from Ibiono in Itu, and not Ikot Ekpene. After I received his sarcastic message, I did not mention the subject again. As it eventually turned out, the fall of Ikot Ekpene hastened the collapse of the Biafran 12th Division and, consequently, of Biafra....

d. More of the story and pictures of the capture of Calabar, Uyo and Ikot - Ekpene are contained in chapter 5 of my book.

1. We built bridges, all within the 30 days
- Page 85 of my book.



2. Map for the capture of Obubra - Page 87 of my book



d) More of the story and pictures of the capture of Calabar, Uyo Ikot – Ekpere are contained in chapter 5 of my book.

1. [Pictures] – Building Bridges – Page 85 of my book.
2. [Picture] Natures helping to build the roads and bridges – page 86 of my book.
3. Map for the capture of Olubra – page 87 of my book.

[3] Afikpo

on page 139 of Achebe's book, he wrote that on the northern front, Mohammed Shuwa First Division easily overran Abakaliki and Afikpo

Comment.

I led the troops that captured Afikpo in February 1968 as part of my order to clear Biafran troops from South Eastern State, and to block the international border with Cameroun. After the capture of Ugep, Ediba, Itigidi and Obubra, I

decided to have a feel of how fighting would be like in Ibo land. Therefore with 12 Bde commanded by Major Aliyu, we attacked Afikpo; but due to the urgency of PH operation which had to be captured before Kampala Uganda peace conference in May 1968, I was ordered by Adekunle the 3MDCO commander to hand over Afikpo to I Division and withdraw my troops to Calabar within 7 days. The full story and pictures are contained in my book. Therefore I Division did not capture Afikpo.

4) The capture of PH

The capture of PH was described on page 137 of Achebe's book that in April 1968, the Nigerians decided to mount a Major strategic and tactical offensive designed to cut Biafra off from the sea coast; and that over 40,000 troops of the Third Division led by col. Benjamin Adekunle engaged in an amphibious, land and air onslaught on the Niger River Delta City of PH.

He went on to say that after several weeks of sustained air, land and sea pounding, a period reportedly characterized by military atrocities rape, looting, outright brigandry - PH fell to the Nigerians on May 12, 1968.

Comment

a. Yes, the advance to capture PH started from Calabar on 17th April 1968, a distance of about 300miles. PH had to be captured not later

than 30 days.

b. The advance and the attack was not led by Adekunle but I was ordered to plan and lead the attack from Calabar to PH which I did, and captured PH in 30 days. Col Adekunle was in Lagos at that time gathering supplies. The story is in my book under "The Capture of PH".

c. PH was captured on 18th May 1968 and not May 12, 1968 as contained in Achebe's book.

d. Rape, looting, and outright bigandry were strong words used to describe my troops and my operations on that sector. Boloney!!!

[1] Firstly, you do not rape Efik, Ibibio or Annang women. They were too sophisticated for that.

[2] Secondly, with me Alabi Isama in command and with only 30 days to accomplish my task of capturing 300 miles, my troops had no time for nonsense as they had to cover at least 10 miles per day including the plan to cross Opobo River. We advanced day and night fighting for every inch of the land.

[3] With our back to the Atlantic Ocean and our chest to Biafran bullets, we had no place to hide loots even if we had time for that. That operation was in the mangrove forest, in the rainy season and with rivers overflowing their banks. Every bit of land was marshy, and water logged.

[4] Achebe used the word "Reportedly". Pity he did not cross check his facts. Efiks, Ibibios, Annangs and

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Ikweres were the best people I had ever lived and worked with in my life. Please see these pictures.

In 3MCDO, we took good care of abandoned Biafra children. British members of Parliament visited April 1968.



**Col. Adekunle with Biafra abandoned child at PH
April 1968.**



Captured Biafra POW re-kitted and absorbed into 3MCDO. They did well and fought against their Biafra 1968.



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Alabi Isama leading the attack into PH 16th April 1968.



