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Propaganda and military operations: A discourse

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Abstract

This paper studies the role and impact of propaganda on military operations especially in times of war. It examines propaganda, its nature, origin, purpose, history, types, aims and techniques and its use as an instrument of foreign policy and military operations in light of what must be done and how it must be done if the use of propaganda must succeed in military operations. It recalls how propaganda has been effectively used in foreign policy, politics and businesses and see if it has recorded such successes in its application in military operations. In addition, examine the laws that guide it, application in warfare and relevance today. It further examines the concept of information war and psychological war and the difference between them and propaganda if any. It takes the Nigerian civil war as case study of situation of war in which propaganda was effectively employed. Focusis on Biafra and her use of propaganda to counter enemy disinformation.and ascertain its success or failure. The paper notes that Biafra propaganda was vibrant, met international standard and was potent in countering the federal government of Nigeria in what could be termed information war.

Keywords: Biafra, Nigeria, Propaganda, Military Operation, Secession

Introduction

A state of war is a period of hostile relations between countries or states or a period of armed conflict between countries or groups. Wars are usually fought when conflicts ensued between states and when such conflicts linger for a long time and become unresolved. When the first coup was announce in Nigeria in 1966, the execution of the coup which was not carried out to the latter attracted the resentment of Northern Nigerian soldiers who saw it as sectional and targeted at their political leaders only. This led to a counter coup. The events that followed it especially the persecution of the Igbo in the northern part of the country, led to the migration of Igbos in various parts of the country to what they called fatherland i.e. the eastern part of Nigeria. This later led to the declaration of secession and the creation of the state of Biafra which implied that the land inhabited by the Igbo had become an independent state,

independent from Nigeria. Because this declarations were not acceptable to the federal government of Nigeria, attempts, diplomatic and war, were made to reverseit and maintain the status quo. When diplomacy failed, a prolonged war referred to as the Biafra war or Nigerian civil war was fought.

This paper attempt to answer the question, what is propaganda, what does it entail, types, for what purpose is it used, what is the origin and techniques and can it be used as an instrument of foreign policy in addition to its usage to further military operations in light of what must be done and how it must be done if the use of propaganda must succeed in military operations. In addition, how successful has it been in its application in military operations and the use of propaganda in the Biafra war and whether Biafra propaganda met international standard. It further attempt to answer the question as to what difference exist between the concept of information war and psychological war.

Propaganda

Propaganda also known as the war of ideas, is the direct use of information as a weapon[1]. It is also "information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view" and often associated with the psychological mechanisms of influencing and altering the attitude of a population toward a specific cause, position or political agenda in an effort to form a consensus to a standard set of belief patterns.[2]

It can be described as any attempt to persuade people or group of persons to accept a certain point of view or take an action.[3] This definition makes propaganda morally neutral because since persuasion is neither good nor bad, moral judgment must be directed to the purposes of the persuasion. Some writers see propaganda as something that is related to education. In this sense, they define propaganda as the manipulation of symbols to control attitudes as education is the manipulation of symbols and others to transmit accepted attitudes and skills.Parker & Perkins, andGarth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, have provided a concise, workable definition of the term: "Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist. Official propaganda may be defined as the organized efforts by governments or members of government, to induce either domestic groups or foreign states or governments to accept policies that are either favourable or unfavourable to their own.[4] This definition takes into account the fact that the size of the group to be propagandized vary with the objective of the propagandist i.e. all appeal are not to the masses.

[1]John Baylis, Wiltz James & Gray, Colin, *Strategy in the Contemporary World, An Introduction to Strategic Studie*s, 3rd edition,
[2]Bruce Smith, *Propaganda,* Encyclopedia Britannica,
[3]Norman Parker, &Howard Perkins, *International Relations, the World Community in Transition,* Delhi:
[4] Ibid

In nature, propaganda is information that is not objective and is used primarily to influence an audience and further an agenda, often by presenting facts selectively and perhaps, lying by omission, to encourage a particular synthesis or perception, or using loaded messages or "loaded language" to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information that is presented[5].Propaganda is often associated with material prepared by governments, but activist groups, political parties and companies can also produce propaganda.

Origin–According to Online Etymology Dictionary, propaganda is derived from the Latin word, 'propagare', meaning to spread or to propagate. Thus propaganda means that which is to be propagated. Originally, this word was first used by the Catholic Church in 1622 when it created the 'Congregatio de Propaganda Fide' meaning Congregation for Propagating the Faith, or informally and simply Propaganda. Its activity was aimed at "propagating" the Catholic faith in non-Catholic countries. From the 1790s, the term began to also be used to refer to propaganda in secular activities especially the Marxists who subjected it to several usages. The term began taking a pejorative or negative connotation in the mid-19th century, when it was used in the political sphere.

