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THE
GOOD NEWS

PATHS TO PROSPERITY IN OUR
ORILEEDE YORUBA

by
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INTRODUCTION

In the following pages, I try to present the glorious picture of our soon-to-come country, our ORILEEDE YORUBA. I try to describe the dreams that are impelling millions of Yoruba men and women in all countries of the world to engage seriously in the Yoruba self-determination struggle, to come together in countless self-determination organizations and clubs, to keep awake for many hours night after night putting ideas from their disciplines and professions in writing about how our soon-to-come country shall be great, prosperous and powerful in the world. God Almighty made us Yoruba people a great people of talent, intellect and skills, and large numbers of us are now pouring out those gifts into the ideas that will make our country one of the greatest and most famous countries in the history of the world – and that will make us Yoruba people a loving, laughing, illuminated family of happy and contented men, women and children.

A lot of the intellectual and other efforts by our people come to me as father of our self-determination struggle. Altogether, they make me humble, happy and proud. Employing my own specialty and insight, I here put forth point by point the main items of what I perceive to be our nation's purpose, determination and expectation. I urge all my Yoruba people to read it, and I urge each to endeavor to bring the benefit of his or her specialty to bear on any of its various points.

In its totality, this is a **Manifesto** from those of us who are fighting for our sovereign Yoruba nation, our independent Yoruba country separate from Nigeria. I live in the unwavering faith and hope that our Yoruba country shall soon be free, and that thereafter we shall see the glory of God upon the life of our free and sovereign Yoruba nation and upon all of us Yoruba people.

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1.

We Yoruba are a Nation with Proud Roots and a Proud History

We Yoruba are a nation with a long and proud history. According to our very powerful ancient traditions, we Yoruba are the oldest people, or the first of humans, in the world. Those traditions tell us that in the beginning of time, when all the surface of the earth was covered by water, the Creator God sent some heavenly beings to come down and establish life on the earth. The heavenly beings descended, bringing with them a chicken, a palm nut, and a small pot filled with a quantity of earth. Their leader was Oduduwa. When they reached the surface of the water, they poured out the earth contained in the small pot and it formed a small piece of ground. Then they put the chicken on this ground, and the chicken went to work scratching the ground with its claws, and the ground spread and spread and, over time, became the continents of the earth. They then sowed the palm nut on the ground, and it germinated and became the first plant in the world. The heavenly beings themselves became the first humans. Oduduwa became the progenitor of the first people in the world – the Yoruba people – and therefore the progenitor of all humans.

This little story or myth might make our children laugh, but to historians, it is something very serious, very important. It shows that long ago, our Yoruba ancestors saw themselves as the first people in the world – and had no memory of any other or earlier humans before their Yoruba group. They even evolved more details over time to add more strength to their creation myth. For instance, one myth has it that Oduduwa descended by a chain, and that the chain is in Ife, the spot where Oduduwa touched down. And, very importantly, early Yoruba people evolved patterns of behavior from the certainty of their belief that Yoruba people are the first humans in the world – behavior such as goodwill towards all human groups and hospitality to all foreigners. In the 19th century, in some parts of our Yoruba homeland (especially in Ife), some of the first European visitors were puzzled that our people received them as kinsmen who had been long gone and who were returning to visit the original home of their ancestors.

While we are pondering these facts of Yoruba history, some modern scientists who are researching in human genetic history, are now saying that the earliest human DNA in the world have been found in our Yoruba nation. And, according to all evidence from archaeological and allied researches, we Yoruba, as one distinct cultural group, have been living in our present homeland since as far back as 8000 years ago. The earliest human bone fossil found in a cave near Akure in Yorubaland, and dating to 6000 BC (8000 years ago), is the oldest human bone fossil found in West Africa. Since 8000 years ago, we Yoruba have owned and held this homeland, and we have developed on it from age to age the highest level of civilization in Black Africa south of the Sahara.

Long before the rest of Black Africa, we Yoruba began to develop into an urbanized people, a people living in towns and cities. Our homeland was the only urbanized part of Black Africa for many centuries. We built our first towns in the 9th century AD (the first being the town of Ile-Ife), and we built more and more in the following centuries. By the time the earliest European explorers came to the coast of West Africa in about 1470 AD, we already had very many towns and cities all over our Yorubaland, most of them walled. By that date, we were one of the most urbanized peoples in the world.

Most of the Yoruba city walls were great works of engineering. Modern researchers who have done research on one of the city walls, the Ijebu-Ode city wall, have described it as one of the greatest man-made structures of the ancient world. These researchers add that, in terms of the amount of earth and rock that was moved in the construction of the Ijebu-Ode city wall and the Great Pyramid of Egypt, the Ijebu-Ode wall was larger than the Great Pyramid. They also add that surviving segments of the Ijebu-Ode city wall are visible from space.

Our urban civilization was a product of our successful economy. The starting base of this successful economy was our agriculture. Taking advantage of our fertile land, our farmers raised more and more kinds of crops and produced increasing volumes of food. Many of them produced food for the urban markets and became some of the richest men in society. The first European explorers into the interior of the Yoruba homeland, in 1825-6, wrote that, throughout their journey they saw, on both sides of their path, extensive plantations of yam, corn, cotton,

indigo, oil palm trees and coconut trees, and they concluded that Yoruba people were a “very industrious people”.

These explorers added that the approach to many Yoruba towns was “an imposing avenue of lordly trees”, that Yoruba cities and towns were “clean habitations”, that people who usually rushed out in the Yoruba cities, towns and villages to see the white explorers were always “cleanly dressed”, and that Yoruba people were an exceptionally hospitable people everywhere.

Our towns were also vibrant centers of trade, craftsmanship, arts, music, producers of cotton goods especially various kinds of cloths and cotton yarn, smiths producing various kinds metal tools and implements, producers of jewelries including beads, various kinds of entertainments and entertainers including masked entertainers, diviners, herbal healthcare providers, and many others.

Our homeland was a land of great commerce. Most traders traded only within their towns, and in each town, various sizes of marketplaces existed. Some of the largest marketplaces were famous throughout our country and even beyond our country. One European trader wrote in about 1700 that one Yoruba marketplace that he visited was at least four times the size the New Market in Amsterdam, that not less than 6000 traders were trading in it that morning, and that he was greatly impressed by the orderliness that prevailed in it. From a long distance away, wrote some explorers, the noise from a large Yoruba marketplace on a market day was like the roaring of a great sea. Many marketplaces offered night-time trading. This commonly meant that the day-time trading closed at about 6 pm, and the night-time trading started at about 9 pm. The 1825-26 explorers wrote that when one approached a night-time market from a distance, it was as if one was approaching a sea of stars – because the traders lighted small oil lamps to illuminate the goods they were selling.

The 1825-6 explorers also wrote again and again that the roads connecting the Yoruba towns were generally well kept – and were often “as level as a bowling green”; that every stretch of road through each kingdom was very well guarded

by the officials of the king; and that traders and other travelers kept all the roads busy day and night.

An American explorer, William Clarke, who travelled extensively in Yorubaland in the early 1850s, wrote as follows about the nature and volume of trade in Yorubaland in those years: “The trade in native produce and art keeps up continual intercommunication between the several adjacent towns, the one interchanging its abundance of one article for that of another. Thus on those small routes may be seen caravans of fifties passing almost daily from one town to another, acting as the great reservoirs of trade. (On the longer routes) a network of trade is carried to a distance of hundreds of miles - - -. Hundreds and thousands of people are thus engaged in the carrying trade - - . Not infrequently the articles from the Mediterranean and Western (European) coasts may be seen in close proximity, and products of the four quarters of the globe within a circumference whose diameter may be measured by a few yards. - - - when several caravans are thrown together - - - a correct idea of the extent of trade may be found in the imposing numbers that stretch over several miles in length”.

Most of our biggest traders were women, often specializing in long-distance trade, either taking trade to distant parts of their Yoruba homeland or to far foreign lands. Those taking trade to far foreign countries took Yoruba products to most parts of Black Africa – to all points of the West African coast, to interior West African countries as far as Hausaland beyond the River Niger, westwards as far as modern Mali and Mauritania, eastwards to the country of the Kanuri on the Lake Chad, the countries that are now Sudan and South Sudan, and the countries of the Congo Valley. In these distant foreign countries, some Yoruba products, especially colorful Yoruba cotton cloths and Yoruba beads, were popular specialties and were avidly sought. When European trade developed along the West African coast (from the 15th century), many of the European traders did a profitable trade in buying some Yoruba products (especially colorful Yoruba cloths as well as beads) on the Yoruba coast and taking them for sale on other parts of the coast. In many of these foreign countries, Yoruba traders established Yoruba trading colonies, and some of these have existed till modern times.

Along most of the West African coast, Yoruba language was the language of trade. A French Roman Catholic priest, Father Columbin, who visited most of the West African coast in 1636 to 1640, wrote that the Yoruba language was the language of trade everywhere along the coast, and that, in fact, the peoples of these countries used the Yoruba language in the same way that the peoples of Europe in his time used the Latin language - that is, while the people of every nation spoke their native language, most of their leading citizens like traders, rulers, etc, spoke the Yoruba language as well. In the same century, another European explorer, Olfert Dapper, wrote that among one of the nations on the West African coast, the people “seldom” spoke their native language but spoke “mostly” the Yoruba language “which in their country is regarded as a noble language”.

Over this whole dynamic and rich civilization, we Yoruba established an elegant system of leadership and order topped by a monarchical government. Each of our towns was ruled by a king or Oba, below whom a number of high and lower chiefs bore responsibility for parts of the town. The king lived in a large and historic palace, with many specialized courtyards, all gorgeously decorated with artistically carved pillars and posts, and with murals and colorful insignia. A high sense of grandeur surrounded the Oba, as was testified to by countless European explorers over centuries.

This whole system of government was governed by two fundamental principles. The first of these was the principle of sovereignty of the people, the principle that power belongs to the people. Thus we Yoruba rejected the universal practice whereby kings are succeeded automatically by their biological children, and whereby citizens have no role in the selection of their kings, and chose instead a system whereby the subjects select their king from among the members of the royal lineage. We Yoruba people love to say proudly that we ourselves select our rulers. Also as part of the principle of the people’s sovereignty, the system gave serious respect and influence to people’s associations (such as the age-grade associations, and the professional or trade associations – like market women’s association, hunters’ association, smiths’ association, etc). The role of women was specially provided for in Yoruba system of leadership and governance. Finally, it was part of the principle of people’s sovereignty that every person, young or old,

was guaranteed freedom to speak in the affairs of his community, lineage and association. Thus the common Yoruba saying, “Both young and old have some wisdom to contribute. That is our rule from our beginning”.

The second principle governing the whole political system is the principle that all our Yoruba kings and royal lineages are descendants of the same ancestor. From this principle sprang a large array of beliefs, practices, dynastic relationships, rituals and art forms, all of them asserting and emphasizing the origin of all our kings from the same ancestral family, the oneness of our kingdoms and the unity of our Yoruba nation as one nation. A Yoruba king’s particular kingdom might be small, but he reigned and glowed in his unbroken consciousness of the largeness of his Yoruba family of kings and kingdoms.

From the 16th to the 19th century, one of our kingdoms, the Oyo-Ile kingdom occupying the northwestern part of our national homeland, struck out and built an empire covering part of Yorubaland and other large territories of many non-Yoruba peoples, up to territories that are now Benin and Togo Republics – the largest empire in the history of the West African forest lands. This Oyo Empire was similar to the Austrian Empire in which the German state of Austria built an empire consisting of German and non-German territories and peoples.

When European Christian missionaries brought Western education to Africa in the mid-19th century, we Yoruba adopted it more strongly than other parts of Black Africa. Schools quickly sprang up in most Yoruba towns. By the last years of the 1850s, we were already producing university graduates and highly educated professionals – lawyers, doctors, engineers, accountants, surveyors, teachers, writers, etc. The first newspaper in Black Africa was published in our city of Abeokuta in 1859, and others soon followed in our other cities. At the Amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, we were very much ahead of the rest of Nigeria in education. The first schools did not come to most of the rest of Nigeria until the 1920s, by which time many Yoruba families were already producing their third generation of university graduates. No other Nigerian nation produced their first university graduate until the mid-1930s.

In the course of the 1950s, with Nigeria then structured as a federation of three Regions (Eastern, Northern and Western Regions) each vested with limited self-government, we Yoruba immediately took our Western Region far above and beyond the other two Regions in all aspects of development – building of new roads and highways, provision of urban water supply, advancement in agriculture and agricultural exports, establishment of skills development institutions for youths, first industrial estates and residential estate in Africa, first television station in Africa, first Free Education program in Africa, first modern sports stadium in Nigeria, etc. The Free Education proved very revolutionary; it raised us Yoruba people above the rest of Nigeria. An unofficial statistics commonly circulating in the 1970s had it that, though we Yoruba were about 24% of Nigeria's population, we Yoruba were 52% of all of Nigerian holders of university degrees and 70% of all Nigerian holders of higher degrees such as Masters and Doctoral degrees. Politically, our Western Region developed the most democratic system of government and politics, and the most professionally competent Civil Service in Nigeria. Our Western Region occasionally gave loans (and even grants) to the Nigerian Federal Government. Altogether, we Yoruba grandly displayed our inherent strength as a nation of civilization builders, and we were poised to go higher and higher in the world.

We Yoruba Have Suffered Abominably in Independent Nigeria
and We Have Decided to Exit Nigeria

But then, since the time of Nigeria's independence in 1960, our being part of Nigeria has been pulling us down. Nigeria's former colonial overlords, the British, laid for Nigeria the foundation of decline and failure by manipulating everything (the constitution, population census, Regional boundaries, the pre-independence election) to establish the small Fulani nation in a position of unassailable dominance over Nigeria. The Fulani are non-indigenous to Nigeria, are the least educated people in Nigeria, and are mostly a nomadic cattle-herding people living in the wild. Unable to understand the nature of a modern country, they embarked on making themselves the new colonial overlords of Nigeria and thereby launched Nigeria into a culture of impunity, process manipulations, massive public corruption, and fearsome economic decline. In spite of Nigeria's great wealth of natural and human resources, and though Nigeria became one of the world's largest producers and exporters of petroleum from about 1970, Nigeria's economy has declined relentlessly. By 2018, an international agency classified Nigeria as the home of most of the world's extreme poverty. Today, 2024, leading persons in the management of Nigeria – former Governors of the Nigerian Central Bank, serving Ministers in the Nigerian Federal Government, etc – are publicly admitting that the Nigerian economy has collapsed.

All over the country, the poverty is fearfully visible in these early months of 2024 – in the enormous and increasing numbers of beggars in the streets, in the large numbers of businesses that have closed down and are closing down, in the lengths of dilapidated main roads, in the collapse of electricity supply, in the decline of the quality of education, in the massive unemployment, in the total collapse of the Nigerian currency, the Naira, in the world exchange market, in the persistent four-digit inflation, in the flight of hundreds of thousands of educated youths to other countries, in the increasing numbers of youth suicides, in the massive crowds of hungry protesters in all parts of the

country, etc. We Yoruba are deeply sunk, and are sinking deeper and deeper, into all this poverty.

In addition, since 2015, the Fulani, greatly emboldened by their success in dominating Nigeria, have embarked on an agenda aimed at conquering and subjugation all the non-Fulani peoples of Nigeria, with the confidently avowed objective of turning all of Nigeria into a Fulani homeland. In the storm of this violence since 2015, hundreds of thousands of Nigerians have been killed, including as many as an estimated 29000 of our Yoruba people. Yoruba farmers have been forced to abandon farming altogether, and the agricultural economy of the Yoruba nation has been almost totally destroyed – thereby foisting terrible food insecurity on Yoruba people for years and years to come. Since more and more of the marauding Fulani are still being brought from all over West Africa, the killings, the destruction of our farms and villages, the kidnapping of thousands of people, and the extortion of large amounts of money from our people are all continuing.