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Annang, Efik, Ibibio and Ikwere women were integral part of our victory in the Nigeria Biafra civil war 1967-1970.



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International Observers saw Part of Biafra Troops atrocities at Annang. 1968.



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**Col. Adekunle The Commander left, came to see
300 Biafra Troops captured at Azumini being re-
kitted into 3MCDO June 1968. Alabi Isama, right.**



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The Terrain-Mangrove Forest and Marshy Land



**My Troops of 3MCDO in this water logged jungle-
What to loot?**



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Without Adequate Maps, and without alienating them, The Natives Showed us the way as in this Mangrove forest



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Within the 30 days from Calabar to PH, we built pontoons to cross Opobo River, while still fighting for every inch of the way.



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**International Observers visited the hospital I opened
for women and children at Abak January 1969.**



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**The natives donated food to us at UYO June 1968.
These would have been left behind if they were
refugees**



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We opened schools and churches at every town liberated.



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We opened girls schools at UYO April, and at PH May 1968.



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We opened girls schools at every town liberated.



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We opened markets at every town we liberated. It was trade by barter though. This was at Ikot-Ekpene June 1969.



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The natives were not alienated. They danced to receive my troops at Opobo. They were the silent millions that helped our victory.



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We had no costumes, but we also danced to show appreciation-Opobo April 1968.



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**Children played. My troops cared for these Biafra
abandoned children-Etinan Hospital January 1969.**



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War still bore human face. These tried to go about their business. They defended their community against enemy infiltrators. They were happy so were JMCDO troops. We advanced without having to look back.



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**Alabi-Isama in beret. I addressed natives at every
liberated town enroute Calabar to PH April-May
1968**



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Refugees were encouraged to return home to peace and plenty.



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The Youth voluntarily joined the Army at UYO 1968.



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I addressed natives at Bori- Ogoni May 1968.



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I helped this young Biafra soldier to locate his lost family at Ikot Ineme February 1969. The father was already dead.



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Lt. Col. Ayo-Ariyo inspected Aba town after capture 1968



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I addressed the natives at Eket April 1968.



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**Captured Biafra officer right volunteered
information at Aletu-Elemo en route PH April 1968.**



[5] The plan to capture PH was a modified version of Gen. George S. Patton of the USA 7th Army landing in Sicily during WW II. The full story is in my book, on page 164.

[a] We addressed troops before any operations against ill discipline.

[b] We never captured towns en route by attacking them; we normally enveloped them to avoid getting bogged down in having to clear each town of Biafran troops. We had no time.

[c] The natives were our best friends – Just see some of the pictures here. They gave us food, they assisted in carrying our supplies and even fetched firewood for our cooking as I had to feed over 40,000 troops on the move and in the rainy season without Kerosene and cooking gas – Read all about these in my coming book.

[e] See how not to do it. On pages 128 and 129 of Achike Udenwa's book titled "Nigerian Biafra civil war – My Experience." He wrote about how Biafran

troops recaptured Owerri, which took 7 months – from October 1968 to April 1969. he wrote that his Divisional commander Col Agbugo Kalu, (who by the way was also my boss when I was tactics instructor at NMTC Kaduna – 1965 to 1967) in company of his brigade commander, Lt. Col Asoya addressed his (Biafran) troops, and told them the importance of clearing Owerri

He further wrote that ammunition was shared and so were the tasks of capturing Holy Rosary Girls School, the catholic Bishop's Court, Assumpta Roundabout etc. In fact Udenwa was shot on the thigh and was evacuated to the hospital at Awo – Omamma.

* I had no time for all these and that was why Biafran troops got bogged down at Owerri for 7 months. It was a lousy and elementary tactics good

only for WW I of 1914, not even for WW II of 1945.

Thank God that Capt. Udenwa was not killed obeying such illegitimate order from his commander.

