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**THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL FORCES IN THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR
OF 1967-1970: A CASE STUDY OF THE USSR AND GREAT BRITAIN**

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**РОЛЬ ВНЕШНИХ СИЛ В ГРАЖДАНСКОЙ ВОЙНЕ В НИГЕРИИ 1967-
1970 ГОДОВ: НА ПРИМЕРЕ СССР И ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ**

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INTRODUCTION

The relevance of research. The involvement of third countries in internal political conflicts is one of the most difficult and long-term problems in international relations. It can lead to a deepening of the conflict and an increase in its violence, as well as to confrontation between States and regional blocs. In 2021, there were twenty-seven armed conflicts of varying intensity in the world, which were internationalized¹, that is, initially internal, but later supplemented by the intervention of foreign actors. At the same time, as the Libyan events of 2011-2012 demonstrated, external forces can play a decisive role already at the stage of the emergence of an internal armed confrontation and even predetermine its outcome. The reasons for the involvement of third countries in conflicts may be different: geopolitical interests, economic reasons, ideological factors, etc. Regardless of the reasons, the involvement of third countries in the conflict usually complicates its resolution and can lead to additional human casualties and destruction. Accordingly, an analysis of the forms, methods and motives of third countries' intervention in the civil war in Nigeria will allow us to determine the optimal behavior of States in the event of an armed conflict in a strategically significant region.

The relevance of the study is also due to the fact that the internal conflict that escalated into the civil war of 1967-1970 in Nigeria was one of the most acute, intractable and large-scale internal political crises on the African continent. It was characterized by such features typical of conflicts in Africa as the struggle between ethnopolitical groups for power and natural resources; the inability of the authorities to resolve acute social and ethnic contradictions; the involvement of third countries in its resolution, etc.

The problem is also relevant because it allows us to identify the specifics of the Soviet Union's policy in African countries. The USSR actively participated in conflicts in Africa, supporting national liberation movements and revolutionary regimes in these countries. As a rule, the ideological factor became the motive for involvement in conflicts, since the USSR sought to expand the number of countries adhering to socialist ideology,

¹ Uppsala Conflict Data Program // Department of Peace and Conflict Research. URL: <https://ucdp.uu.se/> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

but during the war in Biafra, the USSR supported the same side as Great Britain, which was part of the capitalist bloc. This paradox increases the relevance of the problem posed.

An important factor was the colonial legacy of the British Empire, which participated in the arbitrary division of colonial Nigeria into regions, securing their legal status in the federal Constitution. The administrative-territorial units created by the colonizers did not correspond to the ethno-confessional situation in the country. In addition, the British Empire pursued a policy of including Nigeria in its zone of economic and political influence with the intention of limiting the foreign policy subjectivity of this state. To facilitate their management, the bet was placed on the Comprador bourgeoisie, interested in the presence of Britain in their country, as well as on military force. Multinational corporations interested in continuing the exploitation of Nigeria's oil fields made their contribution. All these factors laid the prerequisites for a civil war, which took on the character of a struggle of local elites for territory, power and natural resources, and for the involvement of external players in the conflict. The totality of all the above-mentioned historical and political circumstances determines the relevance of this dissertation work.

Actualizes the topic of this study and the lack of comprehensive scientific papers on the studied issues. In this regard, the study of ways for Nigeria to overcome foreign policy challenges and problems that it faced during the period under review, the nature of interaction with third parties and mechanisms for resolving internal political contradictions will reveal patterns that can be used by democratic governments of Nigeria in their foreign policy activities at the present stage.

Literature review. The research used scientific works of African, Russian and foreign researchers devoted to topical issues of international relations and foreign policy. If we compare the volume of literature by Russian and foreign authors on the topic of armed conflicts in international relations, then the advantage will be on the side of the latter. Moreover, the works of foreign authors differ in the details of the facts, a more detailed description of the "narrow" episodes related to international relations. Russian scientists most often prefer topics with a broader coverage of periods and problems.

Historiography in Russian can be grouped into the following:

The *first group* should include studies that study the phenomenon of intra-state conflict during the bipolar system of international relations: forms, causes, patterns of occurrence and options for completion. Among the authors of works of general theoretical orientation, such names should be mentioned as: I.O. Abramova², D.M. Bondarenko³, A.M. Vasiliev⁴, A.B. Davidson⁵, E.I. Zelenev⁶, V.M. Tatarintsev⁷, L.L. Fituni⁸. The same group should include collective research: «Africa in international relations»; «Africa and the world in the 21st century», «Africa and the world: mutual understanding, study, teaching»; etc.⁹. These personal and collective monographs provide a comprehensive analysis of the main features of the political processes taking place on the African continent, as well as the causes of modern conflicts. Among the comprehensive studies

² Фитуни Л.Л., Абрамова И.О. Развивающиеся страны в политической экономике посткоронавирусного мира //Мировая экономика и международные отношения. 2020. Т. 64. № 9. С. 5-14; Фитуни Л.Л., Абрамова И.О. Политическая теория деколонизации: императивы современного прочтения // Polis: Journal of Political Studies. 2020. № 6. С. 65-79; Абрамова И.О., Фитуни Л.Л. Пути повышения эффективности африканской стратегии России в условиях кризиса существующего миропорядка //Вестник Российской Академии наук. 2022. Т. 92. № 9. С. 837-848.

³ Бондаренко Д.М. Память о Гражданской войне, борьба с расизмом и американская нация: конец 2010-х - начало 2020-х гг. // Вестник Московского университета. Серия 8: История. 2023. Т. 78. № 1. С. 138-164; Бондаренко Д.М. Постколониальные нации в историко-культурном контексте. М.: Институт Африки РАН. 2022. 400 с.

⁴ Васильев А.М. Эхо арабской весны в Западной Европе // Международные процессы. 2021. Т. 19. № 2 (65). С. 21-49; Васильев А.М., Ткаченко А.А. Ближний Восток и Северная Африка в глобализированном мире // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2021. № 8. С. 74-80.

⁵ Давидсон А.Б. Наша африканистика рождалась дважды. заметки к обсуждению // Электронный научно-образовательный журнал "История". 2022. Т. 13. № 3 (113), С. 56-69.

⁶ Зеленев Е.И., Солощева М.А. КНР и моделирование «новой геополитической реальности» в Африке //Контурь глобальных трансформаций: политика, экономика, право. 2023. Т. 15. № 4. С. 41-59; Зеленев Е. И., Солощева М. А. Китайское проникновение в Африку: сравнительно-историческая ретроспектива //Сравнительная политика. 2020. Т. 11. № 4. С. 106-122.

⁷ Татаринцев В.М. Африка в современном мире. М.: Научная книга, 2003. 309 с.; Татаринцев В.М. Военные и экономические аспекты современной политики США в Африке // Вестник Дипломатической академии МИД России. Россия и мир. 2016. № 2. С. 51-61; Татаринцев В. М. Экономическая политика США в Африке: замыслы и реалии // Вестник Дипломатической академии МИД России. Россия и мир. 2016. № 4. С. 131-139.

⁸ Фитуни Л.Л. На пути к новой биполярности: геоэкономика и геополитика противостояния в Африке // Контурь глобальных трансформаций: политика, экономика, право. 2019. Т. 12. № 3. С. 6-29.

⁹ Африка в международных отношениях. М.: Наука, 1970. 256 с.; Африка и мир в XXI веке. М.: Институт Африки РАН, 2010. 320 с.; Африка и мир: взаимопонимание, изучение, преподавание. М.: Институт всеобщей истории РАН 2010. 340 с.

of Africa, including international topics, the works of A.S. Balezin, N.V. Vinogradova and others¹⁰ deserve attention.

The research of Russian scientists D.G. Baluyev¹¹, O.A. Belkov¹², V.F. Zaimsky¹³, K.A. Pantserev¹⁴, M.I. Rykhtik¹⁵, A.Y. Urnov¹⁶ is devoted to the theory of conflicts, issues of their occurrence and prevention. This group of scientific papers made it possible to evaluate the most significant domestic variables contributing to the internationalization of the conflict.

