THE NIGERIA-BIAFRA WAR, 1967-1970:
A LINGERING NIGHTMARE

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Introduction
The present work is an attempt to offer a valid historical context of the causes, course, and consequences of the Nigeria – Biafra war (1967 – 1970). It seeks to bring into focus the chain of events, which culminated in the unfortunate events of 1967 – 1970. These include the nexus between British colonial policies in Nigeria and the pattern of post-independence politics in the country.

Furthermore, there were prominent Nigerians whose perceptions of the Nigerian state, especially on inter-ethnic relations and domestic politics, fanned the embers of ethnic hatred and whose interpretation of efforts to avoid the war did not help matters. Also examined are the activities of relief organisations during the war, and the long-term effects of the war on the Igbo people.

It must be emphasized that the importance of this study lies in the fact that ever since 1970, every debate on the future of the Igbo in Nigeria has, more often than not, involved a re-examination of the causes and consequences of the 1967 – 1970 war.

In order to do justice to the topic, this paper is divided into three major parts namely, the causes of the war, the course of the war, and its consequences on the Igbo. The causes are further divided into the remote and immediate causes, while the course of the war includes the diplomatic recognition accorded Biafra by other countries, and the role of international relief and humanitarian agencies. The consequences are examined against social, economic, and political backgrounds. Finally, the major arguments and findings of the research are presented in the concluding remarks.

Causes of the War, 1967 – 1970
It is customary for historians to examine events from two major perspectives, namely the remote and the immediate causes of such events. A major advantage of this approach is that by placing such developments in a chronological order, the reader is offered the opportunity of following them in a sequential order.