History–the primitive forms of propaganda have been a human activity as far back as reliable recorded evidence exists. The Behistun Inscription of 515 BC detailing the rise of Darius I to the Persian throne is viewed by most historians as an early example of propaganda.[6]During the Reformation, the use of propaganda was aided by the spread of the printing press throughout Europe particularly Germany, making new ideas, thoughts and doctrine to be made available to the public in ways that had never been seen before the 16th century. During the era of the American Revolution, the American colonies had a flourishing network of newspapers and printers and use it on behalf of the Patriots. However, Propaganda is generally regarded as a modern phenomenon that emerged from the creation of literate and politically active societies, informed by a mass media in the 19th century, where governments increasingly saw the necessity for swaying public opinion in favour of its policies. During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic era, propaganda was widely used. Abolitionists in Britain and the United States in the 19th century developed large, complex propaganda campaigns against slavery.

The first large-scale and organized government propaganda was brought about by the outbreak of war in 1914. After the defeat of Germany in the First World War, military officials suggested that British propaganda had been instrumental in their defeat. Adolf Hitler also believed that it had been a primary cause of the collapse of morale and the revolts in the German home front and Navy in 1918. Later, the Nazis adapted many British propaganda techniques during their time in power. World War II saw continued use of propaganda as a weapon of war,

[5]Bruce Smith, *Propaganda,* Encyclopedia Britannica
[6]Nagle Brendan, &D. Burstein, Stanley M. *The Ancient World: Readings in Social and Cultural History*. London:

by Hitler's propagandist, Joseph Goebbels and the British Political Warfare Executive and the United States Office of War Information, building on the experience of World War1.

In the twentieth century, the term propaganda became associated with a manipulative approach though it was historically a neutral descriptive term. This was due to the revolution in communications and transportation, invention of new technologies, expansion in educational facilities and techniques and better and cheaper mail service system which made available, a wide range of materials and media for conveying propaganda messages such as paintings, cartoons, posters, pamphlets, films, radio shows, TV shows, websites and motion pictures that can be used to influence people. However, in the early part of the 20th century, it was the invention of motion pictures that gave propaganda-creators a powerful tool for advancing political and military interests when it came to reaching a broad segment of the population and creating consent or encouraging rejection of the real or imagined enemy.[7]

This growth in the means of affecting or influencing people's attitude brought about an increase in the need for propaganda. For example, the extension of franchise in many countries gave the right to vote to many people and a share in the formation of government policies. And the people, many of who are often divided along political, socio – cultural, economic, class or sectional lines into different groups, had to be mobilized and their conflicting interest reconciled. To achieve this, propaganda is required. Hence it is increasingly needed to create some semblance of united opinion at home and to exert influence abroad in pursuit of national policy. As propaganda became a major instrument of national policy in the century, totalitarian states developed it into an evil science while applying psychological principles to manipulate groups. E.g. communist methods of confusing issues, the use of upside down languages, hate campaign etc.

Aim- propagandist seeks to change the way people understand an issue or situation for the purpose of changing their actions and expectations in ways that are desirable to the interest group. Propaganda, in this sense, serves as a corollary to censorship in which the same purpose is achieved, not by filling people's minds with approved information, but by preventing people from being confronted with opposing points of view. What sets propaganda apart from other forms of advocacy is the willingness of the propagandist to change people's understanding through deception and confusion rather than persuasion and understanding. The leaders of an organization know the information to be one sided or untrue, but this may not be true for the rank and file members who help to disseminate the propaganda. Propaganda may be used as a weapon of political warfare or economic warfare. However, the use of propaganda does not imply a state of political warfare and political warfare may or may not take the form of propaganda. States may decide to influence friendly

[7]Norman Parker, & Perkins, Howard, *International Relations, the World Community in Transition,* Delhi

or unfriendly states using propaganda or exert greater pressure by using some of the devices of political warfare.[8]

Types - Propaganda can be classified according to the source and nature of the message into white, black and gray propaganda. White propaganda generally comes from an openly identified source and is characterized by gentler methods of persuasion such as standard public relations techniques and one-sided presentation of an argument. Black propaganda is identified as being from one source but is in fact, from another. This is most commonly used to disguise the true origins of the propaganda be it from an enemy country or from an organization with a negative public image. Grey propaganda is propaganda without any identifiable source or author. A major application of grey propaganda is making enemies believe falsehoods using arguments. For example in phase one, to make someone believe "A", one releases "B" as grey propaganda, the opposite of "A". In phase two, "B" is discredited using some straw man. The enemy will then assume "A" to be true.