¹⁰ Балезин А.С. У великих озер. Монархи и президенты Уганды. М.: Наука, 1989. 365 с.; Балезин А.С. У истоков постколониальной библиотеки. Непрофессиональные историки в британском протекторате Уганда // *Imagines mundi: альманах исследований всеобщей истории XVI—XX вв.* № 11. Сер. Интеллектуальная история. Вып. 5. 2021. С. 228-239; Балезин А.С. СССР и Занзибар в годы его борьбы за независимость и объединения с Танганьикой (по архивным источникам) // *Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Международные отношения.* 2020. Т. 20. №. 1. С. 54-66; Виноградова Н.В. Республика Конго: становление партийной системы // *Очерки партийной жизни в Тропической Африке.* М.: Ин-т Африки РАН. 2022. С. 33-46; Виноградова Н. В. Республика Чад: 60 лет развития в условиях внутривнутриполитической борьбы и нестабильности // *Страны Тропической Африки: 60 лет политического и экономического развития.* М.: Ин-т Африки РАН, 2021. С. 240-259; Виноградова Н. В. Африка как источник уникального растительного сырья // *Сельское хозяйство в странах Африки южнее Сахары: достижения, проблемы, перспективы.* М.: Ин-т Африки РАН, 2019. С. 226-236.

¹¹ Балуев Д.Г. Эволюция экономических санкций как инструмента внешней политики // *Международные процессы.* 2014. Т. 12. №. 3. С. 23-33.

¹² Бельков О.А. Философия войны: слова и смыслы // *Власть.* 2019. №. 2. С. 119-127; Бельков О.А. Историческая память: роль государства в ее формировании // *Власть.* 2020. №. 6. С. 315-317; Бельков О.А. Военная безопасность: слова и смыслы // *Военная безопасность России: взгляд в будущее.* 2022. С. 163-169.

¹³ Заемский В.Ф., Карпович О.Г. Цифровая дипломатия—дипломатия будущего // *Дипломатическая служба.* 2021. №. 3. С. 264-276; Заемский В.Ф. ООН и миротворчество. М.: *Международные отношения.* 2022. 360 с.; Заемский В.Ф. Кому нужна реформа ООН. В интересах всех и каждого. М.: *Международные отношения.* 2022. 328 с.

¹⁴ Панцерев К.А. Страны Африки южнее Сахары на пути к созданию искусственного разума: миф или реальность? // *Aziya i Afrika Segodnya.* 2020. №. 10. С. 67-78. Панцерев К.А. Злонамеренное использование технологий искусственного интеллекта в странах Африки Южнее Сахары: вызовы panaфриканской кибербезопасности // *Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Международные отношения.* 2022. Т. 22. №. 2. С. 288-302.

¹⁵ Рыхтик М.И. Есть ли разное понимание безопасности у основных субъектов современной мировой политики? // *Международные отношения и общество.* 2019. №. 2. С. 80-82.; Рыхтик М.И., Сергунин А.А. Лоббизм и власть: востребованность и технологии // *Власть в XXI веке. Социокультурные аспекты политических процессов.* 2020. С. 136-161.

¹⁶ Урнов А.Ю. США и выборы в Африке. 2015-2018 годы // *Ученые записки Института Африки РАН.* 2019. №. 1. С. 58-98; Урнов А.Ю. Политика США в отношении Эфиопии, Демократической Республики Конго, Судана, Южного Судана, Анголы и Ливии // *Ученые записки Института Африки РАН.* 2020. №. 3. С. 87-111.

Ethnopolitical issues, as an important component of modern conflicts, are touched upon by such authors as V.A. Avksentiev, B.V. Aksyumov¹⁷, M.N. Amvrosova¹⁸, A.L. Yemelyanov¹⁹, E.S. Lvova²⁰. Collective monographs edited by A.D. Savateev²¹, as well as his scientific articles²², are devoted to the problems of Islamic radical movements in Africa. Their work formed the basis for the author's approach to the study of one of the main causes of the civil war in Nigeria – ethnic contradictions.

A wide range of factors influencing the propensity of various countries of the continent to separatism and irredentism is studied in the works of S.V. Kostelyanets²³.

¹⁷ Авксентьев В. А., Аксюмов Б. В., Гриценко Г. Д. Этничность в политических конфликтах: этнизация политики и политизация этничности // Политическая наука. 2020. № 3. С. 74-97.

¹⁸ Амвросова М.Н. и др. Развитие африканистики в России: история и современность // Контуры глобальных трансформаций: политика, экономика, право. 2021. Т. 14. № 6. С. 297-328.

¹⁹ Емельянов А.Л. Доколониальная история Африки южнее Сахары. М.: МГИМО-Университет, 2021. 295 с.; Емельянов А.Л. Основные закономерности африканских вооруженных конфликтов // Политика безопасности стран современного Востока. М.: МГИМО-Университет, 2021. С. 19-34.

²⁰ Львова Э.С. Новая работа по истории Африки // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2020. № 2. С. 79-80; Львова Э.С. Очерки по истории религий Африки южнее Сахары. 2019. 292 с.; Львова Э.С. Неотрадиционализм в постколониальной Африке южнее Сахары // Африка: региональная идентичность и традиция: ежегодник-2021. М.: РУДН, 2021. С. 197-222.

²¹ Исламские радикальные движения на политической карте современного мира. Страны Северной и Северо-Восточной Африки / Отв. ред. А.Д. Саватеев, Э.Ф. Кисриев. М.: URSS/Ленанд, 2015. 424 с.; Исламистские движения на политической карте современного мира. Вып. 3. Афразийская зона нестабильности / Отв. ред. Саватеев А.Д., Гринин Л.Е. М.: Ин-т Африки РАН, 2018. 250 с.

²² Саватеев А.Д. Исламский фундаментализм в Африке: Миф? Угроза? Реальная опасность? // Африка: Слагаемые современного развития: Ежегодник – 2014. Сборник статей / Под ред. Н.С. Кирабаева и др. М.: РУДН, 2014. С. 228-268; Исламистские движения на политической карте современного мира. Вып. 3. Афразийская зона нестабильности / Отв. ред. Саватеев А.Д., Гринин Л.Е. М.: Ин-т Африки РАН, 2018. 250 с.

²³ Костелянец С.В., Сидорова Г.М., Жерлицына Н.А. Угрозы безопасности Африки: современные тенденции. М.: Московский государственный лингвистический университет. 2018. 289 с.; Костелянец С. В. Дарфур: история конфликта. М.: Ин-т Африки РАН. 2014. 321 с.; Костелянец С.В., Денисова Т.С. Биафра: возрождение и распространение сепаратизма // Восток. Афро-Азиатские общества: история и современность. 2021. № 5. С. 180-190; Денисова Т.С., Костелянец С.В. Гана: сепаратизм в Западном Тоголенде // Вопросы истории. 2021. № 10(2). С. 35-45; Денисова Т. С., Костелянец С. В. Камерун: радикализация ислама и экспансия «Боко Харам» // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2021. № 9. С. 40-48; Костелянец С.В. Russia and the global competition for Africa: the military dimension // Oriens. 2018. No. 6. P. 184-198; Костелянец, С. В. Конфликт в суданском регионе Дарфур: региональный аспект // Восток. Афро-Азиатские общества: история и современность. 2015. № 1. С. 76-86; Костелянец, С. В. Конфликты в Африке: причины, генезис и проблемы урегулирования (этнополитические и социальные аспекты) // Восток. Афро-Азиатские общества: история и современность. 2014. № 4. С. 196-202; Денисова Т. С., Костелянец С. В. ЦАР: динамика конфликта // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2019. № 6. С. 24-31; Костелянец, С. В. Конфликты по-африкански: динамика и способы урегулирования // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2010.

Familiarization with the works of this scientist allowed us to identify patterns that manifest themselves due to the similarity of a number of domestic political determinants of African countries, namely ethnic, linguistic and religious heterogeneity, the level of which is about twice as high as in the rest of the world. At the same time, the scientist attaches great importance to the specifics of each conflict. Identifying the cause-and-effect relationships of problems of a military-political nature, S.V. Kostelyanets in his works conducts a detailed analysis of specific situations in African countries, different in ethnic composition, geographical location, socio-economic development, gives an idea of modern political processes on this continent.

The second group includes works devoted to certain aspects of the ethno-political conflict in Nigeria, which led to the civil war. The ethnic policy of the British and its consequences for the political landscape in Nigeria are described in the works of I.V. Sledzevsky «The History of Nigeria in modern and modern times» and «The formation of the socio-economic structure of modern Nigeria», L.N. Pribytkovsky «Nigeria in the struggle for independence», R.N. Ismagilova «The peoples of Nigeria: ethnic composition and brief ethnographic characteristics»²⁴.

The «ethnic pyramid» and the peculiarities of interethnic interaction in the southern regions of Nigeria were studied by Yu.N. Zotova, the growth of ethnicity in industrial cities and the formation of political parties based on it in the last decades of the colonial era was considered by T.S. Denisova in the work «The Working Class of modern Nigeria»²⁵.