5. The capture of Aba

on pages 137 and 138, Chief Achebe wrote about Aba operations that the Third Division slowly marched north, crossing the Imo River, towards the market town of Aba. He further wrote that with heavy casualties along the way, Adekunle and his men shot gleefully through a fierce Biafran resistance and took Aba in August and Owerri in September. The Aba offensive was particularly gruesome.

On page 138, he wrote that on Third Division entry into Aba, the Nigerian Soldiers massacred more than 2000 civilians. Achebe also wrote about a

report written by one Susan Masid of the French Press Agency on the horrifying incident.

Comment

a. When we got to Aba it was a ghost town. Biafran troops blew bridges and advised the natives to evacuate the town.

b. See these pictures of the capture of Aba town. Akinrinade was in charge of this operation and the rest of the story is in my coming book.

- 1) The blown bridge by Biafran troops
- 2) The ghost town
- 3) The feeding of the returnees
- 4) The guarding of the textile mill
- 5) The guarding of the hotel.

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Biafra Troops blew up this bridge at Aba 1968.



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**My troops were detailed to guard this hotel at Aba
1968.**



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**Aba textile mill could not sell their products due
introduction of second hand clothes**



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**Ayo-Ariyo inspecting Aba Textile mill after capture-
1968.**



6. I was the Chief of Staff of 3MCDO, during the period of 1967 to May 1969. The plans, strategy and the tactics applied were by me as directed by Col Adekunle the General Officer Commanding the Division. The rest of the story is contained in my coming book. Achebe is a story teller because on many pages of his book, he said - "The story I heard" on page 133, on page 138 he wrote - "I was told" on page 150, he wrote - "We were told" while on page 157 he said cattle preceded troops advance. Well, in 3MCDO we had not enough cattle to do that. I am only concerned on the Atlantic sector of the war. The other Sectors, if they wish may defend their honour for posterity. When Achebe spoke about bombing markets and many more, he forgot the first bombing of the war in Lagos in early 1967 when despite the fact that the Ibos were killed in their hundred in the Northern part of the country during the unrest at the time, it was Yaba market and Casino, the most populated

part of Lagos that the Biafran B-26 bomber came to bomb at civilians. Nigeria had no planes to bomb at that time and in any case, 3MCDO operation area while at Calabar had no planes capable of bombing beyond Uyo and Eket not even Ikot - Ekpene or Opobo and beyond.

7) Starvation in Biafra

Ojukwu called all the Ibos to return to the East for safety and security. He also boasted that no force in Black Africa would defeat Biafra.

a. Why then did you have to order the evacuation of people from their towns and villages for another safe area?

- Here is how Achebe put it in his book on page 169, 170 and 171 - "Life in Biafra"

[1] Refugees fleeing the Chaos and conflict

[2] Refugee camps dotted the landscape

[3] Many refugees were heading in whatever

direction the other was headed; propelled by the latest rumours of food and shelter.

[4] Refugees travelled by foot, by trucks cars barefoot, with slippers, in wheel barrows and many in worn out shoes.

[5] Many walked so long their soles were blistered and bleeding.

[6] For the refugees, hunger and thirst grew, so did despair, confusion and desperation.

b. Please let me write here that the Ibos suffered but only from incompetent and inefficient leadership. Leaders boasting without substance, and the people believed.

It was like a soap bubble-beautiful but empty.

[1] The refugees abandoned their children which we picked up anywhere and every where

[2] Those that suffered most were children from ages of 3-5. They were too heavy to be carried by

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their parents and too young to walk the distance – but to where. The aged, pregnant women and the disabled suffered more.

Refugees returned home at Eket 1968



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My troops fed once a day at 5pm, in order to have enough for all. Feeding time for the natives at Aba 1968.



C. But here is what happened.

Achebe's book page 171

(1) Food was short, meat was very short, and drugs were short.

(2) Thousands - no millions by then-had been uprooted from their homes and brought into safer areas; but where they really had no relatives, no property, many of them lived in school buildings and camps.

d. Here are my points.