Technique - there are no fixed means of or instruments of propaganda that are applicable by states because states are always finding new approaches or improving on their new methods both in times of peace and hostilities. The art of propaganda is similar to the arts of advertising or salesmanship. Therefore, for propaganda to succeed in military operations as in advertising or salesmanship, the propagandist must study the public and tailor his message to meet their demands so as to succeed. He must also analyze their fears, perceptions, existing beliefs and ideas, desires and weakness in order to use the most appropriate and promising approach or technique to achieve his purpose.[9]

One of such technique is presentation technique which entails formulation of purpose, arrangement of materials or facts to present only one side of the coin and present his argument like the lawyer to prove one side. He may keep to the truth but not the whole truth, omit facts that are contrary to his view which is propaganda by omission or distortion, resort to lying or useof fake documents e.g. EMS between France and Prussia in1871.

After formulating his purpose, he proceeds to plan to gain attention for his cause through official notes, speeches, protests and declaration by the leader so as to get the attention of his target. To gain the attention of the masses, a popular method is a show of strength through parade of armies to impress observers or drawing attention to a nation's ways of life. Here cultural attaches in embassies use lectures, travel guides, beautiful folders, cultural shows etc. to glorify the home country. This is in addition to visit by statesmen to another country to show solidarity or friendship or create favourable impression by words and actions or deeds though propaganda of the deeds is more effective than propaganda of words.

[8]Norman Parker, & Perkins, Howard, *International Relations, the World Community in Transition,* Delhi
[9] Ibid

Next is to gain responses. In order to gain the attention of buyers and their responses and make them purchase goods and services, the advertiser rely on emotions and plays on them. In the same vain, the propagandist will in an attempt to gain responses of the public, rely on and appeal to certain basic emotions of patriotism, love of justice, right of self-defense etc. with slogans such as 'no representation no taxation', use of symbols or pictorial representation such as the 'cross' which Christians see as symbol of faith, times of great stress, manipulate existing attitudes.

The propagandist next step is to gain acceptance which involves establishment of rapport with the public using existing common characteristics like race, religion e.g. Russian Pan Slavism, invoking higher sanctions from God, justice and lessons of history to add force to argument and make it more universal. This is in addition to name calling so as to discredit opponent e.g. Russia calling America 'capitalist imperialist or war mongers of Wall Street or War Party because Republicans are linked to wars. That is associating opponents with something bad.

Propaganda may be administered in insidious ways. For instance, disparaging disinformation about the history of certain groups or foreign countries may be encouraged or tolerated in the educational system. Such permeating propaganda may be used for political goals such as giving citizens a false impression of the quality or policies of their country or be incited to reject certain proposals or certain remarks. Thus, there is always an element of propaganda which is exaggerated and untrue. Owing to a series of small successes or accidental triumphs, they build up an aggregated impression of invincibility and inevitability. The misfortune is that one confront a large number of people for sufficient time for great damage to be done.[10]

Propagandist carefully selects targets and attempt to formulate messages that would appeal specifically to particular groups ofpeople for it to be successful. For it to be successful, foreign propaganda must have some direct relevance to the daily lives of the people. It must be directed at people who share the same attributes and beliefs with the nation sending out the propaganda. It is usually successful when directed at the youths and apathetic people who are more vulnerable to sentiments and persuasions because their minds are not fixed but still open.[11]

Propaganda as Instrument of Foreign Policy - Propaganda is one of the unique aspects of modern international political relationship. It is the deliberate attempt by governments through diplomats and others, to influence the attitude and behaviour of foreign population or of specific ethnic, tribal, class, religious, economic or linguistic groups, within those populations. Those carrying out the propaganda hope that these foreign groups or entire population will in turn influence the attitudes and actions of their own government. Hence virtually all governments conduct external information programmes e.g. Voice of Nigeria,

[10]Nicolson, Harold, *Diplomacy*, 3rd edition, London: Oxford University Press
[11]Charles Alade, *Theories, Concepts and Principles in the Study of International Relations*, 1st edition, Lagos

Voice of America, BBC, CNN, news Agency of Nigeria etc. They have large bureaucrats home and abroad who are responsible for creating favourable attitudes and impressions about their governments abroad. Hence their embassies have Press Attaches and Public Relations Officers.[12]

Propaganda and Law - Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prohibits any propaganda for war as well as any advocacy of national or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence by law. Propaganda institutions, practices and legal frameworks have been evolving in the US and Britain since 9/11 and the appearance of greater media fluidity. In the United States, the prohibitions of domestic propaganda has been relaxed but it raised public concern