№ 1. С. 40-43; Костелянец С. В. Африканский фактор в йеменском конфликте // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2016. № 5. С. 29-34; Денисова Т.С., Костелянец С.В. Раскол в "Боко Харам" и его последствия для региона бассейна озера Чад // Контуры глобальных трансформаций: политика, экономика, право. 2021. № 2. С. 214-230; Денисова Т. С., Костелянец С. В. Сепаратизм в Южном Камеруне: истоки и перспективы // Контуры глобальных трансформаций: политика, экономика, право. 2021. № 1. С. 194-213; Денисова Т.С., Костелянец С.В. Южный Судан: последствия отделения // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2022. № 2. С. 38-46.

²⁴ Прибытковский Л.Н. Нигерия в борьбе за независимость. М.: Изд-во вост. лит-ры, 1961. 298 с.; Исмагилова Р.Н. Народы Нигерии: этнический состав и краткая этнографическая характеристика. М.: Наука, 1963. 352 с.; Следзевский И.В. История Нигерии в новое и новейшее время. М.: Наука, 1981; Следзевский И.В. Формирование социально-экономической структуры современной Нигерии. М.: Наука, 1984. 298 с.

²⁵ Зотова Ю.Н. Традиционные политические институты Нигерии (первая половина XX в.). М.: Наука, 1979. 307 с.; Денисова Т.С. Рабочий класс современной Нигерии. М.: Наука, 1983. 213 с.

The aggravation of ethno-political contradictions under the influence of oil production in the 1960s was studied by O.D. Filippov²⁶. I.G. Bolshov wrote about the impact of the economic crisis of the 1980s on political processes in his work «Nigeria: the Crisis in the economy (transition to civilian rule and problems of economic recovery of the country)»²⁷.

The current political situation and the situation in the region are covered in scientific publications by N.G. Gavrilova²⁸, L.V. Geveling²⁹, T.S. Denisova³⁰, A.A. Krutova³¹. T.A. Alikhanov and N.V. Yakovleva³² wrote about the peculiarities of interaction between the local population and international oil corporations in the 1980s.

The analysis of the reasons for the revival of separatism several decades after the end of the 1967-1970 civil war between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the separatists of Biafra is contained in the work of S.V. Kostelyanets and T.S. Denisova³³. The author's reference to this work made it possible to identify patterns in the manifestation of separatism and internal political instability, manifested in the form of the "Republic of Biafra", the ideology of which continues to exist in the 21st century.

The *third group* includes works devoted to the history of Nigeria's interaction with the leading geopolitical players of the 1960s - Great Britain, France, the USSR, the USA.

²⁶ Филиппова О.Д. Государственное строительство и межэтнические отношения в Нигерии в 60-е годы XX века: автореф. дис. ... канд. ист. наук. М., 1994. 17 с.

²⁷ Большов И.Г. Нигерия: кризис в экономике (переход к гражданскому правлению и проблемы экономического оздоровления страны). М.: XX век-Согласие, 2000. 45 с.

²⁸ Гаврилова Н.Г. Состояние и перспективы «голландской болезни» экономики в Нигерии // Бизнес и дизайн ревю. 2022. № 1. С. 20-25; Гаврилова Н. Г. Современное состояние экономики Нигерии // Евразийский юридический журнал. 2018. № 5. С. 380-384.

²⁹ Гевелинг Л.В. Выборы в Нигерии: время политических парадоксов // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2011. № 8. С. 37-44; Гевелинг Л.В. Независимая Нигерия // Нигерия: справочно-монографическое издание. М.: Институт Африки РАН, 2013. 213 с.

³⁰ Денисова Т.С. Нигерия-2015: смена руководства // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2015. № 8 (697). С. 12-17; Денисова Т.С. Нигерия: проблемы реализации ЦУР в период правления Мохаммаду Бухари // Повестка дня Африканского союза-2063 и перспективы российско-африканского сотрудничества. М.: РУДН, 2019. С. 26-37.

³¹ Крутов А.А. Движение за освобождение дельты Нигера: конфликт на юге Нигерии // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2015. № 9 (698). С. 31-36.

³² Алиханова Т.А. Транснациональные корпорации в Тропической Африке. М.: Наука, 1986. 291 с.; Яковлева Н.В. Роль нефти в экономическом развитии Нигерии: автореф. дис. ... канд. эконом. наук. М., 1984. 201 с.

³³ Костелянец С.В., Денисова Т.С. Бифра: возрождение и распространение сепаратизма // Восток. Афро-Азиатские общества: история и современность. 2021. № 5. С. 180-190.

Of undoubted interest are the scientific works of such scientists as A.A. Alimov³⁴, A.Y. Borzova³⁵, O.L. Fituni³⁶, V.R. Filippov³⁷, O.S. Kulkova³⁸, Nygusie Kassae V. Mikael³⁹, A.Y. Urnov⁴⁰ and others, whose works touch on the mechanisms, features and trends of the foreign policy situation in the Tropical Africa. The political and military aspects of British and other Western interference in Africa have been discussed in works by N.A. Medushevskiy⁴¹.

³⁴ Алимов А.А., Нестерова И.Е. Интересы США в современных африканских государствах // Общество. Среда. Развитие. 2017. № 2. С. 29–33.

³⁵ Борзова А.Ю. “Brazil’s Cooperation with Africa (Agricultural Aspect)”. Africa’s Growing Role in World Politics. In Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2014. С. 131-143; Борзова А.Ю. и др. Африка перед лицом современных вызовов и угроз. М.: Ин-т Африки РАН, 2021. 216 с.

³⁶ Фитуни О.Л. Вклад африканистики современного Китая в продвижение национальных интересов на африканском направлении // Ученые записки Института Африки РАН. 2021. № 3. С. 5-17.

³⁷ Филиппов В.Р. «Плохая новость» для Эммануэля Макрона // Азия и Африка сегодня. 2020. № 4. С. 4-12; Филиппов В.Р. Э. Макрон: попытка изменить лицо африканской политики // Международная жизнь. 2020. № 6. С. 64-77; Филиппов В.Р. Африканская политика Парижа в период пандемии // Локус: люди, общество, культуры, смыслы. 2020. 11 (03). С. 151-168; Филиппов В.Р. Первое африканское турне Э. Макрона // Международные отношения. 2018. № 1. С. 75-89; Филиппов В.Р. Урановый фактор в африканской политике Франции // Национальная безопасность / nota bene. 2015. № 5 (40). С. 705-720.

³⁸ Кулькова О.С. Новые гуманитарные инициативы ЕС в Африке, углубление торгово-инвестиционного сотрудничества со странами континента // Европейский Союз: факты и комментарии. 2020. № 98. С. 110-113; Кулькова О.С. Евросоюз и Африканский союз: укрепление механизмов сотрудничества-от общего к частному // Европейский Союз: факты и комментарии. 2019. № 5. С. 104-108; Кулькова О.С. ЕС: расширение гуманитарных инициатив в Африке, укрепление сотрудничества со странами Северной Африки // Европейский Союз: факты и комментарии. 2019. № 97. С. 106-109.

³⁹ Ныгусие Кассае В. Микаэль. Хайле Селассие I император Эфиопии. М.: РУДН, 2016. 424 с.

⁴⁰ Урнов А.Ю. Внешняя политика СССР в годы «холодной войны» и «нового мышления». М.: РФК-Имидж ЛАБ, 2014. 294 с.; Урнов А.Ю. Новая африканская стратегия администрации Д. Трампа // Aziya i Afrika Segodnya. 2019. № 5. С. 56-67.

⁴¹ Медушевский Н.А. Военное присутствие мировых держав на Африканском континенте: аналитический обзор // Теории и проблемы политических исследований. 2022. Т. 11. № 2А. С. 99-114; Медушевский Н.А. Миротворческие операции под руководством африканских стран // Власть. 2021. Т. 29. № 3. С. 312-315; Медушевский Н.А., Бусыгина А.В., Сопот М.А. Современная политика Великобритании на Африканском континенте // Теории и проблемы политических исследований. 2021. Т. 10. № 2А. С. 28-43; Медушевский Н.А., Соловьева П.Д. Влияние британской политики на Федеративную Республику Нигерия: от федерализации колонии до сохранения влияния в регионе // Теории и проблемы политических исследований. 2021. Т. 10. № 2А. С. 3-16; Медушевский Н.А. Африка перед вызовом глобализации // Теории и проблемы политических исследований. 2020. Т. 9. № 5А. С. 107-118.

Soviet-Nigerian bilateral relations have become the subject of research by a number of Soviet and Russian scientists. The works of S.B. Gorbachev⁴², A.P. Elokhin⁴³, A.L. Emelyanov⁴⁴, A.N. Zelinskaya⁴⁵, E.E. Lebedeva⁴⁶, E.N. Korendyasov⁴⁷, S.V. Mazov⁴⁸, G.M. Sidorova⁴⁹ and others are particularly significant for this study.