We Yoruba people have been intensively devastated by all this deepening disaster of Nigeria. As Nigeria retrogressed on all fronts, it dragged Yorubaland down with it. Moreover, particular policies and actions aimed against the Yoruba further hurt Yoruba interests. The military dictatorships seized important Yoruba assets that Yoruba people had created in the Western Region in the 1950s – schools and hospitals that had been established by state governments, private agencies and individual Yoruba persons and that had enjoyed very competent management by their founders, Yoruba cocoa export management system, Yoruba radio and television institutions, the proud university that we Yoruba people built in Ile-Ife, even the Yoruba regional sports stadium. Most of these assets were then poorly managed or deliberately neglected and left to decline and perish. Even though our Yoruba region continued to command most of Nigeria's crumbling economy, ever-intensifying poverty became the lot of most Yoruba people.

The most visible and most painful part of the poverty was the devastating neglect of Yoruba youths. Because of the destruction of the economy, countless thousands of Yoruba youths, most of them graduates of universities and colleges, piled up year after year as unemployed, with the Federal

Government and the federally controlled State Governments doing nothing to help. Many of the youths managed to flee to other countries. Many tried to reach Europe by crossing the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea, and some of these perished regularly in the desert and the sea. Some of the youths who were stuck in Nigeria plunged into crime, criminal cults, drug abuse. The quality of Yoruba political leadership rapidly crashed too, as many Yoruba leaders were sucked into the insensitive and horribly undemocratic governance, election rigging, and the arrogant and all-pervading public corruption, that are the character of Nigeria.

But the worst finally came under the presidency of a Fulani man, Muhammadu Buhari, president of Nigeria, 2015 until 2023. Under President Buhari the Fulani agenda over Nigeria matured fearfully. It was advanced with two initiatives and from two directions. The highest objective of the Fulani agenda is that the Fulani must conquer all the indigenous peoples of Nigeria, turn the indigenous homelands into one Fulani homeland, and enslave all the indigenous peoples. The successes achieved by the agenda are already staggering. First, the Fulani have succeeded greatly in propagating a doctrine among the masses of uneducated and poor Fulani people of all of West Africa – the doctrine that Allah has given all the land of Nigeria to the Fulani nation that has never had a homeland, and that the Fulani are to possess it all by conquest. Hundreds of thousands of Fulani from most countries of West Africa, influenced by this propaganda, have relocated to Nigeria – to partake in the conquest and violent possession of Nigeria. It is a phenomenal propaganda success. President Buhari directly aided this success by announcing that people are free to come to Nigeria from any part of Africa without passports or entry visas (a coded message to the masses of illiterate Fulani folks).

The masses of Fulani Mujaheedin (militarized masses of poor folks) that are being brought to Nigeria serve as the foot-soldiers of the violent conquest initiative, spreading all over Nigeria, killing, maiming, destroying farms and villages, raping women, kidnapping people and extorting ransom, forcing countless farmers to abandon farming, seizing and renaming villages all over the Nigerian Middle Belt,

establishing hideouts in countless forest locations in most parts of Southern Nigeria (including Yorubaland), and spreading out violence from there.

And then, there is the government-based aspect of the Fulani agenda. This is the domain of the Fulani men and women who, from their positions in President Buhari's administration, set themselves the duty of filling almost all key positions in the Nigerian federal establishment, and all key positions in Nigeria's security apparatus (army, air force, navy, police, secrete services, immigration service, ports authority), with Fulani people. By the end of President Buhari's presidential term in May 2023, the Fulani had succeeded greatly in taking over Nigeria's Federal Government and its security forces. Altogether, the Fulani had, by early 2023, come close to their dream of conquest of Nigeria.

In the last months of the Buhari presidency, the simple act of changing the design of Nigeria's paper currency notes was turned into a massive source of suffering for Nigerians. At the instruction of the government, people surrendered their old currency notes to the banks, but when people demanded the new notes, the banks usually had none to give. Therefore, even rich people who owned large amounts of money in banks had no cash to spend. Commercial life fell into utter chaos. People were desperately rushing to banks and fighting bank officials, forcing bank officials to flee over walls and fences. In many towns, people destroyed or burnt down bank buildings. Desperate men and women stripped naked in banking halls. Some committed suicide. Across the country, many banks closed down. Because of the angry crowds in front of banks, it became a hazard to go to banks in most parts of the country. The Nigerian Supreme Court ruled that the old currency notes should return to circulation, but the executive government ignored their ruling. The cause of all this destructiveness is the incompetence of Nigeria's government, coupled with the government's constant strategy of imposing poverty and want on the people in order to make them more controllable. subdue them. Virtually all Yoruba people now want their Yoruba nation to quit Nigeria.

Nigeria is no longer one country; it is a chaotic stack of insecure, distressed and mutually hostile nationalities, a failed state in the estimation of the informed world. The two things now keeping the chaotic stack together are, first, the

common people's fear of more blood and, second, the resolve of some of the elite of various peoples of Nigeria to hold on to their shares in the Nigerian culture of public corruption, and the timidity and insensitivity of most of the rest of the elite to act purposefully and decisively towards peaceful separation of their various nations from Nigeria. As things are going now, a blood-soaked dissolution is becoming inevitable.

On February 24 and 26, the Fulani, acting through their topmost nationalist organization, the Fulani Nationalist Movement, issued two declarations of war against the rest of Nigeria – against the President, the Federal Government, and the peoples and State Governments of all parts of Nigeria. Their statements announced that they did not accept the President of Nigeria as their president, that they would overrun Aso Rock (the seat of the Federal Government), take Aso Rock and use it as base for conquering the peoples and governments of Nigeria, and that they would burn down everything in Nigeria. Their declaration then ordered all Fulani to proceed immediately to all parts of Nigeria to fight and bring down all governments.

Following their declaration of war, the Fulani immediately commenced war against all sections of Nigeria. In Yorubaland on January 25, on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, the busiest highway in Yorubaland (and in Nigeria), Fulani militiamen burst on the highway from the forest, forced a local Chairman of a national political party out of his car, kidnapped him into the bush, and later demanded 200 million Naira for his ransom. On January 27 in Kwara State, Fulani kidnappers abducted a student from the campus of Ilorin University. On January 27 in Oyo State, Fulani militiamen abducted the Chairman of a public corporation and took him away into the forests. On January 29 in Oyo State, a local church pastor was attacked on his farm and killed by Fulani militiamen. On January 29 in Ekiti State, Fulani terrorists wielding AK47 rifles attacked the very top of Yoruba society and culture by killing two Yoruba Obas on a highway. A third Oba escaped. On January 30, on the road south of the Ekiti city of Emure in the far south of Ekiti State, Fulani kidnappers kidnapped 14 school children returning from school in their school bus, and later demanded 200 million Naira for their ransom. On February 1, Fulani terrorists forced their way into the palace of a Yoruba Oba in

Kwara State, killed the Oba and abducted his wife and child. On February 7, the Fulani ambushed an Oba in his farm in Kogi State and killed him. By these crowded series of attacks, the Fulani have served notice to Yoruba people that no Yoruba person of any status should be considered safe in any part of the Yoruba homeland – in their homes, or place of work or on the open highways.

But we Yoruba will be separate from Nigeria before the seas of blood come sweeping over everything in Nigeria. We have lost a lot to the Fulani rampages. Farming is dead over most of our farmlands, famine is threatening to engulf our homeland, and the displaced farmers are increasing unemployment everywhere, and some of them are fleeing to Yoruba kinsmen in Benin and Togo Republics. An estimated 29,000 of our people have been killed by the Fulani, and about 1.5 million have been forced to flee into exile in neighboring Benin and Togo Republics. Uneducated and unskilled Fulani youths, dumped on our towns and cities by Fulani leaders to destroy peace and security, are degrading peace and security in our homeland. But we shall soon be free in a sovereign country of our own. We have no other option than to pull our nation out of Nigeria now and create a separate country of our own where we can strongly provide security for our people and develop and prosper as we desire.

In summary, our Yoruba nation faces total destruction in Nigeria. We Yoruba have always proudly taken the lead in the promotion of Nigeria's development and progress. But now, we have resolved to exit Nigeria.

**First and Foremost, in our Orileede Yoruba, We Shall Seriously Revive Our
National Character**

As soon as our new country, ORILEEDE YORUBA, is born, our government will immediately begin to lead us Yoruba people to embark on the desperately needed task of reviving the quality of our Yoruba ethics and character. Over sixty years of our living as underdogs in the deepening poverty and hopelessness of Nigeria, in the ever-increasing moral depravity of Nigeria, have seriously degraded our love of enterprise, our confidence and pride, our cheerful love of family and loyalty to kinsfolk, our gratitude to benefactors, our respect for honesty and probity – in short, our whole Omoluabi foundations. Today, observers regard us as a people who cannot unite to struggle for even the most desirable goals, a people who cannot unite to resist the most insulting attacks on our land, our people, our women and our children. We are seen as a people who would rather insult and denigrate those among us who dare to stand up to defend our cherished assets.

But a new day will soon come – a new day when, in our own sovereign and separate country, in our own country separate from Nigeria, we shall revive and retrieve all of the losses in our character as a nation. We shall foster a solid base for our unity and strength. It is for this important reason that many of us – millions of us – are struggling might and mane for our own sovereign and separate Yoruba Nation. It is sadly true that some of us are confusing and obstructing our national struggle in various pathetic ways. But with our separation from Nigeria, the chance will open for our leaders to call all of us together as a strongly united, purposeful, and achievement-conscious family. The day will soon come.

5.

We Shall Revive and Strengthen our Education

Education is the greatest enterprise of modern Yoruba people. From the coming of schools to West Africa in about 1840, the Yoruba led the rest of Africa in education. Free Primary Education, started in 1955 in the Yoruba Western Region, widened the gap very seriously. But since the independence of Nigeria in 1960, various factors have combined to rob the Yoruba gradually of their lead in school enrolment and in the quality of education. Rejection of education by those controlling the Federal Government of Nigeria resulted in lower and lower budgetary allocations for education. By about 2005, only about 6% of Nigeria's budget was being allocated to education. (Remember that in some years of the 1950s, Chief Awolowo's Western Regional Government was allocating as much as 40% of the budget to education. Remember too that UNESCO suggests that 26% allocation would be about the good average for education in any country). In most states of the Yoruba Southwest, teachers' salaries were not being regularly paid, morale was seriously lost among teachers, schools were no longer receiving adequate teaching materials, school buildings deteriorated. By about 2010, the massive unemployment among Yoruba graduates of schools, colleges and

universities was discouraging Yoruba parents about education. By that date, many schools of the Yoruba Southwest were no longer performing as well as schools in some other parts of Nigeria in the public examinations, and school enrolment was starting to fall. Altogether, we Yoruba people have lost our leadership position in education in Nigeria.

In our Orileed Yoruba, we will have excellent opportunities to take back our strength in education. In general, we will make the right budgetary allocations for education. In the first few years, we will provide other funds for revamping the quality of the buildings and physical properties of our educational institutions. We will elevate the teaching profession to its place as a noble profession. We will provide for renewal learning programs for teachers. We will celebrate a Teachers' Day annually. We will establish performance contests among schools in the public examinations. Finally, we shall make all our students computer literate.

We will assist our four oldest universities (Ibadan University, Obafemi Awolowo University, Lagos University and Ilorin University) to rise quickly to the ranks of the highest and best universities in the world, and we shall seriously elevate all our other universities too. We will make technology a very emphatic feature of our whole educational system. We will strive to make our educational system and our educational institutions rank among the best in the world.

We shall have free education for our children up to Higher School Certificate. We shall then have a tertiary education loan system (for university, college and polytechnic education). We shall create a vocational fund for short-term vocational career programs at home and abroad. Finally, we shall recreate a fund which our father Awolowo established in the 1950s – a fund from which our talented university students, if sent by their universities or invited by the international organizations to which they belong, will be able to participate abroad in holiday students' programs, conferences and other events.

5.

Our Youth Development Program Will Transform Our Nation

In the opinion of most Yoruba people, the most damaging impact of Nigeria on our Yoruba nation is Nigeria's impact on Yoruba children and youths. In Yoruba culture, children and youths are highly valued as the most important assets of every family and of society, and as the pillar of future strength and prosperity. Consequently, Yoruba people devote more attention and resources to proper development of the child than most other peoples do. In modern times when Western education has become the surest means of rising in society, Yoruba parents have commonly put enormous resources on school education for their children, often selling homes and other valuable assets for school fees and college fees. Even to the totally illiterate Yoruba parent, helping the child through school is the most important life pursuit in our time.

Nigeria has seriously hurt this highly cherished Yoruba agenda of child and youth development in two painful ways. First, under the leadership of a people, the Fulani, who despise and fear Western education, the quality of education has been made to fall steadily at all levels in all parts of Nigeria, including Yorubaland – to the great sadness of Yoruba people. Increasing numbers of Yoruba families are responding by avoiding the public schools where education has seriously deteriorated and finding the money to send their children to private schools which are usually more expensive but where education is better.

Secondly, because of the federal government's destruction of the development energy and momentum of the Yoruba Western Region in 1962-65, and because of the relentless decline of the whole Nigerian economy since then, unemployment has become a major character of Nigerian society. Nigeria's unemployment rate is

one of the highest in the world today, and Yoruba society is terribly devastated by the massive unemployment. In the far North of Nigeria where there is almost no attention to education, Nigeria's anti-education posture has created an enormous class of poor youths, consisting of millions of youths, who have acquired no schooling and no skills - the class known as the Almajiri, who are the poorest group of people in the world, and who spend their whole lives as beggars in the streets. In the Yoruba Southwest of Nigeria where all children go to school, the high rate of unemployment has hit the masses of educated Yoruba youths abominably. Hundreds of thousands of educated youths, many of them with different levels of university degrees, have, for decades, been milling around in Yoruba towns and cities, their numbers increasing year by year. Annually, huge numbers of these educated youths find ways to obtain visas to flee to other countries. Many find ways to flee abroad as illegal immigrants. Many even try to reach Europe via the Sahara Desert and over the Mediterranean Sea. There are constant reports that many of these are dying in the desert and perishing in the Mediterranean Sea, or that some are being enslaved in the countries of North Africa. In spite of such reports, more and more Yoruba youths are still regularly heading to the desert and the Mediterranean. Consequently, Yoruba emigrants are found today in probably all countries of the world. For the very many ones who somehow cannot flee abroad, their lot at home is serious poverty and deprivation, frequent economic dependence on their poor parents, occasional begging, occasional life as poorly regarded attendants of politicians, inability to marry and start raising families of their own, membership of criminal cults or internet crime gangs, hopelessness and shame. In these many ways, the youths of our Yoruba nation are being robbed of personal dignity and national moral orientation, the Yoruba nation is being dangerously bled and degraded, and the future of the Yoruba nation is being very seriously imperiled.

In our new country, as we start seriously improving our educational system, we shall embark also very seriously on establishing a national Youth Program for the empowerment and elevation of our youths. We shall learn from the example of the country of Singapore in southern Asia. Up to 1965, Singapore was one of the member states of the Federation of Malaysia. Singapore was a terribly poor island – it had no resources, no land for agriculture, no forest resources, no mineral

resources, and it even had to pipe its domestic water supply from the other provinces on the mainland. In addition, Singapore's youths, most of them little educated, were a serious problem. Because they were unemployed, many of them were involved in crimes, and large crowds of them were frequently rioting in the streets. Finally, in 1965, the government of the Federation of Malaysia decided that the Federation could not continue to face the problems of Singapore and therefore granted Singapore the freedom to separate from the Federation and become a sovereign country. In short, Singapore was expelled from the Federation. So, suddenly, without any preparation, without any resources, and with her youths rioting in the streets, Singapore became an independent country in the world. Singapore's situation was so terrible that the Singaporean leader who had to announce this sudden change to his people by radio was heard sobbing as he made the announcement. At one point in the announcement he said, sobbing, "This is a day of anguish for Singapore and for me". Fortunately for Singapore, Singapore's leaders decided that the only available path forward for their country was to seriously develop their youths. Therefore, Singapore decided to invest all energy on a great Youth Development Program which:

1. provided skills training for all youths in all occupations – from simple occupations like hair-dressing, nursing, cooking, restaurant service, etc, to higher occupations like masonry, carpentry, roofing, plumbing, entertainment, etc, to still higher technological occupations like motor vehicle repairs, electrical installations, plumbing, metal fabrication, etc, to still higher occupations like imports and exports management, building construction management, business promotion, etc, to the highest technological occupations like computer assembly and repairs, printing, publishing, product design, manufacturing, accountancy, etc.
2. devoted serious emphasis on training all youths to be responsible and proud employees in whatever jobs they were employed;
3. provided entrepreneurial education and training for youths who, after acquiring skills, desired to start and manage businesses of their own.