Propaganda and War - The 1930s and 1940s, which saw the rise of totalitarian states and the Second World War, are arguably the "Golden Age of Propaganda". Leni Riefenstahl, a filmmaker working in Nazi Germany, created one of the best-known propaganda movies, Triumph of the Will. In the US, Animation became popular, especially for winning over youthful audiences and aiding the U.S. war effort. US war films in the early 1940s were designed to create a patriotic mindset and convince viewers that sacrifices had to be made to defeat "the enemy. The West and the Soviet Union both used propaganda extensively during the Cold War. During the Yugoslav wars, propaganda was used as a military strategy by governments of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia. Propaganda was used to create fear and hatred, and particularly incite the Serb population against the other ethnic groups of Bosnians, Croats, Albanians and other non-Serbs. Serb media made a great effort in justifying, revising or denying mass war crimes committed by Serb forces during these wars

It is used to dehumanize and create hatred toward a supposed enemy, either internal or external, by creating a false image in the mind of soldiers and citizens. This can be done by using derogatory or racist terms, avoiding some words or language or by making allegations of enemy atrocities. Most propaganda efforts in wartime require the home population to feel the enemy has inflicted an injustice, which may be fictitious or may be based on facts. The home population must also believe that the cause of their nation in the war is just. In NATO doctrine, propaganda is defined as Any information, ideas, doctrines, or special appeals disseminated to influence the opinion, emotions, attitudes, or behaviour of any specified group in order to benefit the sponsor either directly or indirectly. Within this perspective, information provided does not need to be necessarily false, but must be instead, relevant to specific goals of the "actor" or "system" that performs it.[13]

Propaganda is also a method used in psychological warfare, which may also involve false flag operations in which the identity of the operatives is depicted as those of an enemy nation. During WWI, the main purpose of British propaganda was to encourage men to join the army, and women to work in the

[12]Bruce Smith,.*Propaganda,* Encyclopedia Britannica
[13]Bruce Smith,.*Propaganda,* Encyclopedia Britannica

country's industry. Propaganda posters were used, because radios and TVs were not very common at that time. The assumption was that, if people believe something false, they will constantly be assailed by doubts. Since these doubts are unpleasant, people will be eager to have them extinguished and are therefore receptive to the reassurances of those in power. For this reason, propaganda is often addressed to people who are already sympathetic to the agenda or views being presented. This process of reinforcement uses an individual's predisposition to self-select agreeable information sources as a mechanism for maintaining control over populations.

Psychological Warfare- This is an adjunct to military force in times of war. While Eisenhower described it as the struggle for the minds of men, Paul Line barger defined it as "the application of parts of the science of psychology to further the effects of political, economic or military actions." In the narrow sense, "it is the use of propaganda against an enemy together with such other operational measures of military, economic or political nature as may be required to supplement propaganda." Some of the terms associated with it are, international propaganda, war of ideas, struggle for the minds of men, propaganda warfare, war of words and war of thoughts. Others are, ideological warfare, nerve warfare, political warfare, international information overseas and information propaganda etc.[14]

Information Warfare - Is a situation where complex information system on which the conduct of even mundane military operation now depend are vulnerable to attack compared to other military assets. Though it is a tactical problem, it differs from propaganda. Its strategy primarily, is not about persuasion but forcible imposition of one's will upon an adversary. Though it is difficult to ascertain if such imposition can be accomplished by the manipulation or disruption of information alone, but a computer virus attack that disable a national stock exchange for example, night have consequences that are comparable to that of military attack. Once set loose, such a virus might end up anywhere hence information war suffers from some of the same limitations as biological warfare which has not been realized because its fratricidal risks outweigh its prospective benefits.

> According to Baylis, Wiltz &Gray,[15]"the strategic geography of cyberspace remains terra incognita, generally a realm where it is very cheap to operate and to fight undetected" this suggests that its greatest appeal may be to terrorists and others who lack the means to fight openly elsewhere, who do not mind if they are not given credit for their deeds and who are not especially dependent on information technology. However, information warfare appears to be mainly a defensive problem without positive strategic leverage. But

[14]Norman Parker,& Perkins, Howard, *International Relations, the World Community in Transition,* Delhi
[15]John Baylis, Wiltz James & Gray, Colin, *Strategy in the Contemporary World, An Introduction to Strategic Studies*, 3rd edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press

the question remain whether information may become a weapon as modern weapon have gained increasing attention."

Military Operations - Military is a term used to describe the armed forces of a country while a military operation is the coordinated military actions of a state, or a non-state actor, in response to a developing situation. These actions are designed as a military plan to resolve the situation in the state's favour. Operations may be of a combat or non-combat nature and are referred to by a code name for the purpose of national security. In fact, it is ultimately the mission that a unit performs that determines the level of war within which it operates.[16]Military operations can be classified by the scale and scope of force employment and their impact on the wider conflict. The scope of military operations can be theatre, campaign, battle, engagement and strike. Theater - this describes an operation over a large, often continental, area of operation and represents a strategic national commitment to the conflict, with general goals that encompass areas of consideration outside of the military, such as the economic and political impact. Engagement - is a tactical combat event or contest for a specific area or objective by actions of distinct units. Strike - is a single attack, upon a specified target. This often forms part of a broader engagement. Strikes have an explicit goal, such as rendering facilities such as airports inoperable, assassinating enemy leaders, or limiting the delivery of supplies to enemy troops. Campaign - is a subset of the theatre of operation, or a more limited geographic and operational strategic commitment and need not represent total national commitment to a conflict, or have broader goals outside of the military impact. Battle - is a subset of a campaign that will have specific military goals and geographic objectives, as well as clearly defined use of forces.[17]