Of considerable interest in the light of the study of Nigeria's relations with the USSR are the works of S.V. Mazov⁵⁰, who provides a comprehensive analysis of the Soviet Union's policy towards Nigeria after its independence in 1960. The significance of this work is also due to a deep study of the patterns of Moscow's policy in Nigeria in the context of the Nigerian government's attempt to create a new status quo after getting rid of the colonial situation.

⁴² Горбачев С.Б. Реализация геостратегии Запада на Ближнем Востоке как политика двойных стандартов // Экономика и управление: научно-практический журнал. 2021. №. 3. С. 187-190.

⁴³ Орумо Б.К., Елохин А.П., Ксенофонтов А.И. Некоторые аспекты международного сотрудничества по Экологическим вопросам в Нигерии // Глобальная ядерная безопасность. 2021. №.2 (39). С. 25-34.

⁴⁴ Емельянов А.Л. Имитационная демократия: африканский вариант // Новая и новейшая история. 2015. № 5. С. 35-41.

⁴⁵ Зелинская А.Н. и др. Интеграция Африки в современную систему товарооборота // Актуальные проблемы авиации и космонавтики. 2020. С. 531-533.

⁴⁶ Лебедева Э.Е. Африка южнее Сахары в перипетиях мировой политики // Азия и Африка в современной мировой политике. Сборник статей / Отв. ред. д.п.н. Д.Б. Малышева, к.э.н. А.А. Рогожин. М.: ИМЭМО РАН, 2012. С. 96-101.

⁴⁷ Корендясов Е.Н. Российско-африканские отношения на новом старте // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Международные отношения. 2016. Т. 16. № 2. С. 203-214; Давидчук А.С., Дегтерев Д.А., Корендясов Е.Н. Советская структурная помощь Республике Мали в 1960-1968 гг // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Международные отношения. 2022. Т. 22. №. 4. С. 714-727.

⁴⁸ Мазов С.В. Политика СССР в Западной Африке, 1956-1964: неизвестные страницы истории холодной войны. М., 2008. 335 с.; Мазов С.В. Советско-нигерийские отношения накануне и в начале гражданской войны в Нигерии, 1966—1967 гг. (по материалам российских архивов) // Электронный научно-образовательный журнал «История». 2020. Т. 11. Выпуск 8 (94) [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://history.jes.su/s207987840011017-7-1/> (дата обращения: 10.11.2021).

⁴⁹ Сидорова Г.М. Россия и международные инициативы в Африке // Дипломатическая служба. 2011. № 3. С. 34-45; Сидорова Г.М. Африканский вектор российской дипломатии // Дипломатическая служба. 2019. №. 1. С. 63-69; Сидорова Г.М. Африка в мировой политике // Вестник Дипломатической академии МИД России. Россия и мир. 2019. №. 2. С. 11-25; Сидорова Г.М. Наука об Африке в XIX веке // Вестник ЯрГУ. Серия Гуманитарные науки. 2022. Т. 16. №. 2. С. 198-207.

⁵⁰ Мазов С.В. Политика СССР в Западной Африке, 1956-1964: неизвестные страницы истории холодной войны. М.: Ин-т всеобщей истории, 2008. 335 с.

The Department of Theory and History of International Relations at RUDN has its own niche in the field of foreign policy research in Nigeria. A distinctive feature of the research is the emphasis on identifying changes in foreign policy determinants in the context of globalization and regionalization. In this paper, the author has resorted to the results of scientific research drawn from a number of dissertations defended at the departments of TIMO and Comparative Political Science of the RUDN⁵¹.

Thus, the author comes to the conclusion that in the presence of comprehensive works on Nigeria's foreign policy in the postcolonial period through the prism of the implementation of its multilateral and bilateral diplomacy, there were no publications by Russian authors analyzing the aspect of the problem of Nigerian foreign policy raised by the dissertation, namely: the nature, motives, forms and consequences of third parties' participation in the civil war in Nigeria in 1967-1970.

English historiography includes issues related to various aspects of Nigeria's foreign policy and foreign involvement in intra-state conflicts. Foreign scientific literature on the topic of the dissertation is represented by monographs and articles by American, European and African researchers devoted to certain aspects of the topic under consideration. The theoretical foundations for studying the functioning of complex social communities are presented in the works of H. Spencer, M. Weber, J. Galtung, D. Horowitz, C. Geertz etc.⁵².

Regarding the third-party involvement in intra-state conflicts, an important contribute to this thesis was offered by scholars' works, among which we can cite J.

⁵¹ Аньяоха Самуэль Чикеренва. Особенности политического процесса и внешняя политика Нигерии в условиях глобализации: дис. ...канд. полит. наук: 23.00.04. М., 2008. 157 с.; Омо Огбебор Осасуйи Деннис. Нигерия в процессе региональной интеграции в Западной Африке (на примере ЭКОВАС): дис. ... канд. ист. наук: 07.00.15. М., 2018. 191 с.; Ндайисаба Огюстин. Вклад государств региона Великих озёр Африки (РВО) в обеспечение безопасности на примере Демократической Республики Конго: дис. ...канд. полит. наук: 23.00.04. М., 2020. 223 с.

⁵² Spenser, H. *The Man Versus the State*. L.: Williams and Norgate. 1884. 341 p.; Weber, M. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. N.Y.: Oxford University Press. 1947. 447 p.; Galtung, J. *Comprehensive Approach to Peace Research*, *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*. 2011. Vol. 2. No. 1. P. 18-32; Horowitz, I.L. *The Idea Of War And Peace In Contemporary Philosophy*. N.Y.: Literary Licensing. 2012. 224 p.; Geertz, C. *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2020. 296 p.

Rosenau⁵³, S. Huntington⁵⁴, P. Regan⁵⁵, L.-S. Rioux⁵⁶, A. Kapral⁵⁷. There is an extensive literature focusing on civil war duration and termination that has dealt extensively with external intervention. Early empirical studies include P. Regan⁵⁸, who found that wars with intervention (and counter-intervention) last longer than others; and M. Doyle and N. Sambanis⁵⁹, who found that international peacekeeping intervention can help shore up the peace after war ends. Several other studies have replicated and extended these results.

Among the scientists who have studied the foreign policy of Nigeria after independence, a special place is occupied by the works of such authors as: K.H. Aden, T.B. Ashaver, D. Bach, L.P. Blanchard, M. Bloom and H. Matthes, Y. Chen, J.O. David, E. Meyerding, J. Herkovitz, G. Mahe and J.E. Paturel; S. Miller; J.S. Nye, M. Ortiz, S. Riordan, V. Showers, S. Sewall, J.L. Voker⁶⁰. The works of the above-mentioned scientists contain an in-depth analysis of the political, economic, cultural and

⁵³ Rosenau, J.N. Intervention as a scientific concept // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1969, 13.2: 149-171.

⁵⁴ Хантингтон С. Политический порядок в изменяющихся обществах. М., 2004.

⁵⁵ Regan P.M. Conditions of successful third-party intervention in intrastate conflicts // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 1996. Vol. 40. № 2. P. 336-359; Gurney R.M., Hamlet A.F., Regan P.M. The influences of power, politics, and climate risk on US subnational climate action // *Environmental Science & Policy*. 2021. Т. 116. P. 96-113.

⁵⁶ Rioux, J.-S. et al. Third Party Interventions in International Conflicts: Theory and Evidence. In: Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Halifax, NS. 2003.

⁵⁷ Kapral, A. Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflict: A Cost Benefit Analysis. *Res Publica - Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 2004. Vol. 9. № 1. 6 pp.

⁵⁸ Regan, P.M. Third-party interventions and the duration of intrastate conflicts // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2002 № 46(1). P. 55-73.

⁵⁹ Doyle, M.W., Sambanis, N. International peacebuilding: A theoretical and quantitative analysis // *American political science review*. 2000 P. 779-801.