(1) They ran from all over Nigeria to safety in their homes

(2) The war got there, they were uprooted again for safety.

(3) This time where they had no homes or relatives

(4) I think that somebody is warped and with low IQ.

(5) It was all talk and no substance

e. Here is how Udenwa nicely put this in his book pages 97 and 98.

...By the middle of July, 1968, I received a signal from battalion headquarters asking all units to evacuate all able-bodied, civilian, young men to the battalion headquarters at Abua Central.

....This arose from the fact that wherever the Nigerian troops entered, they recruited the local people into their own forces and because they were good swimmers, this made fighting in the riverine areas very difficult for the Biafran troops. In view of my good relationship with the local people, I had difficulty passing this information to them as I knew that they feared being refugees..... I had taken the step of first evacuating the soldiers before informing the Dappa because I was not sure what his reaction would be.

....On hearing this, the Dappa broke down and all I

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could console him with was that our journey was temporary and we would soon be back to Otaba.....

My stay in Otaba was very memorable and my leaving was very sad as I had developed a very good relationship with the local population. I felt guilty that I had disappointed a people who depended on me for their safety.....

ð. A lot had been said in this book written by Achebe. He is a titled Chief, he is a red capped chief and He is an elder of his people and for all of us in this country and across the seas. When elders like him talk, we listen, but I say here that his story here is inconsistent with the truth. Many words had been used to describe Nigeria's situation as at today many years after the civil war. Unfortunately, I am not sure if my dear elder feel the same way as I do right now.

Many of the readers of this book never saw or experienced the war. Those who saw it and were really involved like myself are over 70 years old. I was only 27 years old then; and on our way now to meet our maker – many had gone.

Are we really telling the truth to the next generation of what we did wrong?

Awolowo, according to Achebe wanted to stop second hand clothing. Maybe Achebe was not there in 1978 when this came up at Aba during Awolowo's campaign. He saw products of Aba textile mills unsold; and he said that he will stop second hand clothes being imported into the country to save the textile mills and get our people employed. Do we have Aba textile mill anymore today? And indeed all textile mills in the country folded up today. Is second hand clothing not flourishing today? These unemployed youth did not cause this. All of

us the elders did.

Read more about this in my book on how we killed the Railways, the Shipping line, The Nigerian Airways, The roads, the importation of Petrol, oil, and lubricants.

Many pages of Achebe's book, perhaps he did not mean it that way, but had sown the seed of discord between the progressive youth across the country. In the book, Achebe wrote about the following:-

- a. Ibo marginalization
- b. Ibos not fully integrated into Nigeria

There is no way to discuss these without sounding tribalistic. My mother was from Kwara – the backyard of the West or the front yard of the North when it suits those concerned. So also was my father from Kwale area which also is back yard of

the West or the front yard of the East. I know that I have been detribalized in such a way that I can discuss Nigeria with the truth that the youth deserve with no apology to anybody.

In my opinion, Achebe's book is tribalized and inconsistent with the truth. The Hausas did not deny killing the Ibos, and as Gen Haruna said at Oputa Panel in 2001, he has no apology for that. Bringing the 3MCDO into it and Awolowo in a derogatory way is evil and ungodly.

You will need to read my book where in 3MCDO, we did the following:-

- a. Fed Biafran POW
- b. My troops fed once at 5pm daily in order to have enough for the natives, and Biafran POW too.
- c. Captured Biafra POW were kitted and put back into 3MCDO
- d. In 3MCDO, I opened hospitals for women

and children and international observers went there to see.

e. We opened markets, schools and particularly girls' schools.

f. We opened Churches

g. From 1967 when Calabar and Bonny were captured by 3MCDO, the Children took their final year high school examinations.

* You will need to read my book to get the full story.

Since independence in 1960, the Ibos had always been in the ruling class.