Traditionally, military activities have been divided into two level of strategy and operation. Strategy concern planning and movement of whole armies while tactics deal with the immediate combat level. It covers procedures for maneuvering units up to the level of a Division and as small as the infantry riffle group. The intermediate range activities has subsequently come to be called the "operational level"[18].The operational level of war occupies roughly the middle ground between the campaign's strategic focus and the tactics of an engagement. It describes a distinct intermediate level of war between military strategy, governing war in general, and tactics, involving individual battles. It forms part of the doctrine and war planning of many armies but no two armies define the operational level i.e. technique sometimes called operational art, in the same way. Robertson further notes that "the easiest way of thinking about it is to see operational activities as covering the whole of theatre of war e.g. central front and necessarily involving all services and arms in pursuit of very broad definitions of victory in that area"It differs from strategy in that decisions

[16]David M Glantz,,*Soviet Military Operational Art: in Pursuit of Deep Battles*, London:
[17]David M. Glantz,.*Soviet Military Operational Art: in Pursuit of Deep Battles*, London:
[18]David Robertson, *A Dictionary of Modern Defense and Strategy*, London

on major resource allocation and general war objectives such as whether to aim for unconditional surrender, armistice or other final outcome will already have been made.. Military operations present problems of command which are influenced by distinctive geographies and beset by workings of friction, chance and uncertainty.[19]

Propaganda and the Biafran war – in Biafra which was the theatre of the Nigerian civil war, Propaganda dictated the pace of the war and territories were gained and lost on radio. Sometimes Biafra existed only on radio. The slogan on Radio Nigeria and Television was 'to keep Nigeria one, is a task that must be done'. Within a few months of the declaration of independence, a remarkable array of forces had ranged themselves to crush the new country. Gowon launched the Federal army behind the slogan of 'One Nigeria', 'to preserve the territorial integrity of Nigeria', and 'crush the revolt' were constant features on the Nigerian media. The counter slogan on what was then 'Radio Biafra and Television', was 'the price of liberty is eternal vigilance'[20].

Biafra war propaganda was in two parts, external and domestic. Domestic propaganda was targeted at the entire Nigerian populace both in the republic of Biafra and federal republic of Nigeria. Radio was by far the most powerful instrument in the Biafra war. By 1967 there were two television stations in Biafra - Channel 6 in Enugu and Channel 4 in Aba. However, it was the Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation in Enugu which reached out to all parts of the region and beyond in addition to repeater stations in all the provincial headquarters of the Region. Apart from local newspapers in Aba, Calabar, Onitsha, with circulation only in the provinces, the main newspaper was owned and controlled by the Biafran government with a regional circulation. This was called the Biafra Sun. In addition there were the numerous government propaganda leaflets.

Davies also notes that propaganda was used to ensure a united Biafra. Though the people of Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers Provinces were killed along with the Igbo in the North, they distanced themselves from Biafra. That meant that the whole of the Eastern Region did not speak with one voice. Consequently propaganda was directed from Lagos at the people in the three dissenting areas to sabotage Biafra. Effort was made by the Biafran media to keep them in the Biafran fold and since Biafra had military control of the area, the Biafran media prevailed. To further consolidate this hold, listening to Radio Nigeria and reading Nigerian newspapers was banned and treated as sabotage. It was so effective that those caught were mobbed to death by angry crowds or summarily shot by soldiers.

At the beginning of the war, Radio Nigeria Enugu, which was an offshoot of the Federal Radio Nigeria was taken over by the Biafran government. All the broadcast systems were brought under one umbrella for effective control and the Ministry of Information was converted into The Propaganda Directorate

[19]Colin Gray, S. *Modern Strategy*, Oxford
[20]Patrick Ediomi Davies, "Use of Propaganda in Civil War: the Biafra Experience

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headed by Dr. Ifegwu Eke. The air and sea blockade mounted by the Federal Nigerian Government against Biafra meant that it became difficult to import and export from the Biafran territory. Biafra then established the Voice of Biafra to reach out to the rest of the world, to come to her aid.

The creativity and innovativeness of the Biafrans was exhibited not only on the battle field but also in the propaganda.