⁶⁰ Alden, C.H. *China in Africa*, New York: Zed Books, 2004. 289 p.; Ashaver, T.B. Continuities and Discontinuities in Nigerian Foreign Policy // *International Journal of Development and Sustainable* 2007. Vol.3. (2) P. 289-299; Bach, D. Nigeria's Manifest Destiny in West Africa: Dominance with Power // *Africa Spectrum*. 2008. Vol.42. No.2. P. 22-41; Blanchard, L.P. US. African Command (AFRICOM) // *Congressional Research Service* 2014. 306 p.; Bloom, M. & Matthes, H. Women as Symbols and Swords in Boko Haram's Terror // *PRISM*. 2009. Vol. 6 No.1. P. 78-82.; Chen, Y. China's Role in Nigerian Railway Development and Implications for Security and Development. // *United States Institute of Peace*. 2018. P. 74-90; David, J.O. et al. *Boko Haram: The Socio-Economic Drivers*. // Springer. 2015. P. 67-98; Meyerding, E, I.R. Theory as Politics, International Politics as Theory: a Nigerian case study, *African Nebula*. // University of Chicago. 2010. 345 p.; Herskovits, J. Nigeria: Africa's New Power // *Foreign Affairs*, 1976. Vol.53 No.2. P. 67-91.; Mahe, G & Paturel, J.E. 1896-2006 Sahelian annual rainfall variability and runoff increase of Sahelian Rivers // *Comptes Rendus Geoscience* 2009. Vol. 341 No. 7. P. 90-102; Miller, S. Global Nollywood: The Nigerian movie industry and alternative global networks in production and distribution // *Global Media and Communications* 1989. Vol. 8 No.2. P. 79-92.

humanitarian processes that led to the civil war and the involvement of third countries in it.

Among the authors of works of general theoretical orientation should be mentioned such names as J. Ki-Zerbo, R. Kornevin, B. Kabatu-Suila, J.L. Velour and others⁶¹. The research of foreign researchers L. Bloomfield, F. Hugo, P. Jacquemot, M. Krok, S. Liberty, C. Solvit is devoted to the theory of conflicts, issues of their occurrence and prevention⁶². G. de Villera, J.K. Villame, J.P. Badidike, P. Bouvier and others⁶³ contributed to the solution and study of this problem. These authors explore classifications, the genesis of conflicts, situational moments that clearly illustrate conflict situations in Africa.

African studies have been widely developed, and many American and European scientists have studied the internal political processes in Nigeria, as well as the reaction to them from third countries, as well as regional and subregional organizations. This problem was developed in their works by J. B. Boyd, S. Charlotte, B. Dudley, K.H. Griffin, J. Mayall, A.A. Mazrui, A. Ogilvy, A. Oluwabiya, M. Duruji, M. Sinclair, and D. Nolte⁶⁴. The main priorities of Nigeria's foreign policy in the context of the development

⁶¹ Ki-Zerbo J. Histoire critique de l'Afrique: l'Afrique au Sud du Sahara. Dakar. 2008; Cornevin R. Histoire de l'Afrique dès origines à nos jours. P.1964; Kabatu-Suila B. Instabilité institutionnelle. Kinshasa.2004; Kabatu-Suila B. Patrice Emery Lumumba beautiful! Kinshasa.2004; Vellut Jean-Luc. Bibliographie historique du Zaïre à l'époque coloniale (1880–1960). Tervuren (Belgium): Musée royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1996.

⁶² Bloomfield L. Managing International Conflict. N.-Y., 1997; Hugo J.-F. La République Démocratique du Congo: une guerre inconnue. P., 2006; Jacquemot P. L'économie politique des conflits en République Démocratique du Congo // Afrique contemporaine. 2009. № 230. P., 187–212; Crocq M. Coltan, l'or high-tech qui ronge le Congo // Science et vie. 2002. № 1016. P. 162–164; Liberti S. Trafic d'or entre Congo et l'Ouganda // Le Monde diplomatique. 2005. № 621; Solvit S. RDC: Rêve ou illusion? Conflits et ressources naturelles en République Démocratique du Congo. P., 2009

⁶³ Villers G. de. République Démocratique du Congo. Guerre et Politique // Les Cahiers africains № 47–48, P., 2001; Villers G. de. De la guerre aux élections. L'ascension de Joseph Kabila et la naissance de la Troisième République (janvier 2001 — août 2008) // Les Cahiers africains. 2009. № 75, Bruxelles: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale; Willame J.-C. L'Accord de Lusaka. Chronique d'une négociation internationale. Les Cahiers africains № 51–52. P., 2002; Idem. Patrice Lumumba. La crise revisitée. P., 1999; Badidike J.-P. (ed.). Guerre et droit de l'homme en République Démocratique du Congo. P., 2009; Bouvier P. Le Dialogue intercongolais. Anatomie d'une négociation à la lisière du chaos // Les Cahiers africains. 2004. № 63–64. Bruxelles: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale; ХАНТИНГТОН С. Политический порядок в изменяющихся обществах. М., 2004.

⁶⁴ Boyd, J.B. African Boundary Conflict: An Empirical Study // The African Studies Review 1979. P. 67-81; Dudley, B. An Introduction to Nigerian government and Politics. London: Macmillan 1982. 321 p.; Mayall, J. Oil and Nigerian Foreign Policy // African Affairs, 1976. Vol.75. P. 25-58.; Mazrui, A.A.

of secessionist sentiments on its territory, as well as in the outline of the dynamics and genesis of the civil war, have become the object of study by American and British researchers A. Pine and I. Pogoso⁶⁵. This group of works presents factual material of the activities of the great Powers to intervene in the civil war.

The role of multilateral institutions in the settlement of the civil war in Nigeria is reflected in the published monographs of J. Claude, S. Gila and K.N.U. Okereke⁶⁶. Also, the foreign policy of Nigeria and its bilateral relations with the leading countries of the world are reflected in the works of S. Charlotte, K. Griffin, D. Hearn and T. M. Shaw⁶⁷.

Scientists relying on historicism believe that the emergence of the causes of the civil war is associated with a special historical experience that Nigeria went through a colonial period. E. Azar, S. Okon, R. Olanian, A.R. Mustafa and A. Alao believe that this is a colonial legacy, A. Williams, E. Osagae, P. Eke, O. Adeyeri, O. Nnoli, I. Okonta, U. Ukivo, R. Shklyar - that this is a consequence of the artificial unification of ethnic groups of different numbers at different levels of socio-economic development⁶⁸. Studying the

Towards A Pax Africana: A Study in Ideology and Ambition. London: Weidenfield and Nicolson. 2003. 327 pp.; Oluwabiyi A., Duruji M. The Implication of Nigeria-China Relations on the Actualization of Sustainable Food Security in Nigeria // *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Relationes Internationales*. 2021. T. 14. №. 1. P. 12-24; Sinclair, M. An Analysis of Nigerian Foreign Policy: The Evolution of Political Paranoia. Braamfontein: The South African Institute of International Affairs. 1983. 218 pp.; Nolte, D. How to compare regional powers: Analytical concepts and research topics // *Review of International Studies*. 2010, Vol. 36. P. 881–901.

⁶⁵Pine, A. Nigerian Foreign Policy 1960-2011 // *The Guardian*. 1999.; Pogoso, I. A Decade of Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy: Issues and Challenges. // Board Members, 2011.

⁶⁶ Claude, I.L. Collective legitimization as a political function of the United Nations. *International organizations*, Vol.20 No. 03 1966; Gill, S & Law, D. Global Hegemon and the Structural Power of Capital. // *International Quarterly*, Vol. 33. No. 4. 1978; Okereke, C.N.E. Nigeria and the African Union in the Light of the Arab Revolts. Lecture Series on African Series on African Security. Uppsala Sweden: Nordic African Institute 2012.

⁶⁷ Charlotte, S. How can China help Nigeria become a more stable society in order to attract more FDI, and at the same time keep Chinese interests safe? // Aalborg University. 2015. P. 67-78.; Griffin, C.H. Operation Barkhane and Boko Haram: French Counterterrorism and military cooperation in the Sahel. *Trends Research and Adversary* // University de Savoie. 2015. P 93-109.; Hearne, D. Commonwealth Trade Case Studies: Nigeria. // Centre for Brexit Studies, Birmingham City University (BCU). 2017. P. 56-89; Shaw, T.M. The state of Nigeria: Oil crises, power and bases of foreign policy. // *Canadian Journal of African Studies/La Revue canadienne des etudes Africaines*. 2014. Vol. 18. No.2. P. 56-76.

⁶⁸ Azar E. The management of protracted social conflict: theory and cases. Aldershot, 1990. 190 p. ; Adeyeri, O. Nigerian State and the management of oil minority conflicts in the Niger Delta: A retrospective view // *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*. 2012. Vol. 6. № 5. P. 97–103. P. 99; Nnoli, O. The dynamics of ethnic politics in Nigeria // *ODU: Journal of West African Studies*. 1976. № 14. P. 10-21; Okonta I. The Coastal-Hinterland Factor in the transformation

works of these scientists, the author came to the conclusion that the artificiality and inhomogeneity of the ethnic composition contributed to the emergence in Nigeria of such a socio-psychological phenomenon as an extremely high level of self-awareness based on ethnicity, which became an important cause of the civil war.