4. created a well managed package of financial assistance (small business loans), business counseling assistance, and other kinds of assistance, to new small businesses.

Singapore then offered attractive incentives to foreign investors in order to attract them to come to invest capital and establish businesses in Singapore and thus boost employment opportunities for Singapore's youths.

It all worked wonderfully. Singapore's youths acquired skills in countless occupations, were trained to be competent and loyal employees, and became highly desired employees. There developed among Singapore's youths a culture of excellence at work, a culture of strong loyalty to employers, and a culture of seeking higher skills in order to get promotion at work. Many of them who acquired skills started small businesses of their own. The national small business loans, plus the business counseling assistance to new and small businesses, helped most of the businesses to succeed. Major foreign investors, learning of Singapore's incentives to investments, and of Singapore's skilled and competent employees, brought their investments or businesses to Singapore, and employment opportunities soared. Singapore developed a program of ensuring that Singapore's export products would be of high quality – and that made Singapore's products highly acceptable in the world market. Singapore became a major exporter of various products. As its economy grew rapidly, Singapore was able to devote resources on infrastructural and allied developments – roads, ports, airports, airline, ship building, shipping business, electrical installations, water supply installations, ambitious housing estates. By 1975, Singapore's economy was rated as one of the most successful economies in the world. Singapore became known worldwide as the 'Asian Success Model'.

In 1976, our father, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, sent one of his young Yoruba intellectuals to go and see the miracle that was happening in Singapore and to write a report on it. Papa then had the Singapore development model incorporated into his party's grand plan for the development of Nigeria. But, as we would remember, in 1979, our father's bid for the chance to develop Nigeria was fraudulently rejected through the rigging of the 1979 presidential election. And now we know better – we know that Nigeria is impossible to develop, that

nobody can develop Nigeria. Happily, we have decided to separate our Yoruba nation from Nigeria.

So, in our new country, our Orileede Yoruba, we shall benefit from the Singapore Youth Development model and Singapore's other development programs – and also go into many other development programs that we have the resources for and that Singapore did not, and does not, have the resources for. We shall go into modern agriculture including specialized organic and export farming; we shall borrow agricultural methods from the Israeli *kibutz* system and create youth farm communities (which we shall call *Ileto*) each of which will be able to protect and defend itself competently; we shall go seriously into agricultural products processing, marketing and exports; into design and manufacture of agricultural tools and machinery; modern livestock ranching and meat exports; dairy farming and dairy products exports; mining and minerals refining and exports; wood products processing and exports; various traditional specialty industries (like tie-and-dye and other traditional fabric products, bronze casting, various wood and rattan products, etc) for exporting. We shall offer attractive incentives to investors and businesses, in order to encourage investments and business ventures by our own people, and to attract investments and businesses from the outside world.

We shall offer attractive incentives to our youths in the Diaspora, including particularly those who have resided abroad in hi-tech jobs or hi-tech experiences or connections, to return home and use their knowledge, job expertise and their connections, to create for our country a strong share in the world's hi-tech industries and hi-tech supply chains (including, but not limited to, semi-conductors, electric vehicles, solar energy technology, drone technology, etc). These are fields in which our country can quickly catch up with the world's leaders, fields that will help our country to grow rapidly, to avoid the middle-income trap, and to quickly transform into a high-income economy.

Altogether, we can, and we shall, develop our country much faster than the people of Singapore developed theirs – because our country is much larger in territory and population, and much more endowed with varied natural resources and with educated human resources. What Singapore achieved in about eight to

ten years our Orileede Yoruba can achieve in about four to six years. We shall quickly create a surging national economy that will attract Yoruba youths back home from all corners of the world to come and contribute to, and share in, the rapidly growing prosperity and greatness of their own country.

6.

We Shall Sharply Clean Up Our Politics

From ancient times, we Yoruba evolved democratic political systems. In other monarchical cultures in the world, the king is automatically succeeded by his own child, and the subjects have no voice in the choice. From the beginning of our history, we Yoruba people rejected such automatic succession. In every one of our kingdoms from the very beginning, we chose the right to select the king from among members of the royal family. We also empowered the members of each lineage to select our chiefs. We enjoyed being respected by our kings and chiefs, and we had freedom of speech in the affairs of our society.

In the 1950s, with Chief Obafemi Awolowo as our first Premier and first National leader in modern times, we Yoruba people in our then Western Region of Nigeria evolved the most democratic political society in Africa, the government most responsive and most dedicated to the needs, the desires and the expectations of the people, the leadership conscientiously respectful of our voices and our votes, the government and leadership most capable of competing with the best developed countries of the world. Under Chief Awolowo's successor, the high quality of leadership, politics and governance continued for some time – in short,

we had established our modern political tradition based on our ancient political culture.

But in 1962, because most of the rest of Nigeria were hostile about our foremost position in progress and development in Nigeria, they combined to use the power of the Federal Government to push our Western Region down – by suspending our Region’s constitution and elected government, imposing a hand-picked Sole Administrator on our Region, and introducing the culture of election rigging to our Region. The orderliness and progress of our Region disappeared immediately. Since then, we Yoruba have been retrogressing with the rest of Nigeria.

Ultimately, the retrogression has translated to our walking in tandem with Nigeria in the low standards that are typical of Nigeria – in Nigeria’s undemocratic (even anti-democratic) politics, systematically fraudulent elections, self-centered and horribly corrupt leadership, insensitivity of government to the conditions, fears and suffering of the people, lack of national direction, ever-deepening poverty and hopelessness, general moral decline close to moral depravity.

But the days of our living in these horrible political and moral conditions are about to come to an end. In our own country separate from Nigeria, in our own Orileede Yoruba, we shall soon be living again as a truly democratic people, with our politicians respecting our voices and our votes, with our governments respectfully responding to our needs and desires, with public corruption a thing of the past.

We shall Take Creative Steps About Political Parties

In Nigeria, the political parties have been the central factor in the making of the country's reign of corruption and grotesque indiscipline. The Nigerian political party is simply an association for the personal enrichment of its leading members, and a place of economic refuge for some lower persons. In short, a party belongs to the few leaders who use its influence to amass huge personal wealth. These party bosses stay on top and in money-stealing positions by expending a little part of their ill-gotten wealth to breed and feed an army of hangers-on, cronies and violent thugs for intimidating, physically hurting or even killing political rivals. Consequently, assassinations are common and blood flows frequently in Nigerian politics. Political parties are also responsible for the evolution of the Nigerian political culture of election manipulation and rigging. While preparing for an election, Nigerian political parties typically budget large amounts of money for bribing the Electoral Commission, the police and other security officers working in the election process, the judges of the Election Tribunal (in case their help would come to be needed), and even representatives of other parties at the polling and collation centers. Nigerian political parties represent no moral or developmental principle; they are simply bodies set up to get access to the stealing and sharing of public money. Consequently, Nigerian politicians keep forming more and more parties. At one point, Nigeria had more than 90 political parties.

Having lived through all this for 63 years in Nigeria, most of us Yoruba are strongly opposed to continuing with it in our own new country. Very many of our people have, in recent years, submitted written proposals demanding that we should not have political parties in the politics of our new country. Most of these people suggest that we should have no party at all, and that we should have a system of direct election in which a candidate for a national election contests election in his home constituency without membership of a party, and without being assisted by any party. The winners from their home constituencies then assemble in the National Assembly building in our nation's capital city to be sworn in as our House of Representatives. The House of Representatives then elects the Speaker and the

Prime Minister – and the legislative business of our national government proceeds from there. There would be no party to control our legislators or to direct them to speak or vote one way or other. Legislators would speak and vote according to their own consciences. And there would be no room for corruption.

But here is another possible option. Many others among our people believe and propose that we should have political parties, but that we should employ the law to regulate the party system very tightly. These proposals include:

- a. Law limiting the number of political parties to THREE.
- b. Law placing on every party the duty of swearing an oath to respect and obey the nation's constitution and laws – oath to be renewed by each party annually.
- c. Law prohibiting a party from the use or encouragement or tolerance of violence, election rigging, or financial or material bribes, in the political process or in the judicial process.
- d. Law establishing the rules, benefits and obligations of party membership – including, but not limited to, payment of party dues to the party; legally limiting the amount of the party dues; party membership card; legally prescribed swearing, before nominations for any national or local election, to observance of all laws binding the party, to strict respect and observance of electoral laws and regulations, to rejection of illegal interference with election processes, to rejection of the use of money or other bribes to influence voters, and to obligation to avoid the use or tolerance of violence in the nomination and electoral processes and the general political process.
- e. Law prohibiting a person who holds, or who has ever held, a public office on the platform of a political party from ever holding any public office as a member of another political party.
- f. Law prohibiting a party from seeking or receiving financial or material help, or manipulation of the nation's political process, or manipulative propaganda, from any external interest.
- g. Law empowering the nation to seek the order of a court to punish, or even to proscribe, an offending political party.

8.

We Shall Make Our Elections Quality Elections.

As we have seen abundantly in the political history of Nigeria, and as we have seen in the political history of nearly all African countries in our time, poorly managed elections, manipulation and rigging of elections, disputed election results, conflict over elections, are a sure source of political disaster. Once the trend starts, it is essentially impossible to arrest. The only sure antidote in any country is to make the first election thoroughly clean and to keep that as a tradition forever.

For this all-important reason, everything will be done from the beginning and at all times in our country's history to make our elections free, fair and incorruptible. Our laws will make the slightest falsification of any detail of an election process a high crime, or a sabotage of our national political order, punishable by many years of imprisonment, sometimes by life imprisonment. In many cases, the punishment will include banishment from further participation in elections, or even banishment from politics and public service altogether. If tampering with an election process is observed, alleged, or suspected in any constituency, the ongoing election in that constituency shall be suspended forthwith, to enable investigation to be carried out and completed, and to enable any consequent criminal case to be concluded.

In addition, the government will regularly keep before the consciousness of our whole public serious instructions as to why elections must be respected and be inviolate in our country. In the wide world, our country will have the pride and respect for our highly dependable tradition of respected elections, of free, fair and peaceful elections.

We Shall Achieve a Corruption-free Public Service

In Nigeria's political life, the elected public official often regards and holds his elective office as his personal property. The reason, quite often, is that, in Nigeria, one spends enormous amounts of money to get elected to any public office. It is money, money, money, all the way – large nomination fees to one's party, large bribes to one's party leaders, competitive bribes for buying voters at the nomination caucus, chunky tips to party functionaries, then very large bribes to electoral officials high and low, bribes to police officials, military officials and other security agency officials deployed to election duties, anticipatory bribes to Election Tribunal judges, and then some large bags of money from which one's closest associates would buy the voters from the voters at the gates of the polling stations, and, at the polling stations and vote collation stations, money for bribing polling officials and collation officials, money for paying and feeding one's representatives at the polling and collation centers, and money for bribing the representatives of other candidates on the spot in order to buy them to condone whatever on-the-spot rigging antics one might come up with! It is horrible. A former one-term Senator once said at a non-political meeting that by the time he was finally declared winner of his Senate race, he had spent on it over 440 million Naira of mostly borrowed money. But spending such large amounts to procure a public office is not exclusive to elected officials. Commonly too, non-elected, or appointed, public officials (such as Ministers) have to cough up very large bribes to get appointed. Having gone through this whole process, a public official is very unlikely to feel grateful and indebted to his people. He is most likely to conclude that he has bought his public office.

Two serious aberrations result from this. First, the public official often does not feel that he is obliged to serve the interests of his people. His irresistible urge is to pay the debt that he has incurred for buying his office, and to make a profit on his investment. The result is that he would be insensitive and unresponsive to his people's needs, fears, suffering, and expectations. The streets of the towns of a

State may be filled with countless local youths who have acquired some education and who cannot get jobs, and their brother who is their State Governor or Member State House of Assembly will not feel that he is under any obligation to use the power of the state to intervene. The people of a nation in Nigeria may feel mortally threatened by certain developments and trends in the affairs of Nigeria and the Nigerian Federal Government, and the elected members of that nation in the National Assembly, and the appointed Ministers from that nation, would feel no obligation whatsoever to use their legislative powers and official positions to intervene in the situation. Strictly speaking, the Nigerian public official is not a public official, he is a business magnate; he is not a leader but a dealer; he is serving himself and not his people.

The second serious aberration from the buying of public office is public corruption. The way that public officials can make as much money as they need and desire is to steal and share public money, and stealing and sharing public money is the surest way to achieve wealth in Nigeria. That is why the more ambitious and more audacious would borrow and expend mind-boggling amounts of money – and would even kill – to get into public office. Public corruption rules Nigeria completely and arrogantly. It is a killer, and it is killing Nigeria.

Therefore, as soon as our separate sovereign Orileede Yoruba is born, our government shall take all needed steps to destroy the buying of public offices and make public corruption a very high crime punishable by life imprisonment or even execution. Laws will also be made to make any kind of election corruption a serious offence too, punishable, as we have said above, by many years of imprisonment, sometimes by life imprisonment and, in many cases, banishment from further participation in elections, or even banishment from politics and public service altogether. Laws will also be made to make the buying of votes a high crime, to regulate the funding of elections and election campaigns, as well as politicians' hiring of any political or election staff. In short, in our own country, public office will be washed clean of all the diseases of Nigeria.

10.

We Shall Create a Trustworthy and Respectable Judiciary

In Nigeria, the judiciary is beset by three weaknesses. First, magistrates and judges commonly take bribes. Quite ordinary citizens can buy judgment in the courts. Many influential public persons are known to be able to get whatever judgment they want in the courts because they have bought many judges across the country and are able to buy any judge at ease. The buying and selling of judgment has been with Nigerian courts since the inception of courts in the earliest years of British rule. With such a judicial tradition, no country can exist in assured peace and order or develop in a healthy manner.

Secondly, the influence of the executive government on the Nigerian courts is too much and too blatant. In Nigeria, the people in the executive arm of government usually operate with the presumption that they are lords over the judiciary, the legislature and all. The executive government's interventions in court cases are common and the judiciary has never stood its ground. And furthermore, the executive government commonly refuses to carry out, or simply ignores, court judgments.

Thirdly, some of the judges themselves have been found partaking in Nigeria's culture of official corruption – in the culture of stealing and sharing of public money. Not long ago, millions of Naira in Naira notes was found by police officials in the home of a senior judge. And more recently, the Chief Justice of Nigeria was caught in the act of stealing millions of Naira and had to resign. All this has done much damage to the prestige of the judiciary.

Our Orileede Yoruba is ambitiously conceived by us Yoruba people as a country of great order and peace, with a judiciary that is implicitly respected by all (including by the executive government). Our country will enact special laws for these purposes, including laws by which the executive government can be compelled to respect the courts.

We shall Build an Incorruptible Civil Service

In our Western Region of Nigeria in the 1950s, we Yoruba created and nurtured the most advanced and most competent Civil Service in Africa. Our Region's Civil Service gave assistance from time to time to the Nigerian Federal Civil Service with training programs and with the lending of key personnel. But, as would be remembered, in 1962 the Federal Government used federal power to push our Western Region crashing down. The spirit of excellence in our Civil Service was quickly destroyed. In the next three decades, the decades of the military dictatorships, we have had more and more states, each with its own Civil Service, and each Civil Service studded with high caliber persons, but none of the State Civil Services matches the high professional quality of the Western Region's Civil Service of the 1950s.

The reason for that is the sharp difference between the two systems of governance and leadership. In the Western Region in the 1950s, there were orderly and strict rules for administrative processes and for the management of public money. The political leaders – the Premier, Ministers and the members of the Regional legislature – were dutifully obedient to the rules. All constituted a well oiled machine. That is why the Regional Government was able to achieve all the miracles it did.