- 1st Republic - NPC / NCNC (Hausa / Ibo)

- 2nd Republic - NPN / NPP (Hausa / Ibo)

- 3rd Republic - PDP / PDP (Hausa / Ibo)

- 4th Republic which is ongoing it is PDP majority in the North, in the East and Delta State, Again Hausa / Ibo. So who are we talking about here that Achebe wrote about?

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- Banality
- Mediocrity
- Corruption
- Debauchery
- Tribalism
- Nepotism Etc.
- dismantling the system of excellence by the ruling class. I agree with these but is it not the Hausas and Ibos who had been ruling this country since independence?

In Balewa cabinet of 1960, there were 12 Hausa led NPC ministers and 11 Ibo led NCNC ministers. The Army, the Police, the Navy, the Airforce were all from the East.

In today's 4th Republic, Check and see which tribe is marginalized.

Chief Achebe said a lot of many words that are inconsistent with the truth. The paper here is Revenue Allocation picked randomly for the month of July 2011 where a total sum of 1.5 Trillion Naira

was shared in the country that month of July 2011:-

- 19 Northern states got #247,149,093,285.89

[Less two not in the ruling party]

- 9 Eastern States got #211,006,269,125.12 [Less
two not in the ruling party]

- Delta State got # 45,135,728,733.04

Total for the ruling states #503,291,091,144.05

[Less four states]

- 5 Western states got [Not in the ruling party]

#67,341,311,583.80

- Lagos State got [Not in the ruling party]

#22,821,435,409.32

- Edo State got [Not in the ruling party]

#13,709,711,061.89

Total for states not in the ruling party...

#103,872,958,055.01

From these, how were the Ibos marginalized?

Please read my book on pages 352, 353, 356, and 357 for more on these and many issues. Which tribes are in Government today?

After the civil war, did the Ibos not rush back to the same North that they called names. Then they were killed again. It is so easy to kill the Ibo people because they own the sales of attractive items of cars, electronic items, building materials and others. The Yoruba man in the North or East is a low-lifer. The man drives a taxi, while the wife sold Amala. As soon as there was unrest the wife puts the cooking pot in the taxi and home they went.

I am sure that we all know the numbers of Ibos in Western States and Lagos versus the numbers of Yoruba in Eastern States. Lets get real. If the union of Ibos and Hausas are not working since 1960 till

date then change your direction. You cannot repeat the same thing and get a different result. We, the elders should read more of the Holy Bible particularly Proverb 6 v 19. I am sure the Hausas and the Yoruba can defend themselves which I was told that they are doing particularly the Yoruba on the pages of some National Newspapers on this subject; since I have been away for a while.

I pay my tribute to the youth of today who did not understand the problem caused by elders but had to bear the brunt of it anyway. To these youth, leaders and elders like Achebe, and Obasanjo and many more like him narrated the untruth part of the story, communities exaggerated situations to them, some elders sowed the seed of disunity and discord. Many of these youth at ages of between 5 and 15 years during the civil war, saw their parents

brutally killed and buried in a dishonourable way. They looked, saw and could not do anything about it. Many cried their eyes out. They were unable to help their parents. I still feel your pain. I was there, I saw it all. They are living with it till today; because they saw how their father, mother or loved ones were brutally killed and they just stood there looking and helpless. How can they forget? It is unnecessary to remind them with tales that are not true.

I am sure those of us over 70 years old know how the Ibos came to live in the west and prospering until today. I tell you, it was because of Awolowo who in the Fifties and Sixties started "Free Education and Compulsory" for all, life more abundant and freedom for all, and the rest of it. The progressives moved to the west and Lagos. The minimum wage was 7½ shilling while the Federal Government paid 5 shillings.

Reply To Chinua Achebe's There Was A Country

I rest my case, I am tired. You will need to read my book. It is about 500 pages and more with 25 maps, 10 documents and 500 pictures depicting various situations and mood of the Nigeria Biafra civil war.