R. Olanian, in the spirit of afrocentrism, considers the colonial era as a period of England's realization of its mercantile tasks, without taking into account the cultural characteristics of the population of the controlled territory⁶⁹. S. Okon considered the main mistake of Great Britain, which led to the ethnopolitical confrontation in the country, was the unification of the northern and southern parts of the colony in 1914⁷⁰. J. Idang pointed out that during the creation of the colonial state, several hundred ethnic groups were «locked in one colonial cage», as a result of which dominant ethnic groups and ethnic minorities appeared in Nigeria⁷¹. P. Eke was the first to study the phenomenon of ethnic minorities in Nigeria and carried out their first classification⁷².

The artificiality of the ethnic composition, according to the group of Nigerian historians, contributed to the emergence in Nigeria of such a socio-psychological phenomenon as a high level of self-awareness based on ethnicity. The first among them to try to analyze this phenomenon N.L. Barika examined the process of ethnicity formation since the 1920-s⁷³. The appeal to the work of this scientist made it possible to

of ethnic identities in Nigeria's Niger Delta / Okonta I., Ukiwo U. // Oxford-Sciences Po Research Group. URL: http://oxpo.politics.ox.ac.uk/projects/state_and_ethnic_definition/ukiwo-okonta_paper.pdf (accessed: 12.08.2022); Ukiwo, U. Politics, ethno-religious conflicts and democratic consolidation in Nigeria // *Journal of Modern African Studies*. 2003. № 1. P. 115–138; Ukiwo U. From "pirates" to "militants": A historical perspective on anti-state and anti-oil company mobilization among the Ijaw of Warri, Western Niger Delta // *African Affairs*. 2002. № 106. P. 587-610; Demarest L., Langer A., Ukiwo U. Nigeria's Federal Character Commission (FCC): a critical appraisal // *Oxford Development Studies*. 2020. Vol. 48. №. 4. P. 315-328.

⁶⁹ Olaniyan R. A. *The Amalgamation and its Enemies: An Interpretive History of Modern Nigeria*. Ile-Ife: Obafemi University Press, 2003. 242 p.

⁷⁰ Okon C. *Resource Control and the Mistake of 1914*. Lagos: University of Lagos, 2005. 23 p.; Ayinde K. et al. Modeling Nigerian Covid-19 cases: A comparative analysis of models and estimators // *Chaos, Solitons & Fractals*. 2020. Vol. 138. P. 109-111.

⁷¹ Idang, G.J. *Nigeria: Internal Politics and Foreign Policy 1960-1966*. Ibadan: University Press, 1973.

⁷² Ekeh P. *Political Minorities and Historically-Dominant Minorities in Nigerian History and Politics*. Buffalo : State University of New York, 1994. P. 25-30.

⁷³ Barika, N.L. *Nigerian Foreign Policy from 1960-2003: Implications for Present and Future Leaders* // *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol. 19, Is. 8, Ver. III (Aug. 2014), P. 52-58.

assess the role of the lack of economic resources and the influence of land unions on this fact in growing industrial cities for internal political conflict.

Also, a whole galaxy of scientists believe that the ethno-political conflict in Nigeria is based on the struggle for resources (J. Adalikwu, M. Humphreys) or «thirst for profit» (U. Idemudia), other researchers note that the reason is the uneven development of the country (V. Akpan, O. Ibeanu, A. Paki), others - that it is a combination of these two premises (M. Watts), the fourth believe that the deployment of armed confrontation in the South Nigeria was promoted by the policy of foreign oil companies (F. Steyn, T.L. Karl)⁷⁴.

As for the influence of third countries on the civil war in Nigeria (1967-1970), their motives and the results of foreign policy actions, there is very little work on this problem. The works of the following Nigerian and Western scientists are devoted to this narrow topic: N. Annan, I. Nzimiro, S. Cronje, J. Stremlau, C. Uche, C. Achebe and others⁷⁵. In

⁷⁴ Adalikwu, J. Globalization and the uneven application of international regulatory standard : the case of oil exploration in Nigeria: A Thesis submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and Research For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy In the Department of Sociology. Saskatoon. 2007, Humphreys M. Natural Resources, Conflict and Conflict Resolution // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2005. № 49. P. 500-511; Idemudia U. Oil Extraction and Poverty Reduction in the Niger Delta: A Critical Examination of Partnership Initiatives // *Journal of Business Ethics*. 2009. № 116. P. 90-101. ; Akpan W. Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Nigeria: Lessons from the Niger Delta Crisis // *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*. 2007. № 2. P. 161-191 ; Ibeanu O. (Sp)oil of Politics: Petroleum, Politics and the Illusion of Development in the Niger Delta, Nigeria // *ACAS Bulletin*. 2002/2003. № 64. P. 16-36. ; Edoumiekumo, G.S. Colonialism and Political Conflict in Contemporary Nigeria: The case of the Niger Delta // *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. 2011. № 6. URL: http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol._1_No._6;_June_2011/31.pdf (accessed: 12.08.2022); Watts M. The Sinister Political Life of Community: Economies of Violence and Governable Spaces in the Niger Delta, Nigeria // *Niger Delta Economies Of Violence*. 2003. URL: http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/GreenGovernance/papers/Watts_SinisterPolitical.pdf (accessed: 12.08.2022); Steyn, M.S. Oil Politics in Ecuador and Nigeria: a Perspective from Environmental History on the Struggles between Ethnic Minority Groups, Multinational Oil Companies and National Governments: thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree philosophiae doctor. Bloemfontein. 2003. URL: <http://etd.uovs.ac.za/ETD-db/theses/available/etd-08232005-142307/unrestricted/STEYNMS.pdf> (accessed: 12.08.2022); Karl, T. The Paradox of Plenty: Oil booms and Petro-States. Berkley: University of California Press, 1997. 342 p; Oyefusi, A. Oil-dependence and Civil conflict in Nigeria // *The Center for the Study of African Economics at the University of Oxford*. 2022. URL: <http://economics.ouls.ox.ac.uk/13225/1/2007-09text.pdf> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

⁷⁵ Annan N. Violent, Conflicts and Civil Strife in West Africa: Causes, Challenges and Prospects Stability // *International Journal of Security & Development*. 2014. Vol. 3 No.I. P. 65-81; Nzimiro, I. Nigerian Civil War: A Study in Class Conflict. Enugu: Frontline Publishing Company. 1984. 351 pp., Cronje, S. The World and Nigeria: The Diplomatic History of the Biafran War, 1967–1970. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972. 380 pp.; Stremlau, J.J. The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War,

their research, the authors touch upon various aspects of Nigeria's bilateral relations with Great Britain and the USSR, tracing historical retrospect and conducting a comparative analysis of the actions of these actors.

Thus, it can be concluded that the historiography of this problem provides a comprehensive and fairly complete overview of both the historical aspect of the study and the expert-analytical perspective of the problem under consideration. However, the phenomenon of third countries' interference in the internal conflict on the example of Nigeria is not well studied. This makes it necessary to conduct special studies aimed at analyzing the nature, motives, form and consequences of the participation of third parties in the civil war in Nigeria 1967-1970.

The object of this research is the phenomenon of third-party interference in internal armed conflicts, in particular, in civil wars.

The subject of the thesis is the role of the USSR and Great Britain in the 1967-1970 civil war in Nigeria: their interests, activities, consequences.

The purpose of the research is to identify the causes, forms and consequences of the involvement of the USSR and Great Britain in the civil war in Nigeria.

In order to achieve the purpose, the following **research tasks** shall be solved:

- to investigate theoretical approaches to the participation of third parties in civil wars, including the motives, forms and consequences of such participation;
- to identify the forms and reasons for the involvement of third countries in internal conflicts;
- to identify the features of third-party intervention in civil wars in the African context;
- to assess the key internal and external factors that led to the internationalization of the civil war in Nigeria;
- to reveal the prerequisites of the civil war in Nigeria from the point of view of the factors of the transition of contradictions into armed violence;

- identify key foreign actors who played a role in the Nigerian civil war;
- to assess the role of the USSR and Great Britain in the civil war in Nigeria in terms of the causes and forms of involvement of these countries in the civil war.

The **chronological scope** of the study covers the period from 1967 to 1970. The lower boundary of the study was determined in 1967, when the Government of the eastern region, headed by Colonel Emeka Ojukwu, unilaterally declared independence from the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and renamed the region the Republic of Biafra. At that time, Lieutenant Yakubu Gowon, a Northerner and head of the Federal Military Government (FMG), gave the order for mobilization (July 6, 1967), after which the civil war officially began in the country. The upper limit of the study was determined in 1970, when Biafra surrendered to the Nigerian federal government, after which the military confrontation ended and the civil war came to an end (January 15, 1970). Observing the principle of historicism, for an overview of the root causes of the conflict of 1967-1970, the author turns to the history of the colonial period of Nigeria.