Today, the State Governor is the law, the government, the treasury, the commander of all processes, in short, the owner and master of his State. Essentially, the State Civil Service works according to his whims and caprices and in no clearly predictable order. Even his contacts with his State Commissioners have no predictable order, and it is not uncommon for some Commissioners to have no contacts with him, and to be unaware what to do, for months. The State House of Assembly is a glorified but irrelevant and unwanted entity whose members spend much of their time seeking the face of the Governor. Altogether,

what we call our State Government today is just a bundle of chaos. That is why it is so easy to steal public money belonging to the State. That is why it is so easy for top public officials (Governors, Commissioners and top civil servants) to write their personal interests into government projects, to award government contracts to contracting companies owned by themselves or by their relations, friends or cronies, and even to steal government properties. And that is why it has become the system that every person seeking any government service (such as licenses, official letters, due payments for services rendered, etc) must give bribes to the relevant government officials high and low.

What our new country, Orileede Yoruba, will do to revive the highly productive order of the 1950s is not difficult to see. We shall quickly produce a proper constitution, the right laws, and the right administrative rules. We shall revive the administrative rules of the 1950s that strongly protected public money, the rules for the management of the treasury, and the rules prescribing the steps needed for accessing the treasury and its public money. We shall revive the public service rules of the 1950s – such as the rule that a public servant (elected and appointed) shall not sell anything to, or buy anything from, government, or that a public servant must not receive considerations from members of the public for official services rendered. We shall struggle to accomplish all these within months. And we shall make the penalties for deviation or infringement harsh and prohibitive. Our people generally want this, and they will quickly adjust to the new order. Our country will soon become the high-achieving country that we Yoruba all want.

We Shall Craft The Most Appropriate Constitution

First of all, we shall give our country a most carefully designed constitution – a constitution that elevates our culture and imparts pride to our national institutions, a constitution that enhances our enterprising character, a constitution geared to the greatest and best in success and prosperity.

Because the current Yoruba states, plus the states of the Yoruba parts of Kwara, Kogi and Delta States are, in every way, products of the worst years of Nigeria's corrupt life, most Yoruba people want them to be eliminated right away. Various Yoruba groups have therefore offered proposals of the details of the desired change. The following are proposals of a special meeting of Yoruba leaders held in November 2022:

1. That since our Yoruba Language shall be the language of our new country, Orileede Yoruba, therefore territorial units that would be called Provinces or Districts or Local Governments in English language shall, instead, be called IPINLE and IBILE.
2. The major purpose of the Ipinle structuring as replacement for the Nigerian States is that each Ipinle shall be designed constitutionally and economically to be a dynamic center of progress, enterprise and prosperity.
3. The following shall be our list of Ipinle, carved constitutionally out of the current Nigerian states:
 - a. Current Ondo State would be reconfigured into four Ipinle, namely Etido (consisting of Ikale, Ilaje and Ese-Odo); Ondo (consisting of Idanre and Ondo) , Akure (consisting of Akure and Ifedore), Akoko/Owo. {4}
 - b. Ogun State will be reconfigured into four (4) Ipinle, namely Ijebu, Remo , Egba and Yewa {4}

- c. Oyo State will be reconfigured into four (4) Ipinle, namely Oyo/Ogbomoso, Oke-Ogun, Ibarapa, Ibadan. {4}
- d. Osun State will be reconfigured into four Ipinle, namely Ife, Ijesa, Osun and Igbomina. {4}
- e. Lagos State will be reconfigured into four Ipinle, namely Badagry, Mainland, Island, and Awori. {4}
- f. Ekiti State will be reconfigured into four Ipinle namely Ekiti Central (Ado-Ekiti, ifelodun, Irepodun, Iddo, Gbonyin, Omuo), Ekiti South (Ikere, Ise, Emure), Ekiti West (Ilawe, Ogotun, Ara, Effon, Ijero), Ekiti North (Otun, Itaji, Ishan, Oye, Ikole) {4}
- g. The Yoruba districts of Kwara State shall remain as one Ipinle. {1}
- h. The Yoruba districts of Kogi State shall remain as one Ipinle. {1}
- i. Itsekiri will be one Ipinle. {1}

It should be emphasized again that the above proposal represents only the proposal by one meeting, though a very important meeting. Proposals by other meetings, groups and individuals are many and will all be useful in the making of our country's constitution.

The fundamental factor underlying all the proposals is that we Yoruba people do not want the Nigerian States to continue to be part of our life in our new country. For us, the Nigerian States represent too large and too important a part of the awful and generally hated legacy of Nigeria – too large a part of Nigeria's irrational constitutional and political structuring, of Nigeria's culture of corruption, of Nigeria's culture of insensitive governance, of Nigeria's political culture of disregard for the needs and welfare of the people, of Nigeria's arrogant and morally isolated political leadership, etc.

We shall give our new country a thoroughly rational constitutional and political structure that will not relate at all to the States that Nigeria created. The government of our new country will be truly a government of the people by the

people for the people, a government whose goal is to constantly improve the quality of the lives of all our people. We will make our new country a country of high quality education, a country that conscientiously seeks and creates opportunities for our youths, a country of sophisticated technology, a country of rationally developed infrastructure and industrialization, a country of modern and maximally productive agriculture, a country of enterprise, commerce, tourism, security, peace and beauty, a country of success and pride . We did almost all these before under Chief Obafemi Awolowo's leadership in a few years in the 1950s. Today, we have greater strength than we did in the 1950s, and therefore we can to do it all over and do it to the best. There is no limit.

13.

We Shall Have Truly Yoruba National Military & Security Services.

As soon as our country is born, we shall strike out boldly to create a strong and respectable defense system – army, navy, air-force, as well as military and civilian intelligence agencies. We shall equip each with exceptionally high levels of training, discipline, weaponry, equipment, loyalty to our country and its goal of highest quality service to our people, and mastery in the defense of every square inch of our country's territory.

The most important character of our military forces is that they will be so trained as to put the interest of our country as their NUMBER ONE objective. Since the independence of all African countries, each African country has been living with military forces that were trained to uphold the interests of the colonial powers rather than the interests of their country. The terrible tradition started with the armies that were trained by the foreign imperialists. In the colonial days, the foreign-trained military commanders of each country, as a result of their training, looked down on the political leaders of their country and referred spitefully to them as “bloody civilians.” This is why, after independence, the military commanders were generally impatient with the politicians, and why they were quick to carry out military coups and kill the political leaders. In Europe or the United States, political conflicts, even turmoil among political leaders, can occur, and the military would never step in to ‘restore order’. Because of their training and their ingrained system of order and pattern of traditions, the British or American military have uttermost respect for their country's constitution, political system and national leaders, and, therefore, in the midst of the worst political storms among the politicians, they would leave the politicians to sort things out. If Britain had been an African country in recent times and going through the political instability that Britain has been going through, the army would have intervened. Similarly, if the United States had been an African country, with all the instability that is being generated around former President Trump, the military would have taken over ‘to restore order’.

The duty of the military of any country is to obey the civilian government to defend their country, to act when ordered by the civilian government to protect the interest of their country or to assert their country's will abroad, and to obey the order of the civilian government to suppress insurrection at home in order to enable the constituted government led by the politicians to carry on its constitutional duties. It is not the duty of the military to restore order by killing or arresting the political leaders and seizing control of the government. In our own Yoruba traditions and history of government by the Oba and his chiefs, with an army for military duties, the military, throughout the many centuries of our monarchical history, lived according to the truths stated in these above sentences. We Yoruba can proudly say that these traditions are the reason why no Yoruba military officer has ever led or significantly participated in any military coup d'état in Nigeria's history. Our Orileede Yoruba's military shall be trained and conditioned to live according to these traditions and to the best purposes of a strong and successful modern country.

The disruptive attitudes, presumptions, and disrespect of country and order that the colonial administrations ingrained in the military leaderships of African countries in colonial times shall be fully, definitively and abidingly prevented from showing up in our country's military. Our country's military, being, from start, made up of our own men and women trained and commanded by our own men and women and not by foreign colonial military officers and administrators, shall live in deepest respect for our country and for its traditions, leaders, constitution, laws and government. In Africa, our country shall be known as the country in which the military keep to the boundaries of their duties and, therefore, as a country in which a military coup is an impossibility.

14.

We Shall Evolve an Effective Foreign Policy & Service

The Foreign Service of Orileede Yoruba shall be modeled after the Foreign Service of the old Western Region, 1952-62. The Foreign Service of the old Western Region consisted of a compact group of intellectually well rounded, highly articulate and experienced technocrats drawn from within the globally renowned Civil Service of the Region. Operating with impressive efficiency, much like the Western Region Civil Service from which it was born, the group coordinated and pursued a dynamic policy that ably protected the interests of the Western Region. Such interests consisted mostly of promotion of the economic and development agenda of the Region. The Foreign Service was thus integral to the actualization of the developmental agenda of the government of the Western Region, as well as development of economic relations with selected key countries. The Foreign Service was also distinguished by its efficient management of consular services to citizens of the Region abroad. These citizens were mainly students of the Region who had gone to study abroad.

The Foreign Service of the old Western Region reported directly to the Office of the Premier of the Western Region. The Office of the Premier of the Western Region was also directly engaged in the design and implementation of policy, especially as it related to relations with such countries as Israel and pan-African states such as Ghana. The pursuit of economic development was the preeminent activity in the policy of the Western Region, and it copiously involved Chief Awolowo, the Region's Premier. Also Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the Premier, shared strong ideological affinity with a number of pan-African key leaders, particularly with Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, as a result of which the Western Region developed close relations with progressive countries such as Ghana and others. In summary, the Foreign Service of the Western Region distilled the domestic agenda of the Region into a policy of international engagement to actualize the progressive political programs of the Region's administration.

The Foreign Service of Nigeria that emerged following Nigeria's independence in the 1960s was structurally modeled after that of the Western Region and was integrated into the new federal Ministry of External Affairs in the Office of the Prime Minister.

The hub of the diplomatic interaction of the old Western Region with Europe and the world was its property and offices at 9, Northumberland Avenue; London in the United Kingdom. It is instructive that in the late 1950s, the Government of the Western Region, in a demonstration of its typical vision, had acquired this London property that was later to be appropriated by the Federal Government of Nigeria. That structure that was taken over from the Western Region now houses the High Commission of Nigeria in the United Kingdom. Beyond this, the founding officials who directed the policy and policy implementation of the Nigerian Ministry of External Affairs were mostly sourced from the Western Region.

The critical role of these pioneers from the Western Region in the founding of the Nigerian External Affairs Ministry (later the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), is illustrated in the career of Chief Simeon Adebo. Chief Simeon Olaosebikan Adebo (1914-1994) obtained a degree in law from London University. After being admitted to the bar, he began his career at the Ministry of Finance and the Treasury of the Western Region. In 1961, Chief Adebo became head of the Civil Service and Chief Secretary to the Government of Western Region. In 1962, he was appointed as the first Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations. In 1969, he took up an appointment with UNITAR (*United Nations Institute for Training and Research*) as Director General, and he stayed with the Institute until 1972. As head and member of a number of associations, he was actively engaged in a variety of activities targeting the promotion of democratic values and the enhancement of the effectiveness of development policies. Upon return Nigeria, he was appointed to head many institutions. These included the National Universities Commission and the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies. He also served as chancellor, first, of Obafemi Awolowo University and, later for eight years, as Chancellor of Lagos University.

The indelible influence of the veteran technocrats of the Western Region who were seconded to found the Nigerian Ministry of External Affairs is reflected in

the intellectual astuteness, professionalism, transparency and the stout ethical principles that characterized the officials and administration of the Nigeria Ministry in its early years. This was also reflected in the seamless management of policy and service delivery of the early days of the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These were the years when the country provided true leadership on African issues.

In the evolution of the Nigerian state, the sterling qualities inherited from the Western Region have given way to mediocrity, expressed in the euphemism of federal character, ineffective bilateral consular relations across the globe and thus inefficiency in the management of the challenges of the Nigerian Diaspora as well as a lack of transparency in the administration of policy. Worst of all is the policy incoherence and the failure of Nigeria to provide leadership for the African continent. Some have suggested that this resulted from the appointment of untrained hands, especially politicians, as heads of diplomatic missions. There is also the repudiation of global best practice for the Foreign Service Officers to handle purely diplomatic duties including bilateral, multilateral and protocol issues. Allegations of mismanagement of funds are also rife in the Ministry. This has led to a loss of stature of Nigeria in global affairs. Few consider corrupt and incompetent Nigeria as a meaningful state actor to consult on important African questions.

The Foreign Service of Orileede Yoruba will resuscitate the golden era of diplomacy associated with the Western Region of the 1950s and early 1960s. It will employ soundest intellects and serve the critically important purpose of advancing Orileede Yoruba to the status of a most respected country in the affairs of the world.

15.

We Shall Evolve the Best Immigration Policy

As we must expect, many of our nationals will immediately live in places that used to be part of Nigeria and are now beyond our borders, or will have homes or vital interests there. Conversely, many former citizens of Nigeria who are not our nationals will live in our country or have homes or other vital interests in our country. The management of this situation demands the most constructive diplomacy and statesmanship from us. The objective must be that all persons in these categories will be able to pursue their lives and businesses in peace wherever they choose to live, and will have transparent protection of the law in the management and disposal of their businesses, properties and other assets. It is quite possible that difficulties may arise from any of the other parties that we must negotiate with in these matters, but we must keep a cool head, and lead in working out sensible and compassionate solutions with all concerned.

A crucial factor in all this will, no doubt, be speed in the making of our transitional immigration laws – especially immigration laws spelling out guarantees of protection for non-Yoruba former Nigerians on our soil, and for their families, properties, businesses and other assets; and including guarantees of asset protection to those who may choose to return to their native homelands, leaving assets behind.

Then, there will need to create, expeditiously, the permanent **Immigration Laws** for our new country – to establish the rules of immigration, the various kinds of status for immigrants, and the processes for naturalization. The laws should provide special naturalization privileges for those people, formerly Nigerians originally from other parts of Nigeria, who have lived on our land before the creation of our country, to enable them, if they so choose, to become citizens without difficulty or delay under our laws.

16.

Our Country Shall be a Land of Enterprise and Plentiful Jobs

The general expectation of all humans is that jobs, opportunities for gainful employment, be available, be quick and easy to get, and be transparent and free of bribery or special influence. In the 1950s, Yoruba youths graduating from schools, colleges and universities and seeking jobs in the Western Region, were commonly confident that they could get jobs in their Western Region's public service and in private enterprises. They could easily get jobs without being the offspring of prominent parents, without depending on anybody's influence,, without paying any bribes to anybody. In our Orleede Yoruba, we shall return to those beautiful conditions.

In the years since independence in 1960, job opportunities have deteriorated steadily and seriously in all parts of Nigeria, both in the public service and the private sector. In spite of the enormous amounts of money that Nigeria has been earning from petroleum, the whole Nigerian economy has been chaotic and shrinking, businesses have been closing down or relocating to other countries, investors have been withdrawing investments.

The economy of the Yoruba homeland has continued to lead in Nigeria, but the decline and deterioration have been terrible even among the Yoruba people. Almost all the factories that were established in the Western Region before the 1960s have perished. According to a survey, most of the factories that had made the Ikeja Industrial Estate the pride of the Western Region by 1960 had, by 2010, been converted to church buildings or 'event centers'. The large enterprises established by the Western Region all over the Region in the 1950s had been abandoned long before 2000 - the rubber tree plantation in Araromo-Obu (the second largest rubber plantation in Africa) and its sheet rubber processing plant; the palm-tree plantation and palm-oil production factory in Okitipupa (one of the largest oil palm plantations in the world); the enormous citrus plantation in Apoje near Ijebu-Igbo, and its juice canning factory in Apataganga, Ibadan; the livestock development estates in many places in the Western Region; all have long been

abandoned. More than 80% of Cocoa processing industries in the South West were shut down before 1999. The Yoruba captains of business and industry who dominated the landscape in the city of Ibadan – men like Nathaniel Idowu, Amos Adegoke, Lekan Salami, Alao Arisekola, Adeola Odutola, Jimoh Odutola, Chief T.A. Oni, Chief Bode Akindele – have passed away without successors. The places of most of the great Yoruba owners of businesses in Lagos in past decades have been taken by non-Yoruba persons. Even in education, where we Yoruba were far ahead of the rest of Nigeria by 1960, we have retrogressed seriously, especially in educational standards. The condition of roads in the Yoruba Southwest has become abominable. Neglected federal roads are strangulating what remains of the economy of Yorubaland. We have abandoned the farm settlement strategy of the Western Region of the 1950s and only pay lip service to agricultural development. Instead of feeding ourselves and others like we used to do in the 1950s, we now depend on others to feed us. We produce no tomatoes, no peppers and none of the other basic food items that we consume. Altogether, the economy of the Yoruba nation has retrogressed very terribly since the 1960s.