> 'Even when the capital of Enugu fell to the Nigerian soldiers, the radio station built underground in Umuahia in a bunker was still announcing the retention of Enugu. The stations were boosted by people who were encouraged to produce more radio from scrap, bushes and forests became radio stations and palm and cotton wool trees their antennae. People were also encouraged to buy and carry radios."[21]

The operation and activities of the Biafran media was successful because propaganda was backed by Motivation, Mobilization, Sustainability or Sustenance and Durability. Prior to the civil war, the Biafran media was used as an instrument to build up unity, confidence and morale of the Biafran people. Pictures of Easterners being massacred in Kano and different parts of the North were repeatedly shown on the then Eastern Nigeria Television and in the region's newspapers. This angered all parts of the East and motivated them to support the cause, not just the Igbo as most families of the East were affected either directly or indirectly by the massacres.

In the case of mobilization, there was a very fine line between motivation and mobilization as one flowed into the other. It should be stressed however, that the most important things that the media did, either as Eastern Nigeria media or the Biafran media, were: conveying of the Declaration of Secession and Independence, and the announcement of the Ahiara. The 'Ahiara Declaration which resulted, both from the failure of the 'Aburi Accord' and the Declaration of Independence, was regarded as a 'Charter' for Biafra and Biafrans. The Biafran media repeated pronouncements and announcements of the Ahiara Declaration several times, served as motivation and mobilization. There were passages for all strata of society which was like a 'Bible', a way of life and conduct, for Biafran Servicemen, Civil Servants, Businessmen and Civilians. Passages were treated as wise sayings. The Biafran media sustained the struggle through drama and sketches in praise of Biafra, and edification of Ojukwu in glorious light while portraying Nigeria in bad light, and Gowon as caricature.[22]

Songs like "Ojukwu Nyem Egbe", "Military Police", "Biafra Win The War", and several others, he further said, were constantly repeated on the Bifran media.

[21]Patrick Ediomi, Davies "Use of Propaganda in Civil War: the Biafra Experience
[22]Patrick Ediomi, Davies "Use of Propaganda in Civil War: the Biafra Experience

Song writers, musicians, band leaders, like Miki Nzewi, Nwokolobia Agu etc. and performing groups, wrote and performed numerous songs and sketches on the media, and at the war fronts, to sustain the war effort. Several drama sketches were written, and directed by prominent figures, amongst whom were John Ekwere, Cyprian Ekwensi, and Ralph Opara etc.

External Propaganda - The external was targeted at the outside world hence during the Nigerian civil war, Biafra hired Public Relations firms to organize campaigns to "tell Biafra Story"[23]i.e. create favourable attitudes among interest groups in North and South America, Europe so as to influence American, Canadian and European governments to be more friendly and receptive to Biafra's plea for aid and support. The propaganda was handled by Mark Press in Geneva and Robert S, Goldstein in USA.[24]The propaganda with pamphlets were so strong that many people overseas believed that the civil war was a war to exterminate the Biafrans. The skillful and successful way in which Biafra used her propaganda was so successful that it persuaded many international humanitarian organization to provide it with aid and powerful world leaders including the catholic pontiff to accuse Nigeria of genocide. Countries who supported Biafra were Ghana, Gabon, Ivory Coast and France. Ghana was a country with most consistent and outspoken advocate or support for Biafra cause. The major reason was the effectiveness of rebel propaganda. 'There were few houses in Ghana without copies of the rebels publications e.g. 'crisis 1966', "Pogrom" 'the problem of Nigerian unity' etc. It was such that the lurid and distorted account of events leading to the war was passionately believed by many Ghanaians who were quick to jump to the conclusion that events in Nigeria had to a large extent destroyed the basis of the federation"[25] Many also believed rebel claim that the war could not be won and that the whole federation would disintegrate if the federal government persisted in persecuting the war.

With the establishment of the Voice of Biafra in 1967, which reached out to surrounding African countries, sympathy began to emerge from some African countries. The countries included parts of the Cameroun despite the attempt by the Cameroonian leader to stop it, Gabon, Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Zaire. Outside Africa, Israel, France, Portugal, South Africa and Haiti. By accusing Nigeria of continued genocide and instituting pogroms, Biafra also attracted some non-governmental sympathy from Great Britain and the United States. The media was used to propagate false claims - Radio Biafra and Voice of Biafra for example, accused Nigeria of waging the war to steal the abundant mineral wealth of Biafra. They called it an 'oil war', because Biafra territory was the main source of crude oil in Nigeria. Also, a broadcast from the Voice of Biafra in December 1967, accused the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, of supporting Nigeria, and ignoring the cross party consensus in the British

[23]Charles Alade,, *Theories, Concepts and Principles in the Study of International Relations*, 1st edition
[24]OlajideAluko, *Essays in Nigerian foreign Policy*, London
[25]OlajideAluko, *Essays in Nigerian foreign Policy*, London