Main Sources of Data. In order to achieve the author's goal and solve the research task, a group of sources were involved, analyzed and systematized and this can be divided into several groups.

The first group «regulatory and legislative sources» include the basic State laws of Nigeria (Richard's Constitution of 1946, the Constitution of the Independent Nigeria 1960), as well as the main regulatory document of the unrecognized Republic of Biafra, the attempt to create which was made by separatists from the Eastern region during the civil war⁷⁶. These sources allow us to draw a conclusion about the peculiarities of the relationship between the central government and the southern regions of the country and about the situation of the inhabitants of this region. The same group of sources includes acts and decrees regulating the conditions and procedure for the extraction of minerals, as well as the distribution of income from their sale: the Decree «On Oil in Navigable

⁷⁶ The Reviewed Nigerian Constitution of 1946. Lagos: Government Publication, 1946. URL: <http://www.nigeria-law.org> (accessed: 12.08.2022); The Constitution of the Federation of Nigeria. Lagos: Federal Government Press, 1960. URL: http://www.worldstatesmen.org/nigeria_const1960.pdf (accessed: 12.08.2022); Proclamation Of The Republic Of Biafra. Enugu // Government Printer, 1967. URL: www.worldstatesmen.org/Biafra.doc (accessed: 12.08.2022).

Waters» of 1968, the Act «On Gasoline» of 1969⁷⁷, as well as interstate treaties that regulated cooperation between Nigeria and third countries⁷⁸. These normative legal documents allow us to identify the historical context and the political and legal range within which the economic contradictions between the north and the center have matured (since the late 1960s), ethnicity was formed, and the main lines of ethnopolitical faults were outlined.

The second group «clerical sources» represents reports of the colonial and postcolonial periods, directly or indirectly covering the situation of the population of Nigeria. This is the report of the Willink Commission in 1958 on the situation of ethnic minorities in Nigeria⁷⁹, on the activities of the Commonwealth of Nations mission in Lagos⁸⁰, on the consequences of the civil war in Nigeria⁸¹, etc. To analyze the assessment of the situation in Nigeria from the point of view of the USSR, the author used analytical references prepared by the African Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁸². This group also includes telegrams exchanged between decision makers from

⁷⁷ Oil In Navigable Waters Act: Decree № 34, 22nd April, 1968. Lagos: Federal Government Press, 1968. URL: <http://www.placng.org/new/laws/O6.pdf> (accessed: 12.08.2022); Petroleum Act 1969: Decree № 51, 27th November 1969. Lagos: Federal Government Press, 1969. URL: <http://www.nigeria-law.org> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

⁷⁸ Agreement on Economic and Technical Co-operation between the Government of the U.S.S.R. and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria / in Nigeria's Treaties in Force, Vol. I: for the period of 1 October 1960 to 30 June 1970. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information. 1971.

⁷⁹ Nigeria: Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the fears of Minorities and the Means of Allaying Them : [The Willink Commission Report. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Command of Her Majesty. July. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. July 1958]. URL: <http://www.adakaboro.org/thewillinkcomm> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

⁸⁰ TNA, FCO 38/111, fo. 153, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 14 July 1967. P. 7.

⁸¹ National Intelligence Estimate: Consequences of Civil Strife in Nigeria, Foreign relations of the United States. 1964–1968 // Africa Document. Vol. 24, 397. 2 May 1968. URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d397> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

⁸² Справка II Африканского отдела МИД СССР «Советско-нигерийские отношения». 24 ноября 1967 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 504-506; Справка I Африканского отдела МИД СССР -К вопросу о "Республике Биафра". 31 июля 1968 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 507-513.

Nigeria and foreign countries⁸³. The author also referred to declarations⁸⁴ and memoranda⁸⁵ to record the content of Nigeria's bilateral relations with third countries.

The third group is media sources. This group is represented by such documents as minutes of meetings of the House of Representatives in the British Parliament⁸⁶, communiqués of meetings of State officials⁸⁷, official statements and speeches of heads of State and Government, as well as diplomats containing conclusions on Nigeria's foreign policy⁸⁸. Various aspects of the development of British-Nigerian cooperation

⁸³ Telegram from the Embassy in Nigeria to the Department of State', Foreign relations of the United States, 1964–1968. Vol. 24, Africa, Document 392. Lagos. 8 August 1967. 1700Z. URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d392> (accessed: 12.08.2022). Outgoing code cable, from secretary-general to Gussing, 29 August 1968, UNA, S 0303–0005–04; Cable from secretary-general to Sadruddin Agha Khan, 29 July 1968. United Nations Archives [hereafter UNA], S 0303–0005–04; FCO 38/267, National Archives. Letter and memorandum to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs from the British High Commissioner. October 1967; TNA, PREM 13/1662, Thomas to Prime Minister, 18 August 1967; Telegram 5133 from the Department of State to the Embassy in Nigeria // U.S. Department of State. 11 January 1969. URL: <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e5/55256.htm> (accessed: 12.08.2022). Address to Nigerian Council by Sir Hugh Clifford, Lagos, 1920 // African Proconsuls. European Governors in Africa / ed. Gann L.H., Duignan P. New York/London/Stanford: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan Publishers & Hoover Institution. 1978; Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All African Posts // Foreign Relations of the United States. Volume XXIV, 1964–68. 2 August 1966; Я. Говон - А.Н.Косыгину. Телеграмма с просьбой не признавать Биафру в качестве суверенного государства. 30 мая 1967 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 499-500.

⁸⁴ Déclaration du gouvernement sur la politique étrangère. Speech by Michel Debré at the French National Assembly. 2 October 1968. URL: www.assembleenationale.fr/histoire/michel-debre/discours/02101968.asp (accessed: 12.08.2022).

⁸⁵ Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon // U.S. Department of State. 28 January 1969. URL: <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e5/54884.htm> (accessed: 12.08.2022), Information Memorandum from the Western Africa Country Director, Bureau of African Affairs (Melbourne) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Affairs (Palmer), 18 April 1968, Department of State, Central Files, POL 1 NIGERIA-US, in Foreign relations of the United States. 1964–1968, Vol. 24, document 396.

⁸⁶ Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates, 1969. Vol. 781. Col. 490; Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates, 1969. Vol. 781. Col. 485-500; Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates. January 21, 1969. Vol. 776. Cols. 549-554; Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates. December 4, 1968. Vol. 774. Col. 65.

⁸⁷ Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference / Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Information. 1969. URL: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1969/jan/21/commonwealth-prime-ministers-meeting-1> (accessed: 12.08.2022). Commonwealth Office, Memo 'Observers', UK National Archives [hereafter UKNA], FCO 38/225; UK High Commissioner in Nigeria to Commonwealth Office, 21 August 1968, UKNA, FCO 38/225.

⁸⁸ Speech by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Willy Brandt, to the African Ambassadors accredited in Bonn. // Afrika. May 6, 1968. Vol. IX; Press Release № F2480 / Federal Ministry of Information. Lagos. 2 November 1967; Press Release no. F2826 / Federal Ministry of Information. Lagos. 16 December 1967; Second interim report by representative of secretary-general to Nigeria on humanitarian activities, 30 October 1968, UNA, S-0884–0014–11; The West fails to recognize Russian

during the Civil War are devoted, in particular, to the speeches and writings of British Prime Minister G. Wilson⁸⁹ and interviews with Nigerian leader Y. Gowon⁹⁰.

The fourth group contains personal nature sources. Of great value for the analysis of bilateral relations are the diary entries of Deputy Foreign Minister Ya.A. Malik and USSR Ambassador to Nigeria A.I. Romanov, shedding light on aspects of Soviet support for Nigeria⁹¹. Thus, the source base is representative and enables the selected topic to be explored in a substantive and comprehensive manner.

Methodology of research results from the multifaceted nature of the chosen topic and is based on a systematic approach to the study of the history of international relations. This study was conducted within the framework of structural theory in combination with the approach of realists to the interpretation of the act of intervention of a third party in an armed conflict. The structural theory proposed by Ross, Scarborough and Galtung considers conflict as a phenomenon inherent in human societies according to how they are structured and organized. They agreed that conflict arises as a result of deep-rooted structural dysfunctions such as political and economic inequality, corruption, injustice, unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, disease, overpopulation and exploitation. J. Galtung argues that whenever economic and political discrimination and lack of tolerance in pluralistic societies are embedded in such human social relations, conflicts inevitably

grip on Nigeria // Markpress. Press Comments on Biafra. GEN-611. 27 May 1969; Report and recommendations – US military survey, Nigerian army – action memorandum // Clark to Trimble. 26 Jan. 1966.