The effect of this whole situation has been disastrous on job availability. By the late 1990s, Yoruba youths graduating from universities, colleges and schools were already accumulating in the streets, unable to get jobs. As the situation got worse and worse, it became common that, after graduating, a youth could roam the streets for as long as ten years because of lack of jobs. Most of these battered youths sought ways to flee from Nigeria to other countries, and many succeeded in doing so. Some others ventured into the effort to reach Southern Europe by crossing the arid Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea – and, of these, some succeeded in making it through to Europe, but many perished in the desert or in the sea, or became enslaved in the countries of North Africa. Of the ones who remained at home, some joined criminal cults, or went into outright crime, or fell into drug abuse. Mercifully, however, many of those who remained at home struggled to live normal and culturally sensible lives, even in the face of the difficulties of unemployment. But commonly, the unemployed youths could not easily take the next steps in life – they often could not get married and begin to raise families of their own.

Altogether, this massive youth unemployment of the past many decades has troublingly distorted the life and morality of the Yoruba nation. We have become a country that is deeply sunk in corruption, a country in which even the poorest youth seeking a job must somehow find some money to bribe the officials responsible for the employment processes, a country in which one must pay large bribes for any highly paying jobs. This, together with the pervasive and ever-deepening poverty in Nigeria, has pushed us Yoruba far down culturally. We have lost most our Omoluabi love of kith and kin, respect for the dignity of every person, concern for the wellbeing of community and people, love of enterprise, love of mutual cooperation and help. We have gone down culturally, and we are now close to being a country of the loveless, the hopeless, the cynical, the purveyors of falsehood and of hatred, insults and cursing for a living, the fraudster, the traitor, the irresponsible, and the violent. In the current struggle for Yoruba self-determination, many gifted young men and women would rather criticize, sneer and even insult and curse at the actors, and fabricate and propagate lies, rather than offer the positive contributions that they are very well able to make to the struggle. With these trends, awful shadows hang over the future of our Yoruba nation.

In our new country, Orleede Yoruba, all these disastrous trends will be quickly eliminated. Nigeria's culture of corruption will vanish. Unemployment and its debilitating and corrupting effects will very quickly disappear.

An emphasis on youth development will set the pace for rapid national development – similar to what was achieved in the small island country of Singapore in Southeast Asia in a few years in the late 1960s. In 1965, Singapore was a very poor state in the Federation of Malaysia. It had no resources. Even its drinking water was piped from other states on the mainland. Its greatest problem was its masses of unemployed youths who frequently disturbed the peace by rioting in the streets. As a result of a riot which lasted for months in 1965, the Malaysian parliament voted that Singapore should leave the federation. Singapore thus suddenly became a separate sovereign country without any preparation, without any resources, and without any economic strength. The Singaporean politician who had to make the announcement to the people of

Singapore wept audibly as he made the announcement on radio. Yet, ten years later, Singapore was rated as one of the most successful economies in the world. It was a miracle, and Singapore achieved it by focusing on the **development of its youths** as the central piece of its national policies. The details of this are simple and widely known in the world.

With this youth development approach, together with the high-technology strategies of our time, high-technology strategies that our people in the Diaspora world-wide have been exposed to abundantly, we Yoruba will achieve a highly advanced economy for our new country in even less than five years. That means that in about five years our country will be one of the most highly developed countries in the world. At that peak of success, unemployment will be a thing of the past in our country. In fact, our country may sometimes run short of workers in some parts of our economy, and we may need to attract workers from other countries – just as some of the richest countries in the world (such as Canada, Britain and the United States) are now doing.

That is where we Yoruba Nation are going; that is our goal. Our Omoluabi culture, our well known Yoruba love of enterprise, collaboration and dedicated attention to the weak and infirm among us, and the decency of our lives and of our interpersonal ethics, will bounce back. Of course, we will make laws and evolve social policies to aid this cultural and moral revival, but the economic upsurge itself will go a long way to liberate our people from the diseases and slave mentality of Nigeria. The masses of our people in the Diaspora will return to contribute to, and to share in, the rapid changes and prosperity. Our country will grow to become a loving, laughing, illuminated family peopled by contented and confident men, women and children. We can do it.

We shall Kill Corruption in our Country

The most important reason why corruption has flourished so mightily, so blatantly and so long in Nigeria, is that Nigerians do not know what is happening in their government, do not know their rights, do not have access, and commonly do not seek to have access, to government information – even to information that the law makes open to all citizens. Public officials, elected and non-elected, are continually crooking up fraudulent government contracts as a means of pulling out public money for sharing, or diverting public money from its lawful path to paths where it can be stolen and shared. It is common for top accounting officers (presidents or governors) to authorize their representatives to go to banks and cash out large amounts of money from the public accounts, for the purpose of keeping the money for personal use or for gifts to friends, supporters and cronies. In Nigeria, any access by a public official to public money is an opportunity to build up great personal wealth. An American who knew Nigeria very well made the famous statement that in other countries, public corruption means that some public officials steal some of the public money under their control, but that in Nigeria, public corruption often means that all public officials steal all of public money under their control. From time to time, the billions of dollars earned by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, and most of the enormous loans from abroad, do not reach the public account in the Nigerian Central Bank. An international agency estimated that Nigerian leaders stole 25 trillion dollars from the Nigerian treasury between 1960 and 2000. A senior British official is credited with the statement that if all the money being stolen from the Nigerian treasury were stolen from the British treasury, the British economy would collapse. A Nigerian Accountant General, a very senior federal official, was recently alleged to have stolen 190 billion Naira from the Nigerian treasury.

Since large numbers of our own Yoruba elite have imbibed the culture of public corruption in Nigeria, we have to resolve in our new country not merely to fight a war against public corruption but to crush it quickly and definitively. This will call

for various strategies operating together. First, public service rules will be made to establish absolutely the processes of official handling of public money and the penalties for deviating from the rules. Secondly, laws will be made prescribing draconic penalties for even the smallest incident of public corruption. Under these laws, some kinds of acts of public corruption will earn a life sentence or even a death penalty. Thirdly, government will establish a powerful and sustained public enlightenment campaign about all aspects of corruption, the destructive power of corruption, the new initiative for the total crushing and elimination of corruption in our country, and the benefits to our country and all our citizens of the total elimination of corruption. Fourthly, laws will be made to empower citizens, under carefully stated qualifications, to receive license for establishing watch-dog agencies that watch upon aspects of government activities, with legal rights to alert the public and the government about any suspected wrong-doing. These laws will also provide legal protection and some material reward for citizens who tell-tale on public officials that do wrong.

Fifthly, the government will popularize the fact that there are documents of government that ordinary members of the public have a right to have access to if they so desire. This means that if any member of the public comes to ask to see a document that they are legally entitled to see, the public officials shall help him to see it. At the bottom of this is that there shall be created a demarcation between documents that are open to the public and documents that are closed to the public.

Finally, laws will be made that will demand that all meetings of government and government agencies (at all levels of government) shall be held in full view of the public – with the exception of necessarily confidential meetings like interviews of persons for jobs or contracts. Holding meetings in full public view means that notices of meetings shall be posted in a public place (such as notice boards in the department, or notice boards in a wider public place or in the local media), and that members of the public may come into the meeting to observe. It also means that members of a government agency may not go and hold any of its meetings in a place inaccessible to members of the public or in some private place like a member's home or office, or a hotel, or a restaurant. If some or all members of a

government agency get together at a party or celebration and take a decision of their agency there, they will be guilty of breaking this law. A state in the United States of America made this kind of law and the people of the state gave it the name “Government in the Sunshine Law” or “Law of Government in the Open Sunshine”. Members of a Local Government Council in that state privately got together and took a decision of their Local Government Council during a member’s birthday party at the member’s home, someone alerted the police, and the Councilors were arrested and charged with breaking the law. The principle behind all this is that power and government belong to the people and the people should know, and must not be prevented from knowing, what is happening in their government .That is the kind of character that our country will have.

18.

We Shall Have Trusted and Respectable Public Media

The news media (newspapers, radio and television) are powerful tools for bringing information to members of the public and for generating and upholding debate. Independent, professional and responsible media are the backbone of a democracy in a democratic country. When owned or funded by government, or secretly controlled by government, the news media can become a means of government misinformation, control and dishonest misdirection of the public, leading to a decline of democracy. Therefore, ownership of the media should belong exclusively to members of the public.

In our Orileede Yoruba, the media shall be owned only by members of the public, and it shall be illegal for government to own or control any of the media. We shall also make laws for cleansing the media of the kinds of diseases that are common to the media in Nigeria – such as demanding or accepting money as condition for publishing a story, or irresponsibly refusing or neglecting to due salaries to reporters who are employed as paid reporters. All in all, the media shall uphold and promote the seriously democratic and ambitiously development-focused country that our Orileede Yoruba shall be.

Social media are relatively new as a phenomenon in our world and, therefore, regulating the social media is uncertain and patchy. As a result, irresponsibility tends to mark the social media – irresponsibility such as blatant and deliberate falsehood, insults, character assassination, criminal defamation, etc. In the disagreements and conflicts marking the on-going Yoruba self-determination struggle, we are seeing, in the social media manned by Yoruba folks, the most grotesque kinds of irresponsibility imaginable. In our Orileede Yoruba, laws will be made to rectify this sickening aberration. The laws will require that anybody seeking to establish a social media outlet must undergo a prescribed course of training and, after the training, obtain a government license. The laws will enable

any person who has been hurt by any falsehood or defaming statement on social media to lodge a criminal complaint to the police (for criminal prosecution), and to seek redress via a civil case. If any Yoruba person operating a social media outlet abroad should utter or allow statements that hurt another Yoruba person living in Orileede Yoruba, the offended party may seek civil redress and also report to the Orileede Yoruba police, and the criminal justice authorities will seek to have the offender extradited home for the criminal trial. In all things, our country shall be a seriously orderly and stable country.

19.

We shall place Great Emphasis on Sports!

In all of the most developed countries of the world, sports provide great opportunities in employment and life elevation for the youths. Yoruba people who have studied or lived in the United States know of the huge opportunities that sports provide for youths there, and the great contribution of sports to the American economy. The main sports, especially the big team sports – American football, basketball, baseball, ice hockey, and the up-and-coming soccer and rugby football - enroll thousands of American youths as professional sportsmen annually, pay millions of dollars to every sportsman, and regularly turn thousands of sportsmen to millionaires for life. The American National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Association (NBA) rank among the richest businesses in the world. In America too, even university sports is big business, earning billions of dollars annually and giving university scholarships annually to thousands of High School graduates who have done so well in their High School sports as to qualify for selection into university sports teams. The best of the university sportsmen are ceremonially recruited annually into the big professional teams, the place of the big money. We must add that every sports team, from High School teams and up to the great national teams, employ various grades of managers, coaches and assistants – and that all these give employment to a large number of people. And then there are the many non-team sports like tennis, golf, table tennis, swimming, various events in athletics, etc, almost all of which start from High Schools, each of which can take a player to a world championship.

Our Orileede Yoruba will start immediately to organize sports in these ways, for our youths. To push the organization higher and higher until we reach America's

kind of height, we will need to build up the infrastructure needed for sports. In our High Schools, we will build modest but reasonably efficient sports stadiums, basketball courts, tennis courts, swimming arenas, etc. In our universities we will build higher-grade stadiums and all the other facilities. Then at the national level, we will establish a National Sports Development Commission to see to the development of the great teams (each with its stadium and other facilities), and the great leagues, and the structure and facilities for the non-team sports. The Sports Development Commission will be authorized to raise funds and take loans, in addition to government allocations, for this development. .

Altogether, we will make sports a great factor in the provision of opportunities for our youths, and in the dynamism of our national economy. We will help our youths to stand tall among the best in the world of sports.

20.

We Shall Go Very Powerfully for Technology

Son or daughter of Oodua, read the following article from *The New York Times* of January 12, 2010. Please read it carefully and thoughtfully. This is it:

“Jews are a famously accomplished group. They make up 0.2 percent of the world population, but 54 percent of the world chess champions, 27 percent of the Nobel physics laureates and 31 percent of the medicine laureates. Jews make up 2 percent of the U.S. population, but 21 percent of the Ivy League student bodies, 26 percent of the Kennedy Center honorees, 37 percent of the Academy Award-winning directors, 38 percent of those on a recent Business Week list of leading philanthropists, 51 percent of the Pulitzer Prize winners for nonfiction”

“The most resourceful Israelis are now going into technology and commerce, not politics. This has had - - - an invigorating effect on Israel’s economy. Tel Aviv has become one of the world’s foremost entrepreneurial hot spots. Israel has more high-tech start-ups per capita than any other nation on earth, by far. It leads the world in civilian research-and-development spending per capita. It ranks second behind the U.S. in the number of companies listed on the Nasdaq. Israel, with seven million people, attracts as much venture capital as France and Germany combined. - - - Israel now has a classic innovation cluster, a place where tech obsessives work in close proximity and feed off each other’s ideas”.

Now, after reading that article, are you thinking what I am thinking? Here is what I am thinking, what I am dreaming of, what I believe I shall see in this life – that

someone will write an article similar to this on us Yoruba people sometime not far from now. Like this:

“Yorubas are a famously accomplished people. They make up 0.9 percent of the world population, but 54 percent of the world chess champions, 27 percent of the Nobel physics laureates and 31 percent of the medicine laureates. Yoruba-Americans make up less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, but 21 percent of the Ivy League student bodies, 26 percent of the Kennedy Center honorees, 37 percent of the Academy Award-winning directors, 38 percent of those on a recent Business Week list of leading philanthropists, 51 percent of the Pulitzer Prize winners for nonfiction.

“The most resourceful Yoruba are going into technology and commerce, not politics. This has an invigorating effect on Orileede Yoruba’s economy. Lagos and Ibadan have become two of the world’s foremost entrepreneurial hot spots. Orileede Yoruba has more high-tech start-ups per capita than any other nation on earth, by far. It leads the world in civilian research-and-development spending per capita. It ranks second behind the U.S. in the number of companies listed on the Nasdaq. Orileede Yoruba attracts as much venture capital as Britain, France and Germany combined. Orileede Yoruba now has a classic innovation cluster, a place where tech obsessives work in close proximity and feed off each other’s ideas”.

Wow! Is that not worth living for and fighting for? Will it not be wonderful if somebody could write this about us Yoruba and about our country Orileede Yoruba in seven or eight years from now? Sure! But the first step towards it is to create our sovereign country, separate from Nigeria. And then we shall go to work, striving to rank among the leaders of the world in technology. and prosperity. We can do it.

But there is more. Our goal must be to fly to the highest peak of the latest emerging technology, and we shall do so by investing heavily in the needed infrastructure and learning properties for our youths. Indians did that for their youths 25 years ago, and on the heights of today’s technology, Indians are high-

ups in the greatest companies in the world. Because we have been providing education for essentially all our young people in all the past 67 years, and because Nigeria's awful conditions have been pushing large numbers of these educated youths to other countries where they are acquiring varied kinds of quality education and experience, we Yoruba already have the vehicle that will take us to the top of the world in technology. We are ready to fly.

21.

We Shall Impose Order on Our Mineral Exploitation

A recent mineral survey of Nigeria ordered by a Yoruba Minister in the Nigerian Federal Government shows that every state in the Yoruba homeland has very significant mineral deposits. Unfortunately, the incompetent and chaotic management of affairs by the controllers of Nigeria has produced a situation in which a lot of unlicensed and unrecorded mining is going on in most parts of Yorubaland.

