

The Premier Meeting Of Yoruba People Living In The Federal Republic Of Germany

Hamburg 4th Of August 2001

PROLOGUE

Owing to reasons best known to all of us, this report has to be written in the language of our "step mother". It would try to portray the nucleus of the discussions and the eventual conclusions. An attempt to write in detail, the contributions of each branch would fail and that is why this report has been written in general terms. Delegates are reminded that the written speech of the Stuttgart branch has already been distributed at the Congress. This means the report is nothing but an attempt to capture the facts and, subsequently the conclusions of the proceedings at that premier meeting.

THE REPORT

Saturday 4th of August 2001 saw a sizzling, seething mass which was the premier congress of Yorubas living in the Federal Republic of Germany. That glowing brightness of hamburg's mid summer afternoon reflected in the faces and hearts of the delegates and their hosts.

The President of Egbe Isedale Ati Ilosiwaju Omo Yoruba, Mr Adekunle Adenawo stressed the need to re-establish contact with the Yoruba language, so that in the near future it might be easier to give such a welcome address in the language of our fore-fathers, more so when one is confronted with the fact that the Yoruba race, with a population of over 20 million, in Nigeria alone, is the largest race in the world.

With this note of challenge, the President welcomed the delegates and thanked them heartily for taking the pains through the congested roads on this particular day. The reasons of our coming together like this, is to find a way to forge a total unity of the Yoruba race. This would be a tedious and thorny way.

Who are the Yorubas?

Should we stand there scratching our brains for an answer. There are Yorubas along the whole of the West Coast of Africa: Benin Republic, Togo, Sierra Leone, otherwise known as Saro. Within the same longitude, spreading within the vicinity of the North and South Equator, there are Yorubas who have made Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia in South America their homes. History has even told us they carried the Yoruba culture along with them when they were carried off as slaves some 400 years ago. We are still going to expand, and reach these Yoruba people in the last nook of the globe, the President went on. Here in Germany, we want to incorporate our women into our midst. Having gathered the momentum, we shall move forward fast with brotherliness. In his own words, but to get to the moon, we need a rocket.

When problems have names, they can be easily be solved. We would try to step into those shoes Obafemi Awolowo left behind; we have started and we would continue to try to unite the Yorubas in our areas of jurisdiction. This type of unity must not necessarily be on party politics. We shall however support any Yoruba party whose aims are crystal clear to us. Knowledge is power and most of the Yorubas acquire this knowledge through hard work unlike some other few tribes in Nigeria who base their acquisition of power through connections to Permanent Secretaries. As a result the latter group of people are not ready to support any genuine project. Such example is the Tinubu Square; where, in the good old days, the rain comes from under the ground. It was left to rot and subsequently vanish as a beauty spot in Lagos.

History has proved that a good heart is only good when your partner has the same good heart. Mr Adenawo reminded us that this good heartedness, a typical endowment of a Yoruba man, should be with held to some extent if we are now to achieve our set goals. Dreams of Dr Martin Luther King Jr did not end in his 1963 Alabama speech, when he engaged himself in a bitter struggle for the (black) human rights. Mr Adenawo promised us the hamburg dream will not end up in the pit of pigs

We would at the moment not have a world congress, rather we should tread gently and make those steps strong and firm.

Mr Sherif Ojelabi from Düsseldorf expressed his happiness to have had the opportunity to be in the midst of his people. He reiterated that they started this gathering of Yorubas about one ago. Presently, there are only ten members in the union, but they would put hands together to increase their numbers as time goes on. In the long run we should be prepared to send delegates home, those who are prepared to contest for local elections, so that we would be able to make progress.

Aachen condemned the inclination of some Yoruba people to money and material matters. Money has spoiled a lot of things and it is high time we deviate from such tendencies so as to have a clear vision towards our goals. Unity with clearly laid out goals will bring us success in whatever we choose to do. We should no longer dwell on the past, but we should engage in the matter at hand with total dedication and devotion.

Kassel propagates her total engagement in social activities, saying this is one of the ways we can reach out to the Yoruba people where ever they may be. Unity and brotherliness are mentioned here too as an instrument to attain our achievement.

Munich warned against untimely engagement in total politics, but we should however maintain contacts in Nigeria to be abreast of what is going on in our mother land. In her enthusiasm, she began to prognose on how we shall deal with financial matters. She did not expantiate much on this as it would be seem untimely for now.

Bielefeld reminded us of the need to take care of one another by constantly keeping in contact, because in this country where the culture has no room for close family affiliation, frustration will keep knocking at the door

In his elderly wisdom, Mr Taiwo John emotionally hammered into our youthful ears, any one who is subsequently chosen to lead this family should do so with selflessness, courage and candour; these are qualities of a good leader. History is full of such examples where leaders take it upon themselves to determine what will and what will not happen. We should be watchful here.

Listening to Mr Bayo Martins, one might be right to say, now history is about to repeat itself. The drumologist, in a brilliantly condensed speech, brought us back to the beginning of the Yoruba history in the dead end of the first half of the 20th century. History, here taking the form of political consciousness. Around 1944, or thereabouts, some enlightened Yoruba sons, Maja, Ojituku and Doherty sat down in London and formed Egbe Omo Oduduwa. They portrayed the Yoruba culture as consciousness, and politics a subconsciousness. Now putting the two together, we meet a cultured Yoruba race with a focus on political consciousness. And this is exactly where Mr Martins is taking us to. After the initial teething troubles which plagues a newly formed union has been overcome, we should give that child a name. Under this name we would be known as members of one race. Each "Bundesland" could then choose what name they wish to be known as; only, this touch of Oduduwa must prevail in this name.

Bielefeld put the question across: how do we co-ordinate these efforts? Charity begins at home, she said, now we should carry the refined charity to where it began. We should not concern ourselves in politics only, we should also be engaged in philanthropical activities such as taking care of those in need and donating towards the raising of the standards of living in Nigeria; and all that should start now! There are so many of us today, but who knows if numbers will progressively increase? Thus we should try to conclude and implement many of our objectives each time we meet

The suggestion came from Mr Oladehinde that we should earmark objectives of each branch and thereby try to create a central body which consists of different bodies with special tasks.

A branch which is good at social activities should be entrusted with such activities.; a body which is good in politics should be charged with dealing in politics as should be later defined by the central body. This would allow us to form a strict functioning confederation.

With this, the congress ended with a prayer from Mr. Atibioko from the host branch and then it was all enjoyment and merriment for those who still had time to stay

The next meeting was fixed for Berlin on 27th of October 2001.

EPILOGUE

The brief facts are these: The legacy passed over on to the present generation has been blurred by the obnoxious, systematic cocacolanisation of the black continent which we describe as home. The chasm of the triple heritage which led to a conflict of culture in which we suddenly found ourselves, has inflicted a lot of harm, but nothing is lost yet. The bitter lessons would enable us to re-trace our steps. We have to refurbish that legacy before handing it over to our heirs, then history would say "Ours was not a lost generation"

General Secretariat

ThePresident

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Dateline: hamburg 20th of August 2001

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