Parliament against his policy. The Biafran government claimed that even though Britain officially supported the Nigerian government, it indirectly and unofficially sympathized with Biafra. The propaganda was aimed at promoting discord between Nigeria and Britain. The rumour' spread like wild fire in Biafra boosting morale.[26]

While the federal government maintained that it was only carrying out a "police action" to defeat rebellion and secession and seeking to restore and maintain the unity of Nigeria- a point that pleased the British, American and Russian governments who did not want to see Nigeria break up. Biafra on its part countered with media images and symbols of pogrom, genocide, indiscriminate bombing and strafing of civilian populations in the churches, markets, and hospitals. This had the effect of arousing public sympathy around the world. Church organizations like Caritas, the World Council of Churches and other humanitarian organizations rose to aid what they understood as the starving and dying millions of Biafra. Auberon Waugh in his book "Biafra, Britain's Shame" displays graphic images of Kwashiorkor ridden children, women and men of Biafra. Thus, Nigeria propaganda machine was weak and ineffective while Biafra's was the opposite. The war would not have dragged on for the period it lasted if Nigeria did what Biafra achieved at the propaganda front.

Biafra also played on religion with the Catholic Church playing an important worldwide role in the propaganda war since most Easterners were Catholic. It was therefore natural for the Church to sympathize with them. Consequently, individuals like Fr Mike, Fr W.J.Dowling, Fr Michael Golden, Fr O'Marley, Fr Owen Reid spared no effort to publicize the Biafran cause as widely as possible. In France, the combination of Catholicism and President De Gaulle's desire to weaken Nigeria, meant that the Biafrans got every support short of 'de jure' recognition. The missionaries often talked of the conflict in terms of a 'Holy War' between Christianity and Islam. This was probably because Nigeria got strong support from the oil- rich Arab countries, while Egyptian pilots helped to fly Russian-built Ilyushin jets for the Nigrerians[27]

When it came to television, the Biafrans were far more adept than the Nigerians. Colin Legum of the Observer Newspaper explains: 'The Biafrans stole a march by flying in everybody who wanted to come and taking them up and showing them everything. Thus much of the filming on television, which is what upset the Federals, was on the Biafran side, showing the devastation caused, first by the air bombing and then later by the famine. So in that sense the reporting became one-sided because the Federals refused to let the cameras in or placed great obstacles in the way'[28]Nigerians handled the media abysmally by being defensive, secretive and very formal. Consequently, people who couldn't fathom the political complexities of the war could easily grasp the wrong in a picture of a child dying of starvation.

[26]Patrick Ediomi, Davies"Use of Propaganda in Civil War: the Biafra Experience",
[27]Patrick Ediomi, Davies "Use of Propaganda in Civil War: the Biafra Experience",
[28] Ibid

This was due to the establishment of a Propaganda Directorate which was under the general control and supervision of the information Commissioner, Dr Ifegwu Eke. The directorate had the responsibility of carrying out effective propaganda against the enemy and sustain national morale. "It's spokesperson was a young broadcaster named Okokon Ndem whose verbal attacks on Nigeria and Nigeria Leadership had the devastating impact of a whole brigade on rampage"[29] External broadcast was carries out by the Switzerland based Mark Press which constituted the external arm of the directorate. It effectively countered Nigeria propaganda and promoted Biafra's interest in Europe and the United States. Effiong is of the view that the directorate was extremely very effective because it had people like Uche Chukwumerije and Cyprian Ekwensi but silent on their actual contribution to the effectiveness of the directorate. However, it could be stated that if Okokon Ndem was very effective in his verbal attacks on Nigeria, the credit would go to Uche Chuckwumerije and Cyprian Ekwensi who would have written the scripts the broadcaster read on air. [30]

Cyprian Ekwensi was Director of the Broadcasting Corporation of Biafra from 1967 – 1970 and used his literary skills to produce broadcast scripts used for propaganda. (Priebe, 2009). He was also appointed chairman of the Bureau for External Publicity of Biafra. On his part, Uche Chukwumerije who joined the Biafran War Information Bureau in 1966, came to lime light when he demonstrated his strong revolutionary zest and became Biafra's visible Chief Propagandist.