As soon as Orileede Yoruba is born, it will stop all mining immediately. The appropriate Ministry of Government will then develop a mining policy for each kind of mineral. This will provide that mining licenses shall be granted to Yoruba entrepreneurs only. It will also set up the rules for mineral sale and exports.

One major mineral, bitumen, demands a special attention. The bitumen deposit in parts of the Yoruba coastland is the second largest bitumen deposit in the world – second to Canada's deposit. Nigerian officials who were formerly charged with the duty of seeing to the mining of the bitumen somehow concluded that it could not be mined at a profit, because, according to them, it called for machinery that was different from the machinery in use in Canada. We do not know the scientific basis for this strange conclusion. It was most probably a casual response to bitumen by a Nigerian Government that was awash in petroleum money at the time. Mining the bitumen, we will be able to tar all our roads affordably, and we shall become a major exporter of bitumen in the world.

22.

We Shall Create a Highly Efficient Transportation

Simply put, the goal and desire of all of us Yoruba people is that our country, Orileede Yoruba, shall soon have one of the most efficient highway and railway systems in the world, as well as the smoothest and safest air transportation system at home and abroad.

A system of Grade One highways, or turnpikes, shall start from Lagos and radiate all over our country – a western wing going westwards to Badagry, and from there straight northwards, through Yewa, Ibarapa, Oke-Ogun to the great ancient city of Oyo-Ile; a large central wing going northwards from Lagos to Ibadan, to Offa, to Ilorin, to Oyo, and to Ilorin; Ilorin to Oyo-Ile; an eastern wing going from Lagos to Ikorodu, to Ijebu-Ode, to Ore, Ondo, Akure, Ado-Ekiti, to Kabba, to Lokoja; shorter wings going from Ore, to Okitipupa, to Igbokoda; from Akure to Owo, to Ikare, to Kabba; from Akure and Ado-Ekiti to Ilesha and Ibadan; from Ibadan, to Oshogbo, to Oyo; from Lagos to Abeokuta, to Ibadan. Besides these turnpikes, lesser roads will radiate to all parts of our country. Altogether, highway and road transportation will be very efficient in all parts of our country.

In addition, various local authorities will bear the responsibility of construction and maintenance of good rural roads to aid farming and food supply, and to take the comforts of modern life (such as electricity, pipe-borne water, village schools, village markets, even rural banking and rural postal service, etc) to rural communities. In a recent meeting of ‘Yoruba Nation’ advocates, one group came with the interesting and important proposal that, in our Orileede Yoruba, we should ensure that Yoruba people will never carry crops from the farm, or any other things, by head – that the practice of carrying loads on the head shall be eliminated from our country. Obviously, one way to achieve this cultural change is to make reasonably good roads available to all rural communities.

The technology of trains and railways has advanced tremendously in the world. Typically, Nigeria has been operating at the lowest end of the technology. We

Yoruba will not do that in our country. We will operate at the most modern end of the technology – with trains and rail systems that are currently being adopted by the most advanced countries of the world. That means that we will scrap the existing Nigerian rail system in our land and go straight for what we desire.

Our railroads will have the very important objective of greatly enhancing the unity of our homeland and people. Therefore the rail lines will be so laid that all regions of our country shall be served. The trains will be the most modern fast trains and, therefore, going by rail from any part of our country to the farthest part will take only a short time. Our train stations will be of such quality that will make every Yoruba person proud.

Concerning air travel, we already have two international airports, one in Lagos and the other in Ilorin. To these we will add one in Ibadan, one in our ancestral city of Ile-Ife, one in our revived ancient city of Oyo-Ile, one in the east of our country (in Akure) and one in the west (in Abeokuta). We will rebuild our Lagos and Ilorin international airports and ensure that all our airports have the best structural, functional and aesthetic quality. Our engineers will decide for us the number of domestic airports that our country can safely have.

About this subject of air travel, a Yoruba engineer and writer, Daniel Agbowu, wrote in his book that was published in 2008: “By now for sure, the Yorubas would have floated their own Odua International Airline servicing all parts of the world. A befitting international Aircraft Hanger would have been built in Lagos or its environs to service most of the African and International airline fleets operating in West Africa”.

We Shall Make Our Electricity Supply Maximally Efficient

Nigeria's most disastrous record of failure is in the field of electricity supply. The Nigerian national grid crashes frequently, leaving most of the country in darkness for days. Even in the best of times, every Nigerian home, office or business loses electricity supply frequently and, often, for long periods of time. Even the residences and offices in the heart of the Nigerian Federal Government in Abuja and the halls of the Nigerian National Assembly are not exempt from these experiences. Light has been known to go off in important times when the President of Nigeria is addressing the Nigerian National Assembly. In the 62 years since Nigeria's independence, Nigeria has not found ways to cope with this problem. Nigerian Presidents are fond of vowing to fix it, but, after spending billions of Naira on it, nothing changes.

The economic effects of the failure are catastrophic. Every Nigerian who can buy a generator is buying, making Nigeria the importer of most generators manufactured in the world. Small businesses cannot cope. Even larger businesses are closing down or relocating to other countries. The fumes from generators cause pollution in most city neighborhoods, with serious consequences for the health of the people.

In our own separate Orileede Yoruba, we Yoruba will speedily establish sure and dependable electricity supply. In fact, fortunately, we are starting at a very good time in the world, at the time when, as a result of climate change and its excessive heat, storms and devastations, the world's scientific leaders are seriously advising a shift from fossil fuels for generating electricity to renewable energy sources. An early 2023 report by scientists backed by the United Nations warns that the world is on the brink of catastrophic climate changes that can bring unimaginable destruction to the world. The report adds that man's addiction to the use of fossil fuels for generating energy is the cause of the problem, and seriously urges that countries should "move away from fossil fuels and invest in renewable energy".

As a starter country, we will join the ranks of countries that are going seriously for renewable energy – such as solar power, wind turbines, waterfalls. This will give our country some advantages in the world. Our country will be saved from Nigeria's diseases arising from excessive centralization. Continuously working with manageable capital investments, we will be able to supply electricity throughout our country and free our people from dependence on inherited Nigerian features within a couple of years. This will also provide employment for many of our people.

We Shall Have Regular Water Supply in all Our Towns

In the 1950s, with Chief Obahemi Awolowo as our Premier in the Western Region of Nigeria, the Regional Government provided pipe-borne water for our major towns. But in the decades of the military dictatorships and the insensitive State Governments, prolonged lack of maintenance resulted in the perishing of the water supply installations. The water pumping stations, long neglected,, disintegrated, and the water pipes through the streets rusted. Today, fetching water in the traditional way from brooks, or digging water holes by hand, or, for richer folks, sinking bore holes fitted with pumps, is the vogue in all parts of Yorubaland – even in our greatest cities. There are hints that boring too many holes can degrade the integrity of the local earth and cause danger to the foundation of buildings (as happened recently in a part of India), but our rulers of today have no interest in the people's welfare - and pay no attention.

The task for Orileede Yoruba is obvious. We will replace the pumping stations and the pipes, and extend the provision of these to communities that did not have them before. We will then make it mandatory for all to use the community water supply system, at reasonable monthly fees. Chief Awolowo did all his water supply installations in less than three years. We will be set to do ours in fewer years. Provision and maintenance of water supply systems will be the responsibility of Local Governments (Ibile).

25.

We Shall Evolve a Rational Healthcare System

We Yoruba people have medical practitioners in large numbers, but, unfortunately, the chaos, insensitivity, insecurity and hopelessness of Nigeria have driven most of them away to other countries. Therefore, the immediate task of our Orileede Yoruba will be to design a healthcare delivery system that will make working at home attractive to our medical practitioners who are just graduating, and make returning home attractive to those who have fled abroad.

In Nigeria, medical practitioners have gone on strike many times, but the response of the rulers of Nigeria is to control them rather than to meet their demands. And that is a major part of the reason for their fleeing abroad. They complain that the hospitals no longer provide satisfactory working places, that medical workers' working conditions and salaries are unsatisfactory, and that government responses to their complaints are unresponsive and disrespectful. Most Nigerian hospitals do not deserve the name hospital both in physical conditions and in the service to patients.

Therefore, the most urgent task needed towards a rational and respectable healthcare system in our new country is to carefully review the existing hospitals from the Nigerian past – their physical conditions, their medical workers' conditions of service and salaries, and the quality of service to patients - and to embark urgently on making improvements. Doing this creditably will convince our medical practitioners (those who are just graduating at home and those who are working abroad) that there are respectable places for them at home in the new country.

Then, serious consideration will be given to private medical service – private hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, pharmacies, etc . The objective will be to make the regulations and conditions of owning private medical facilities attractive to our doctors.

To achieve all these purposes and goals, Orileede Yoruba will set up a body of doctors, professionals and experts to chart out best practice in the provision of healthcare, both public services(that is, public hospitals and clinics, including the building of new facilities) and privately owned services (that is, private hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, etc). The overall goal shall be that our new country shall quickly drop its horrible Nigerian past in the field of healthcare delivery, and evolve structures, aesthetic qualities, employment conditions, and quality of service to patients, and empowerment of private practice, that an ambitiously modernizing and people-oriented country like ours desires and deserves.

Finally, our healthcare system will provide free treatment in public health institutions for certain classes of citizens, the details of which shall be set out in our laws. Special provisions will also be made for rural healthcare. We shall also create a health insurance system for all workers and for others with income from other sources.

We Shall Modernize our Cities

Most of our cities have the fame of being the oldest cities in tropical Africa. In modern times, if we Yoruba had not been part of Nigeria and if we had been able to continue to develop as we were doing in the 1950s, we would have raised the quality of our cities very high in the decades since then, and at least some of our cities would rank by now among the most attractive and most sophisticated cities in the world.

We have lost valuable time. But in our new country of Orileede Yoruba, we will gain the time we have lost. Every one of our cities will experience marked improvement. We shall focus the most special attention on four of our cities – first, our ancestral and most ancient city of Ile-Ife; second, our now destroyed great ancient city of Oyo-Ile; third; our modern mega-city of Lagos; fourth our modern political capital of Ibadan.

The name of our Ife is very loud in our culture, and even louder among scholars of art, culture, and African history and the Black African Diaspora, in the world. No other tropical African city comes close to Ife in worldwide fame. Unhappily, Ife bears today the shocking appearance imposed on it by its recent past- its destruction twice in the 19th century, and its total neglect since the beginning of the 20th century. Consequently, when one visits Ife today, one cannot but be alarmed and shocked. Yet Ife can be a great asset to us Yoruba people, as a central place of tourism and even pilgrimage in Black Africa. That is what we shall, in our new country, strive to achieve. With our own national funds, and with international financial support, we shall transform Ile-Ife into a super city with modern streets and facilities (great hotels, restaurants, amusement parks, places of traditional festivities, residential estates, etc), and with a large spread of cultural tourism spots – shrines, statues, historic compounds, historic places, and the palace. Our goal shall be an Ife city that attracts an endless stream of visitors and tourists regularly, and pilgrims to some major historic events annually, a great

city whose tourism and pilgrimage shall seriously boost the economy of our country.

The city of Oyo-Ile, capital city of the Old Oyo Empire, was, in the 18th century, the largest, the most heavily populated, the politically most powerful and most influential, the commercially richest and most widely influential, and altogether the most prestigious city in all of Black Africa. When multiple internal and external troubles forced the people of this great city to abandon their city in 1835-6, we Yoruba suffered the most shattering loss in our whole history. Today, Oyo-Ile is covered by bush and wild grass and roamed by lions and other wild beasts. But, with the birth of our Orileede Yoruba, the time will be ripe for us Yoruba to embark on resuscitating this great city. Already, many ideas are circulating among us about the rebuilding. The end result will be a shimmering new city, the home of national and international sports events, sports facilities (stadiums, theaters, tennis courts, etc), beauty contests, music competitions, large residential estates, glistening modern facilities such hotels, restaurants, saunas, and, finally a great national university. We shall make this city the place to which the world will come to engage in sports, to hold great conferences, to holiday, to hold beauty contests, and to see great sights including the revived ancient palace, revived famous marketplace, some revived lineage compounds, some refurbished ancient shrines.

Lagos is our greatest modern city – according to some of our youths, our megalopolis. Beautiful new additions to Lagos are spreading out – in places like Lekki, Victoria Garden City, Banana Island, etc. But the central piece of Lagos Island needs to be seriously restructured and modernized, and so do expansive parts of the mainland. Our Orileede Yoruba will embark immediately and massively on this task, with the objective of raising Lagos to the status of one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Though Ibadan became the capital city of the Western Region in 1951 and has remained the political capital of the Yoruba nation since then, no attempt has been made to uplift the structure and appearance of Ibadan. In our new country, we will change this situation rapidly. And the objective will be to restructure and

elevate the face of all parts of Ibadan, and to make the city a national capital that all Yoruba people will be proud of.

But we must repeat that all our cities will receive serious modernization. Our cities are a great legacy from our ancestors. We must make each one a legacy that we are proud of.

Finally, we will build beautiful residential estates in every part of our country. Houses in these states will be functional and attractive, and will be reasonably prized and affordable to most of our people. Our father Awolowo built our first housing estate (the first housing estate in Nigeria) in the 1950s. In our new country, we shall return seriously to that effort.

Hitherto, our general practice is that each individual buys a plot of land in a new estate or in an old neighborhood and builds on it as he wishes, with the result that our streets and neighborhoods mostly look disorderly and unattractive. In many cases, the individual is unable to complete the building for years, thereby adding to the ugliness of the neighborhood. In the developed countries of the world, it is real estate developers that build residential houses for sale. The real estate developer buys the land, lays it out for an attractive residential estate, designs the kinds of homes to be built in the estate, determines the price of each design, and offers the plots for sale, with the buyer selecting the house design that he likes. The developer then builds the house for the buyer. The developer also constructs the roads in the estate, lays out the water pipes and the electric lines, ready to connect to each house as it is built. This system always results in well ordered and attractive housing estates, streets and neighborhoods. The developer creates an office in the estate, from where he serves the needs of the house owners at agreed prices. In our new country, we will go for this kind of housing development and therefore make our people owners of very comfortable homes and decent streets and neighborhoods in lovely estates. The individual will not need to accumulate money for building a house; all he needs is satisfactory proof income and an initial small deposit to the developer. After that, after the completed house is handed to him, he pays what he owes the developer in easy monthly installments over many years (commonly 30 years in America). The law will cover all of these details. Since the developer pays national taxes and then

local taxes on his estate to the Local Government, and the house owners pay tenement taxes on their houses to the Local Government, this system puts good money into the treasury of the national government and the treasury of the Local Government for its local services to its people. It is a win-win arrangement, and we Yoruba people deserve it.

27.

We Shall Seriously Emphasize Enterprise and Business

We Yoruba were the foremost business leaders in Nigeria for most of the 20th century. In the 1950s, our father, Obafemi Awolowo, pursued policies that greatly elevated the Yoruba in business. He created the Western Region Investment Corporation, the largest indigenous-owned agglomeration of investment capital in Africa, with holdings in manufacturing, real estate, banking and commerce. This alone put us Yoruba highest in business in Nigeria. Then, he established the first industrial estates in Africa (the Ikeja Industrial Estate followed by the Apapa Industrial Estate) and these attracted a wide array of businesses and industries, making the Yoruba homeland the most industrializing part of Africa. Yoruba business captains sprang up, especially in Lagos and Ibadan, but also in Ijebu-Ode, Abeokuta, Ikorodu, and some other towns in the further Yoruba interior. We Yoruba are only about 25% of the population of Nigeria, but, altogether, in most of the 20th century, there were more notable businessmen among us Yoruba people than in all the rest of Nigeria combined.

But Nigeria has forced us to retrogress – and to gradually lose our business share in Nigeria. During the military dictatorships, it somehow became the general belief among the dictators that the Western Region Development Corporation negated the interest of Nigeria and, therefore, official policy saw to its dismemberment and ultimate destruction. In the same atmosphere of hostility to all things Yoruba, most of the businesses in the Industrial Estates failed or relocated to other countries, and, as we said before, their industrial houses were turned to churches or Event Centers. In the generally hostile atmosphere too, it became difficult for notable Yoruba businessmen to succeed the old ones who were dying.

Refugees from distressed parts of Nigeria took over as owners of most businesses in the Yoruba Western Region. Among the Yoruba intelligentsia, the question is perpetually being asked how this has been possible in the homeland of the Yoruba people, traditionally the best traders and business people in Africa. The

clearest and most plausible answer is now circulating on the social media. According to this, during the past fifty years, one of the refugee peoples created a massive business advantage for themselves by establishing a hidden, exclusive, trade in small and easily smuggled quantities of cocaine from South America and Asia, smuggled to the rich countries of Europe and North America where they sell it at about 4,000% profit. Doing this repeatedly results in exponential growth in capital. The money is then used to buy merchandise in Europe or America or China for importation to the main cities of Yorubaland. In the Yoruba cities, these people are able to sell the merchandise quickly at low prices and thus edge out Yoruba and other rivals from the market. The latter end up losing their shops to their cocaine-backed rivals. If they have taken loans from banks for their trade and have used their properties as collateral for the loans, they also lose their properties to the banks and their rivals buy such properties from the banks. Most of these people who live in rental houses are also priced out of their homes by their rivals who are able to offer more money to landlords. All this destroys the lives of the Yoruba host communities. Much of the same disaster is being inflicted on some other peoples in other parts of Nigeria.

We Yoruba men and women who are fighting for self-determination for our Yoruba nation cannot, and do not, confirm the explanation that is offered above. But we are determined and certain that as soon as we have our sovereign nation state, we Yoruba people shall go powerfully back to our culture of enterprise and our love of prosperity. The government of our country will make it a cardinal policy to lift up Yoruba businesses and businessmen. Certainly, that will include serious steps to legally institute a level field for all businesses and entrepreneurs, and to eliminate any hidden practices that can confer unfair advantage upon any section of the business community.

In a recent Yoruba Self Determination meeting, a young man stood up and proposed that when we get our new country, our Orileede Yoruba, our government must raise up at least a hundred millionaires every year among Yoruba people including youths. When he said that, the meeting exploded with wild and prolonged applause. Sure, what that youth said can happen. Yes it can.

At the bottom of the entrepreneurial ladder, our government will develop a Small Business Program for aspiring entrepreneurs, similar to what they have in the United States of America where a Small Business Administration (SBA) is a very important feature of the national economy. Roughly, the idea is that when an American conceives a business idea, there are agencies within the SBA that can help him to put it together properly, and help to guide him to write a good Business Plan that he can take to the bank for a business loan. If he fails to get a loan from the bank, then he returns to the SBA and apply for an SBA loan. Typically, the SBA will grant him the loan – and he will start his business. This is only for small businesses and, therefore, mostly for youths. But it is regarded in America as a major pillar of the U.S. economy and it is therefore always dutifully given respectable financial allocations for its services. In fact, the allocation to the SBA is part of the President's annual budget. It is so important that, for instance, at the peak of the **Covid-19** pandemic recently, the U.S. Congress made a point of voting large allocations for the SBA, so as to keep it serving Americans strongly at the peak of the pandemic. Naturally, many small businesses do grow to become big businesses; this is a secret of America's success. It will be a source of our success too - soon.

Furthermore, the great improvements in roads, railways and air transportation, in electricity and water supply, and in the great improvement in public security and order in our new country, will enhance the chances of our business success. So too will the elimination of public corruption. No entrepreneur applying for a government contract will need to bribe public officials, and no contractor who has done a government contract will need to share his profits with public officials. It will soon be a new day for enterprise, success and prosperity, as soon as our Orileede Yoruba comes into existence. What that far-sighted youth said – that our country must make many millionaires per year – will happen.

We Shall Take Good Conscientious of our Weaker Citizens

We Yoruba pride ourselves as a people who honour and conscientiously take care of our aged persons, and who care very seriously for the weaker persons among us – such as the physically challenged or the mentally challenged. In traditional Yoruba society, we used to say proudly that we never let our weak or infirm become destitute in the streets or let them become beggars in the streets. We used to brag that any beggars seen on our streets are non-Yoruba persons. A German scholar, Prof. Ulli Beier who lived for many years in Yorubaland in the 1950s and 1960s wrote later that, in all those years, he never saw any Yoruba destitute or beggar in the streets.

But, gradually since 1960, as Yoruba people have become poorer and poorer, there have been more and more Yoruba beggars. At first, these were the physically or mentally challenged. But over recent decades, increasing numbers of Yoruba physically and mentally healthy and firm have ended up as beggars. Prof. Ulli Beier wrote that when he came back on a brief visit to Nigeria in 1986 after a long absence from Nigeria, he saw some Yoruba beggars – women who were perfectly healthy. Sadly, he noted in his diary, “The life of Yoruba society has crumbled”. The life of the Yoruba people has been crumbling more and more since then. Today, the streets of Yoruba cities are swarming with Yoruba beggars healthy and infirm, among the enormous crowds of non-Yoruba people who are coming from their homelands to beg in the streets of Yoruba cities.

When we have our own sovereign country separate from Nigeria, this whole situation will quickly change. Emergency measures shall be instituted to get all Yoruba folks away from the lives of begging in the streets. And then, within a few years, the general revival of our businesses and the general prosperity of our economy will take full care of the situation. Concerning the massive crowds of beggars from other countries, we shall institute measures to get them returned in a calm manner to their countries.

Beyond these, we shall evolve social welfare policies for our needy people – welfare assistance to persons who lose their jobs, welfare support for some months to parents who have babies, various old-age benefits, free or low-rent housing for aged persons, etc.

We Shall, At Last, Go Seriously For Modern Agriculture

No African country has succeeded in modernizing agriculture and markedly increasing agricultural productivity. Our father Awolowo worked very well with our traditional cocoa farmers in the 1950s and established a very effective cocoa marketing system, and he thereby made Yoruba cocoa farmers the most productive African farmers of the time. He also established many centers for Yoruba youths to learn modern agricultural methods. Unfortunately, in the 1960s and 1970s, hostile Federal Military Administrations seized the cocoa marketing system and wrecked it, as a result of which our cocoa farmers lost earnings from cocoa and abandoned their cocoa plantations – resulting in Nigeria ceasing to be a cocoa exporting country. An attempt was made under the Babangida military dictatorship in the late 1980s to revive cocoa prosperity, but it was ignorant of the fundamentals of cocoa farming and it did not achieve much. At the same time, from 1963 on, Chief Awolowo's agricultural training centers were abandoned and allowed to fall into ruins.

In the past few decades, some members of the Yoruba elite began to venture into serious modern farming, but Fulani marauders quickly destroyed most of it. A German-educated Ph.D. holder established a large modern farm in Upper Ogun in Oyo State. Just when his farm was beginning to produce, the Fulani ambushed and murdered him near his farm and mutilated his body, and his enterprise fizzled out. One of the most eminent citizens of our nation raised a large modern farm near Akure, but the Fulani terrorists kidnapped him on the farm and held him in the forest for days until ransom was paid for him. During his captivity, his Fulani abductors kept asking him if he would go back and continue the farm – that is, if he would continue to farm on the land that belongs to the Fulani. For months after, the Fulani kept coming in the night to burn his palm trees. A young man won a foreign contract to supply a certain kind of wood. He came home and raised a plantation of the wood, but the Fulani came and cut all his young trees. Many others have suffered the same fate or fled from suffering the same fate, and the rising growth of elite-owned modern farming in our land has essentially stopped.

It is for these and many other reasons that we must exit Nigeria and establish our own sovereign country, Orileede Yoruba, in which we shall be free to provide security for all our people and ensure for them the freedom to go into any enterprise of their choice in any place of their choice in their country.

Of course, farming will be one of our topmost enterprises. And it will be increasingly modern and mechanized farming, as we determinedly phase out traditional peasant farming employing hoes and cutlasses. We will, from the start, energetically promote the designing and production of agricultural machines and equipment in our country, because experience worldwide has shown that when agricultural machines are designed and produced in the country of their use, they are more suitable for use there. For instance, we know the depth of our topsoil and therefore, purchasing our land-working machines from countries with deeper top-soils could be a poor way to start off.

But the emphasis will not be narrowly on farming alone. It will also be on the development of our rural communities, in order to strengthen the population base for successful agriculture. We will invest seriously on building roads to all rural communities, and on rural water and electricity supply, and even on rural banking and rural postal services. Our objective will be to bring the features of modern comfort to all our rural people, in order to make rural life acceptable so that our rural populations will cease the destructive practice of massive migrations to urban places. In fact, we will make rural life so attractive that many of our urban people will seek to share in rural life.

So, for the overall rapid development of our country, our government will give maximum dedication to agricultural and rural development. We will quickly become able to feed ourselves; and then we will become a major exporter of selected farm products. We will emphasize organic farming, in order to maximize the acceptability of our farm products worldwide, and also to minimize our fertilizer importation. We will also produce our own fertilizer. And the strategy of the youth farms development will borrow richly from Israel's Kibutz farms system with which the small state of Israel has turned arid deserts into the most productive farmlands in the world, and the process of which has made Israel a world leader in agricultural science and water management.

In the course of our self-determination struggle now, we are discovering that large numbers of our educated youths are eager to make their life's success through farming. That is a very happy development for our nation. When our new country is born, it will open the doors wide for agricultural and rural development, and for these youths.

30.

We Shall Elevate Tourism

Our Yoruba homeland is very rich in cultural tourism assets. The city of Ile-Ife leads the way with its shrines, monuments, statues, ancient festivals, and other ancient locations of importance. But all across Yorubaland, there are large numbers of shrines, ancient festivals, etc. And then there are the countless types of traditional masks, each of which features its annual appearances and festivals – Egungun in Ado-Ekiti and some other Ekiti towns, Epa also in Ekiti, Gelede in Yewa and Egba towns, Eyo in Lagos, and others. And then there are outstanding natural features that regularly attract visitors – such as the hot spring in Ikogosi in Ekiti, Idanre Hill, Olumo Rock, Erin Ijesa Waterfall, Erinta Waterfall, the lakes on hill tops in Idere and Ado-Aye in the Ibarapa area of Oyo State, and similarly impressive rock towers across the country. And then there are many places of historical importance – such as the slave exports place in Badagry, the Kiriji War battle field between Igbajo and Imesi-Ife. And then, there are the impressive ones among the palaces of Yoruba Obas. And finally, there are some important assets that our new country might designate as national monuments – a sure one of which is Chief Obafemi Awolowo’s residence and mausoleum in Ikenne.

Our new country will need to invest money on some of the places mentioned above in order to upgrade them to the status of tourist attractions. Most of the festivals will also need to be improved upon. Then, one important festival will need to be recreated – namely, the Ife Festival which Obafemi Awolowo University initiated in the late 1960s and which for many years annually attracted large crowds of tourists, especially scholars and artists, from abroad, and which was abandoned after the Federal Government took possession of the university. In fact, the Ife Festival will now need to be greatly expanded to make it the central festival of the Yoruba world. It will encapsulate the total Ife as the place of origins, Ife mythology, and the central importance of Ife to all descendants of the Yoruba nation worldwide. Important persons from all over the Yoruba world (from Brazil, Cuba, United States, the Caribbean, Europe, etc) will regularly serve

on its Board, and hopefully people in the hundreds of thousands will come annually to it. It should be like the Mecca of the Black World. And its halls, parking lots, approach roads, and Ife hotels, shall be of high international standards.

Needless to say, the impact of the tourism and pilgrimage on the economy of our Orileede Yoruba will be great. It can become a major factor in the prosperity and buoyancy our country. To manage it all, a National Tourist Commission will be set up, and its members will be artists and scholars from our homeland, artists and scholars from other parts of the Yoruba world, and significant traditional figures, Obas and chiefs.

31.

We Shall Preserve and Strengthen Religious Harmony In Our Country

Many scholars and researchers in the world acclaim us Yoruba as the best managers of religious diversity, the masters of religious harmony, in the world. Here are a couple of examples. A London University scholar, Professor J.Y.D. Peel, who spent decades studying the Yoruba nation, in his last major article before he died in old age in 2016, wrote that the Yoruba know better than any other people in the world how to maintain religious harmony among groups of people who hold different religions. He added that the Yoruba are very proud of this, that it is an exceptional cultural achievement, and that we Yoruba must hold it dear and never let anybody or anything take it from us. He then added the memorable statement that the kind of tree that has produced the poisonous fruits that we now see in Boko Haram and Islamic fundamentalist terror can never grow in Yoruba soil.

Two American researchers, Gerald MacLoughlin and Clarence Bouchat, who recently did a study of Nigeria for United States authorities, wrote in their report that the Yoruba are a model of religious harmony, since Yoruba Christians, Muslims and devotees of traditional religion live together harmoniously not only in the same towns but also in the same households.

In short, our religious culture is one of respect for every person's religious choice and therefore harmony among persons of different religions. Even though we have lived for over one century in the same country with radical and even fundamentalist Islamic peoples, we have held to our culture of religious mutual respect and harmony. Efforts made by some other peoples to import Islamic radicalism or Islamic fundamentalism or religious conflict to our homeland have always failed. Therefore, the task before the rulers and leaders of our Orileede Yoruba will be to make sure that we Yoruba faithfully preserve our religious culture of respect and harmony. This is a field of societal development in which we have a solid cultural weapon for success.

Happily, in the course of our current self-determination struggle, various developments have arisen to point to a future of heightened religious harmony in

our coming country. First, some of our people created a large prayer-warrior group consisting of Christian, Muslim and Isese prayer warriors, a group engaging in marathon praying for our nation for some days every month. This is a revolutionary, futuristic, development. Then, more surprisingly, some of our youths created a Yoruba Nation Christian Youth Association, a Yoruba Nation Muslim Youth Association, a Yoruba Nation Isese Youth Association, all committed to praying separately, and jointly together, for our Yoruba nation. These two developments represent, undoubtedly, the first of their kind in the history of the world. They introduce a Yoruba nation that is poised to teach the human race a whole lot in religious harmony, peaceful co-existence, and love - in every country, and in the whole world. It is a truly great prospect.

We Shall Restore Dignity to our Obas

In the course of the history of Yoruba membership of Nigeria till today, our Yoruba Obas almost totally lost their accustomed honour, prestige and dignity. That is one of our most damaging losses in Nigeria.

In the 1950s, our father Awolowo was fully aware that our whole monarchical system was in danger of being destroyed under the constitutions that were evolving in Nigeria. As Premier, he made it policy that the Obas would not lose any dignity. He was personally close as a friend to many of the Obas. Finally, in respect for the fact that our Yoruba culture is a monarchical culture, the leaders of the Region under him included a House of Chiefs in the Western Regional Constitution. He also made the traditionally highest of the Obas, the Ooni of Ife, the Regional Governor, a position ceremonially superior to the position of the Regional Premier. In the House of Chiefs, the Obas commanded real constitutional power and therefore felt truly that they were the fathers of the Yoruba nation.

But in the federally generated crisis in the Western Region in 1962, all that had been given to the Obas were taken away. The House of Chiefs was allowed to continue to exist (until the January 1966 coup), but the actions and attitudes of the rulers of the Region under the Sole Administrator and the Akintola returned premiership of 1963-66, left the whole Region in no doubt that the days of conscientious respect and honour to the Obas had gone. One Oba who dared to say something critical about the Premier's administration in 1963 had his House of Chiefs salary loudly and rudely cut to near nothing, and he was subjected to public ridicule. The Ooni of Ife was replaced as Regional Governor by a politician.

The condition of the Obas has gone worse and worse in the era of the off-and-on military dictatorships, 1966-99. Because the Obas have lost seriously in prestige, and because Yoruba society generally has declined seriously in morality and become part of the corruption of Nigeria, the home base for each Oba has deteriorated abysmally – so much so that an Oba's appointment is now a function of money and corruption and political manipulations. Gone is the fear that our

people used to have from the belief that an Oba was divinely chosen and was invested with sacred powers. Politicians have turned Obas into political pawns. Opposing groups of politicians commonly compete for political support by the Obas, even though the generality of Yoruba people want their Obas to be high above politics. The generality of Yoruba people hate the constitutional arrangement that vests the appointment, installation and deposition of their Obas in the State Governors, and hate even more passionately the absurd Nigerian order of protocol whereby even the highest of the Yoruba Oba is ranked below the Sultan of Sokoto.