After this, Biafra became a beehive of world journalists and the world was brimming over with the Biafran story. Charity organizations across the globe fell over themselves to get into the act of relief shipments to Biafra, all to the chagrin of Nigeria. Predictably therefore, public opinion and government policies around the world reacted variously to the massive media coverage. In America, Senator Edward Kennedy, Chairman of the Senate Sub-committee on Refugees tried to tilt official policy towards Biafra. In Ireland, Holland and Germany, there was also significant support for Biafra. Thus, when the capital, Enugu, was "sacked" or "liberated", Biafra's existence was sustained basically by media propaganda campaign, especially radio and it maintained the morale of the Biafran army and citizenry. It also sustained the sympathy of the international community- even when the government was relocated elsewhere in Aba, Owerri, Umuahia respectively. The mode of the propaganda was entirely 'manipulative persuasion' by both Nigeria and Biafra, but more so by Biafra, whose propaganda was better organized and more efficient. No doubt, censorship as a mode of propaganda was also heavily applied. Each side only issued statements and released messages and information favourable to it.[31]

Before the civil war commenced, the federal government did not place any importance on propaganda as instrument of diplomacy not to talk of the war.

[29]Philip Effiong, *Nigeria and Biafra: My Story*, New Jersey
[30]Ibid
[31]OlajideAluko, *Essays in Nigerian foreign Policy*, London:

The government relied on traditional forms of diplomacy that rejected propaganda as an instrument of policy.[32]. But the skillful and successful way in which Biafra used it baffled the Nigerian government as its propaganda succeeded in persuading many international humanitarian organizations and powerful world leaders including the Pope to accuse Nigeria of genocide. To counter the damaging effects, the federal government in 1968, recruited professional public Relations firms such as the London firm of Calitzire, the Burson Marteller Association in Washington and Robert and Goldstein. This was in addition to the federal radio, Nigerian Television Authority, voice of Nigeria and very many newspapers and magazine that were mainly based in Lagos.

Davies further stated that after the war, the effect of Biafra propaganda made the Nigerian government to expand its external publicity organ. Early in 1970, a new division of external publicity with an initial expenditure of 405, 290 pounds was approved. Centers of Press Attaches abroad was increased from five to eleven with nine of them located in Europe and America where support for the secessionists had been great during the war, so as to undo the vast damaging effects of Biafran propaganda. Government also announced plan to modernize the Nigerian Broadcasting corporation so that the Voice of Nigeria could be heard in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas distinctively through various short wavelengths. In the 1970/1971 fiscal year, 100, 000 pounds was approved for publicity for heads of missions overseas.

In the prosecution of the civil war, the war was fought at two fronts, the first being the battle field and second the propaganda field. The first being the military was won by the federal government. The second was conducted in the media i.e. propaganda field, and there is no doubt that the Biafrans won. Thus while Biafra lost the war on the battle field, it won on the political, humanitarian and information field via propaganda. In the same vain while Nigeria lost on those fields, she recorded the ultimate victory on the battlefield and the war ended. The Easterners had dominated the Nigerian media and they were fully conscious of the need for publicity to attract outside support and they mounted 'the most successful public relations campaign of all time'.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed propaganda and military operations, the definition and origin of propaganda, its history, aim, types, technique used in applying it, the position of law as regards its usage and its use as an instrument of foreign policy and military operation or war. It further discussed psychological warfare as an aspect of propaganda and distinguished propaganda from information warfare. Military operations was examined in terms of definition, types and modalities. The Nigerian civil war also known as the Biafra war in which operations were carried out was used as case study. The paper found that propaganda is a veritable or very useful instrument in military operations such that Biafra recognized it as such and used it as a tool while Nigerian did not.

[32]Patrick Ediomi, Davies "Use of Propaganda in Civil War: the Biafra Experience

Biafra had a dynamic and very efficient propaganda that was used as a potent weapon despite challenges and was professionally used to its advantage. Consequently she won sympathy and support both home and abroad and can therefore be said to have compared favourably with those used in other wars and thus met international or professional standards.

While Biafra was always on the offensive in the propaganda war, Nigeria was always on the defensive. In the war, while Nigeria set out to fight a single battle which was initially called "police action', she was forced to fight the battle at two fronts i.e. war of words or ideas and on the battle field. While Biafra won the war of words, Nigeria won the war on the battle field which was most essential. As in Biafra, propaganda can be used as instrument of mobilization motivation, support, sustenance and durability which was why the territory was able to hold out for 3 years despite its numerous daunting challenges. But had Nigeria combined the type of propaganda Biafra used with her war efforts, the war would probably not have lasted the period of years it lasted.

Though Biafra propaganda is a classic case or example of how propaganda can be employed in military operations or war – successes in raising and motivating the morale of soldiers and mobilizing civilian population and tilting international sympathy and support, it failed to weaken public opinion and support in Nigeria and demoralize federal troops who engaged Biafran troops on Biafran soil which was the theatre of the war. It also did not weaken international support that Nigeria had. Hence Nigeria recorded the ultimate victory and her war aims and objectives were met while those of Biafra failed. Therefore the impact of propaganda must be felt on both side, internally on the belligerent population and troops and externally on the civilian population and belligerent troops on the battle field to ensure maximum effect.

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