Our Obas are enormously important to us, to our greatness in history, to our distinguished civilization among all peoples of Black Africa. It is our Obas that founded our cities and towns, the number one source of our great civilization in history. Therefore, a major reason for our struggle today to separate our Yoruba nation from Nigeria and to have a separate sovereign country of our own, is to restore our Obas to the highly exalted position that they deserve among us Yoruba people.

Most certainly, therefore, a resuscitation of the true position of Yoruba Obas will be a serious objective of our new country, Orileede Yoruba, when it is born. It is difficult to tell the possible details of this program from this distance. But, judging from the long subdued wishes of the overwhelming majority of Yoruba people, the Yoruba monarchical system and the Obas are will enter into a new era of constitutional relevance, functional involvement in the development, progress and prosperity of the Yoruba nation, serious status elevation, and greater reverence among Yoruba people. For our Obas as fathers of our nation, a glorious new sun is about to rise.

33.

We Shall Return Fully to Our Yoruba Language

The Yoruba language has retrogressed seriously in the past one century. By now, large numbers of Yoruba youths cannot speak the language confidently or write even a short message in Yoruba. On the surface, the problem springs from the fact that many Yoruba parents are intervening in their children's language growth, by directing their children to speak only the English language and avoid the Yoruba language. These days, it is common for parents to display in their homes notices urging people not to "speak vernacular" in the interest of the children.

But at the root, the problem comes from the fact that we Yoruba people have been living since the beginning of the 20th century in a country that is hostile to our culture and our interests. Under British colonial rule up to 1960, the learning emphasis in schools was on learning the history and language of the colonial overlord, resulting in a small, but noticeable, decline of the Yoruba language. But since Nigeria's independence in 1960, the decline has gradually become more and more serious as official hostility has grown. Some State Governments of the Yoruba states, responding to pressure from the Federal Government, withdrew resources from the teaching of Yoruba language and history in their schools. The situation got so serious that, in the 1990s, the Nigerian government prohibited the teaching of Yoruba history and language in Yoruba schools. By the beginning of the 21st century, more and more Yoruba families were forcing their children to speak only English, in the belief that the mastery of English language enhances a young person's entry into the Nigerian economy and politics. By then, scholars of language were saying that the Yoruba language was seriously declining, and

predicting that, at its current rate of decline, the Yoruba language could become extinct before the end of this century.

But help is near now. As soon as we have our Orileede Yoruba, Yoruba language will become our official language - the language of education, of government and administration, of politics, of commerce, and of everything. For a while, we might tolerate English in some fringe areas of life. We will also establish some special institutions for teaching some foreign languages – English, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese – in order to produce some persons for our diplomatic service and for managers in foreign businesses. But Yoruba language will be our language, and the language with which we shall speak to the world at the United Nations.

Happily, we Yoruba have today a good number of the world's most acclaimed linguists – professors of language studies. Some of these have given their whole academic live

to the study of the Yoruba language and are waiting eagerly now for our new country – waiting eagerly to put their knowledge and expertise into helping our new country to develop its Yoruba language for all areas of human activity.

34.

We Shall Keep the Costs of Governing Low and Patriotic

One of the worst kinds of public corruption in Nigeria's culture of public corruption is the absurd, unpatriotic and destructively huge expenses that Nigeria's political leaders allocate to the mere business of governing. To be brief, here are some of its sickening items:

Salaries

Nigeria's President is paid a salary of N14.4 million per month plus allowances, the largest of which is his Constituency Allowance of N8.76 million. His Vice-President N12.1m plus allowances; Senate President N8.69m plus allowances; Deputy Senate President N8.1m plus allowances; Senator N12.766m inclusive of allowances; Speaker House of Representatives N7.4m; Speaker of each of 36 State Houses of Assembly N2.4m plus allowances; Chairman each of 740 Local Governments N2.06m.

Multiple Allowances

The allowances are many – Constituency Allowance , Personal Assistant Allowance, Vehicle Maintenance and fuel Allowance, House Maintenance Allowance, Domestic staff Allowance, Entertainment Allowance, Utility Allowance, Hardship Allowance, Annual leave Allowance, Wardrobe Allowance, Newspapers Allowance, Security Allowance. These allowances together usually amount to many times the basic salary of each public official. For example, one very high public official earns, in addition to his basic salary, 25% for his Personal Assistant

Allowance, 75% for Domestic Staff Allowance, 45% for Entertainment Allowance, 30% for Utility Allowance, 20% for Monitoring Allowance, 200% for Accommodation, 300% for Furniture – all together amounting to 595% of this official's basic salary. Besides, every legislator gets a Constituency Allowance which, in some cases, could be bigger than the official's basic salary. Most of these allowances are a thoughtless carry-over of the allowances that British colonial officials used to be paid for being brought away from their temperate country to serve in tropic Nigeria. Altogether, the allowances cost Nigeria many billions of Naira monthly. Nigeria's political leaders seem to believe that Nigeria exists mostly to make its public officials millionaires and billionaires.

Security Votes

The military dictatorships gave many destructive gifts to Nigeria. One of the most destructive is the peculiarly Nigerian Security Vote. Monthly, Nigeria allocates many billions of Naira as 'security votes' for the Nigerian Federal Government and for the 36 states of the Nigerian Federation. Each State Governor gets some hundreds of millions of Naira every month, the highest getting billions of Naira, and the Federal President getting probably many times as much as some states. The State Governors of the five leading states in this horrible use of public money (namely, Bauchi State, Lagos State, Akwa Ibom State, Rivers State and Oyo State) each receives about 1.5billion Naira per month. The allocations are legally protected from audits. Neither under British colonial rule nor during the first years of independence did Nigeria have this curse.

Legislators Deserve the Most Expensive Cars?

In late 2023, during the first months of the presidency of our own brother, President Bola Tinubu, Nigerians were amazed at the almost total destruction of the Nigerian economy by Tinubu's predecessor, President Muhammadu Buhari. In January 2023, some months before Buhari left office, his Minister of Finance had said that Nigeria had been borrowing loans abroad to be able to keep running, and that Nigeria was expending 90% of her revenues on servicing foreign debts. The enormity of her statements had not then been clearly seen by most Nigerians at that time. But, by November 13, 2023, the situation was very clear.

The National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, informed the chiefs of the Nigerian Security Services on 13th November that President Tinubu had inherited from President Buhari a “bankrupt country”, and that there was no money for running the government. Three days later, the Finance Minister and Coordinating Minister for the Economy, Wale Edun, informed the Nigerian Senate that Nigeria could not continue to borrow money, because Nigeria was already expending 98% of its government revenues to service foreign debts. At the same time, the Nigerian currency, the Naira, was dropping sharply in value, and hyper-inflation was brutalizing the lives of the masses of most Nigerians. There were growing reports that families could no longer feed themselves and their children, that owners of cars or electric generators could not afford to bear the high cost of gasoline for their cars or generators, that small businesses were perishing, that large foreign businesses were fleeing from Nigeria, that some Nigerians who could no longer see any way forward were committing suicide.

Yet, in these circumstances, the news came that the Nigerian Senate was buying cars worth 160 million Naira per car for each Senator. To the rulers of Nigeria, such a preposterous act is perfectly normal. That is Nigeria.

Summary

A study currently running on the social media offers some information about the wealth status of the five richest former Nigerian presidents and governors. Of the five, the richest has an estimated wealth of 5.4 billion US Dollars; one has about 3 billion US Dollars; and the remaining three have slightly under 2 billion US Dollars each. All made their wealth through public office. Two of the five are former Military Presidents. For many decades now, various international agencies have classified Nigeria annually as about the most corrupt country in the world.

IN OUR ORILEEDE YORUBA, these unpatriotic uses of public money will never happen. Legislators will serve their country on a part-time basis only – just as was the case during the Awolowo premiership in the 1950s. They will hold on to their substantive jobs – as teachers, managers, journalists, engineers, doctors, lawyers, etc - and their legislative salaries will be only for the time they spend working in the legislature. There will be some allowances – for instance for renting houses to

live in during legislative work. But such allowances will be frugally determined. Since we already have very many government-owned houses, legislators will be able to live in such houses at reasonable rents. Executive officials (such as Prime Minister, Ministers, etc,) will live without rent in government-owned houses, but all living expenses there will be on their own accounts. The government will not buy cars or build houses for high public officials, elected or appointed. There will be nothing like the Nigerian 'security vote' that is above auditing. Our country's incomes will be used faithfully for developing our country and for improving the quality of life of our people. And there will be 'watchdog' agencies watching to see that government accounts are managed with integrity.

Politics and Public Service Will be Patriotic and Clean and Open to All True Patriots in our New Country

Our politics and our government, from the moment when we become a separate sovereign country, will be guided entirely by the principles and ideas that our ancestors evolved over one thousand years ago, the principles that guided our every kingdom throughout our pre-colonial history, the principles that our father Obafemi Awolowo returned faithfully to when he was called upon to rule us as Premier of our Western Region under Nigeria's limited self-government system in the 1950s. Our ancestors evolved the principles that power belongs to the people, that leadership and government are a sacred trust, that both young and old have some wisdom to contribute, that each person bears in him or her the dignity of the ancestors and deserves to be sensibly respected as such, that government exists only for the wellbeing of the people. Living upon these principles, our ancestors created from the 9th century on, many towns (most of them proudly walled), many gorgeous monarchies, an economy based on a prosperous agriculture and rich manufactures, and a commerce that spanned the whole of tropical Africa. For many centuries until the advent of European colonial rule, our country was the most urbanized country in Africa and one of the most urbanized countries in the world.

Following upon the same principles, Chief Obafemi Awolowo gave us, in only six years as Premier of our Region in the 1950s, the highest achieving and most productive government in Africa, the first Free Education program in Africa, the first television house in Africa, the only indigenous agglomeration of investment capital in Africa, the first industrial estate and residential estates in Africa, the best modern Civil Service in Africa, the most democratic politics in Africa, the cleanest elections in Africa, even the first sports stadium in Nigeria, purified water systems in most towns of our Region, a free radio system serving all our people, the first Pilgrims Welfare Board in Nigeria (to help Western Region's Muslim citizens on pilgrimage to Mecca), the earliest efforts at modern livestock ranching in Nigeria, the only skills development centers for youths in Nigeria, the longest and best network of modernized roads in Nigeria, the first and largest tertiary education scholarship program in Nigeria.

In later years, whenever our father Awolowo was asked how he managed to achieve all these wonders in a few years in spite of the limited financial resources of our Region in the 1950s, he usually responded with a Yoruba proverb, "Ohun to ba wu ni lo npo lola eni" – it is what a person fervently desires that the person is likely to have in abundance.

What Chief Awolowo fervently desired as ruler of our people was that our people should have a rapidly, consistently and sustainably improving quality of life. When he became Premier, the government planners decided to build a grand Premier's Lodge for him; but he rejected it and chose instead to continue to live as Premier in the home that he had owned in Ibadan for some years. When they then offered him a less expensive option – to renovate for him at still considerable cost a vacant colonial official's house – he rejected that also.

And when a titanic crisis confronted his plans for the Free Primary Education Program, he stood firm and fought it like a true warrior. What happened is that the statistics of school-age children produced by the colonial administration was grossly wrong. Therefore, when the children streamed to the schools on the first day of the Free Education Program, their numbers far exceeded the numbers expected by the schools in all parts of the Region, and there were therefore not enough classrooms and teachers for them. Many well-wishers, and many pundits,

advised the Premier to suspend the start of the program and to send the children back home meanwhile. But he answered that he would not deny the parents and the children that which they so fervently desired. And he stood his ground, directed that no child must be sent back home, and pulled success out of the fire – and the Free Education Program finally stabilized.

There are many other similarly amazing stories about our father, Awolowo. Here is just one more. When the leaders of the three Regions of Nigeria went for a Constitutional Conference for many days at the Colonial Office in London, one of the Western Region's leaders fell sick and had to be admitted to hospital. The hospital bill was considerable. The Western Region's Commissioner in London came to Chief Awolowo and offered to pay the bill from the account of the Western Regional Commission in London, with the arrangement that Chief Awolowo as Premier, on arrival back to Ibadan, would get the Regional Ministry of Finance to send the money back to the Commission in London. But rather than agree to that, Chief Awolowo called the Western Region's leaders attending the Constitutional Conference together and proposed to them that, rather than take money from the Region to pay their friend's hospital bill and have to explain later to the people of the Western Region how the Region's money had been spent in London, the leaders themselves should contribute the money from their own pockets for their friend's care. He then put down his own contribution, and the others followed his example, and the hospital bill was paid - without taking a penny from the Region's money.

That is the quality of stewardship that the Yoruba people desire and deserve from their leaders. And it is the quality of stewardship they will get completely and consistently from our political leaders and our governments when our own separate sovereign country, our Orileede Yoruba, comes into existence - soon.

We need to add the following critically important points. Politics in our Orileede Yoruba will definitely be only for patriots who desire to serve their people and country, and persons seeking to become rich through public office will never have a chance in the political life of our nation. In Nigeria, the horrific public corruption, the consequently prohibitive costs of participating in high-level politics, the prohibitive costs of running for election, the danger of injury and

even of death in politics, all make politics the preserve of mostly the daring, the crooked, the greedy. Many decent Omoluabi men and women who went into Nigeria's politics found that they could not succeed without suppressing their conscience and surrendering themselves to Nigeria's culture of corruption. As some of our bright youths have said in a joke, stealing public money, contriving ways to hide the stolen money, organizing the money laundering, going abroad to go and ensure that the foreign bank is keeping the account safely and secretly, always studiously putting up some air of innocence – these are enough as full-time job, and are commonly the full-time job, of Nigerian public officials.

The political arena will be totally different in our sovereign Yoruba nation, our Orileede Yoruba. Patriotic persons who have a lot to offer to their nation and their people, men and women who, during our Yoruba Self-determination Struggle, have learnt the truth about the expectations of our nation, and others who sincerely and patriotically accept the philosophy of our new country, will find it easy, attractive and pleasant to participate in our nation's politics, and will end up being honored by our Yoruba people. Our politics will be dominated by ideas and contests of ideas. In our Orileede Yoruba, all roads - in politics, the professions, technology, agriculture, commerce, academia, business, the arts, the sciences, and all other fields of life - will be wide open to all on the patriotic terms laid down by our nation. Ours will be a country that the whole world will respect for our manifest democracy and meritocracy, our competent and patriotic public officials, and our success and prosperity, a country that all other countries of the world will be willing and happy to do business with.

In an address by the leader of our Yoruba Self-determination Struggle, Prof. Banji Akintoye, the following statements were made to a crowded conference of Yoruba people, mostly youths, in Ibadan in late 2019, at the beginning of our struggle, "We Yoruba must always bear in mind that these same Yoruba politicians of today, these brothers and sisters of ours who are now deeply immersed in the deplorable standards – the corruption, the self-centered greed, the crookedness, the insensitivity - of Nigeria's political life, are still fundamentally our brothers and sisters, and that they are also inheritors of the ingrained Yoruba standards of politics and leadership – the responsibility in

positions of leadership and governance, and the dedication of the powers and resources of leadership and government solely to the wellbeing of the people. When we have our own separate sovereign Yoruba country, our Orileede Yoruba, these same brothers and sisters of ours will certainly return from the accursed bosom of Nigeria to the blessed bosom of their own Yoruba nation and give us Yoruba people the kind of leadership and government that we desire and deserve. The many Awolowo's who are today submerged in the dung-heap of Nigeria will shine forth with the brilliant light that was borne by our Yoruba ancestors throughout our history and by their illustrious son Obafemi Awolowo in modern times, to bless our people in countless ways all over again. Our historic duty today is what we are now doing – namely, struggling to pull our Yoruba nation peacefully out of Nigeria. This is a war we cannot afford to lose, a war that we must win, a war that we will win”.

There is not much that we can add to these wonderful statements. It is a message of love, duty, patriotism and hope to all of us Yoruba people, including our Yoruba men and women who have been engaged in Nigerian politics.

ARISE OODUA

THE DAY OF YOUR GLORY HAS COME