⁸⁹ Wilson H. *The Labour Government 1964-70: A Personal Record*. L.: Penguin Books. 1974.

⁹⁰ Gowon Announces the 'Final Push' // partial transcript of BBC interview. August 24, 1968 / reprinted in Kirk-Greene, *Crisis and Conflict*. Vol. II. P. 316-317.

⁹¹ Из дневника Я.А. Малика. Обсуждение с нигерийским послом в СССР Ч.О. Ифеагву проблемы территориальной целостности Нигерии. 6 марта 1967 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 496-499; Из дневника А.И. Романова. Из записи бесед с О. Аволово о советской военной помощи Федеральному правительству Нигерии. 5 и 12 июля 1967 г № 179. Запись беседы Н.В. Подгорного с послом Нигерии в СССР Дж. Куруббо после вручения верительных грамот. 19 октября 1967 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 500-501; Из дневника А.И. Романова. Запись беседы с О. Аволово о причинах затяжного характера гражданской войны в Нигерии. 29 декабря 1968 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 515-517; Из дневника А.И. Романова. Запись беседы с Я. Говоном о необходимости новых поставок советского оружия федеральному правительству Нигерии 14 августа 1969 г. // Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 - начало 1970-х. М.: Политическая энциклопедия. 2021. С. 517-518.

arise higher than in societies where opposite social relations are established⁹². The author shares the methodological assumptions of representatives of political realism about the inviolability of state sovereignty and the secondary nature of non-state actors in international relations (including international organizations) as structures derived from the will of individual strong and weak states. Accordingly, the involvement of third parties in an armed conflict is considered as a practice of interference by some States and groups of States in the internal and international affairs of others, as well as a projection of the political interests of powers into conflict regions, interaction and interweaving of these interests. Assistance in the settlement under this interpretation appears as a form of struggle of forces external to the conflict for the post-conflict reconstruction of the country, society, and region.

Methods of the research. General scientific methods were used in the work: analysis, synthesis, induction. They were used to identify the main prerequisites and causes of the crisis in Nigeria, to identify common and special features of the Nigerian ethno-political conflict, etc. Special historical methods were also used: historical-geneticist (retrospective) method. With his help, the features of the ethnopolitical situation in Nigeria, inherited from colonial times, which complicated interethnic relations, were determined. In addition to that the historical-comparative method made it possible to compare the points of view and approaches of various researchers and experts to the problems under consideration. The author proceeded from the principles of historicism, objectivity, reliability, systematicity. The principle of historicism made it possible to consider problems in development and interaction, to establish links between the present, the past and the future. The principle of objectivity allowed to consider historical facts from the point of view of objective laws to avoid bias and distortion of facts. The principle of reliability allowed us to study each phenomenon in the totality of its positive and negative sides. The use of the above principles and methods ensures the scientific validity of the provisions and conclusions formulated by the author.

The scientific novelty of this dissertation research is as follows:

⁹² Galtung J. Comprehensive Approach to Peace Research, International Journal of Peace and Development Studies. 2011.Vol. 2. No. 1. P. 18-32.

- for the first time, the paper examines the complex causes and prerequisites of the civil war in Nigeria, analyzes the driving forces of the conflict, and identifies the motives and forms of intervention in the civil war by third forces;

- the role of not only state, but also non-state actors in the civil conflict in Nigeria is considered. In particular, the influence of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the position of the United Kingdom and the United States on this issue has been proved, which made it possible to consider the ICRC as one of the initiators of the intervention of these countries in the conflict;

- the position of the USSR in relation to the conflict in Nigeria is studied at a time when, under the influence of global changes, traditional approaches to conflicts, means and methods of their settlement, to their prevention are changing, and in connection with the assertion of the principle of pragmatism in the African vector of Soviet foreign policy, a new approach to conflict resolution is being formed. The pragmatism of this approach is to support those political forces that have sufficient material resources and the loyalty of the local population to end the conflict. The involvement of the USSR in the settlement of the civil war in Nigeria marked the recognition by the Soviet leadership of the priority of geopolitics over ideology;

- the role of British diplomacy in the civil war in Nigeria has been identified and investigated in close connection with the very acute problem of its foreign policy – the preservation of its presence in the former colonies. This allowed the author to prove that this course was simultaneously a factor in destabilizing the situation in Nigeria, affecting the foreign policy interests of the USSR and a number of African states. The analysis of the Nigerian component of the African strategy of Great Britain and the USSR with an assessment of the general and specific aspects of the policy and diplomacy of these countries in Nigeria is new in the work;

- the work uses a wide range of sources in Russian, English and French, many of which are being introduced into scientific circulation for the first time, which made it possible to comprehensively and comprehensively investigate the interests, activities, as well as the results of the involvement of Great Britain and the USSR in the 1967-1970 civil war in Nigeria.

The main provisions for the defense.

1. Third parties intervening in an internal conflict in accordance with exogenous and endogenous factors have access to a wide range of engagement strategies that they can use in an attempt to resolve it. A variety of engagement strategies can give interventionists leverage and help them in mediation and internal conflict management efforts. These levers are often diplomatic in nature, not just military, providing a favorable basis for soft intervention in conflicts, especially when extreme measures for the introduction of troops and military intervention are inappropriate and may even be counterproductive. Consequently, as the experience of applying economic sanctions and military coercion shows, sometimes it is necessary to link diplomacy with the threat or use of force in order to achieve breakthroughs in the negotiation process.

2. The success of a third party's intervention in an internal conflict largely depends on the correct recognition of the stages of this conflict and the implementation of the right strategies. In this regard, when violence breaks out, the involvement of third countries to maintain peace usually becomes the most urgent strategy, because without the separation of antagonists it is impossible to cope with the conflict and resolve it, but as soon as the peak of the confrontation subsides, the involvement of third forces should give way to political negotiations of the opposing forces. If the widespread use of military force in the form of peacekeeping continues, despite the de-escalation of violence, it will create new problems and lead to a re-escalation of the conflict. If an attempt is made to maintain peace, but nothing else is then done, the result will be a continuation of the conflict, because without proper peace-building efforts, peacekeeping alone cannot resolve the underlying causes of contradictions.

3. Specific features of internal conflicts in Africa are the following: the struggle between ethnopolitical groups for power and resources; the importance of the ethnic factor; manipulation of ethnic feelings by politicians, contributing to the polarization of interethnic relations; the desire to control deposits of natural resources, aggravating the course of the conflict; the inability of the authorities to resolve acute social and ethnic contradictions, which are the basic prerequisites for involvement in the conflict of the broad masses of the population; the destruction of traditional institutions, as well as the

protracted nature of confrontation. Moreover, internal conflicts in Africa are rapidly internationalizing and acquiring the features of an international conflict, because almost all border States are involved in them.

4. The prerequisites for the civil war in Nigeria were laid by the colonial period of government. The British government, realizing the need to withdraw from Nigeria, preferred a united and "moderate" Nigeria to the prospect of the coexistence of many potentially radical nationalist administrative units. British officials diligently prepared this scenario together with the Nigerian elites and the Comprador bourgeoisie during the period of late colonialism up to the coup d'etat of Gowon. The UK government was prepared to consider recognizing an independent Eastern government if it proved "viable." When the status quo became untenable, often due to the conflicting ambitions of the same elites, London politicians and civil servants were forced to identify Britain's most pressing interests in Nigeria and develop strategies to protect them. The interests of preserving access to oil resources and saving Shell-BP investments were put in the first place. Thus, the goal of a third party when intervening in an armed conflict is not the ultimate support of a certain party for ideological reasons, but clearly planned assistance to the side that has real opportunities to seize or retain power. The third party is ready to support only the force that has a set of resources (authority, legitimacy, human power) to seize or retain power.

5. The Soviet decision to support the federalist side in the Nigerian civil war marked a decisive departure from Moscow's previous ideological commitments in the countries of the so-called third world and especially in Africa. By supporting a country whose leadership was absolutely not interested in the "socialist orientation", the Soviet leadership actually recognized the primacy of pragmatic geopolitics over ideology. The war in Biafra was indeed one of the conflicts of the Cold War period, which had its own specifics, when alliances were created and maintained despite ideological differences: Moscow relied on the numerical superiority of the federalists and their resources. From the Soviet point of view, it was a winning bet. Despite the fact that the fears of the West (fueled by the propaganda of Biafra) regarding the domination of the USSR in West

Africa turned out to be largely unfounded, nevertheless, it should be recognized that the Soviet Union gradually increased its influence in the region previously closed to it.

6. As the war progressed, Britain, under the leadership of Prime Minister Harold Wilson, tried to be more accommodating to the needs of the federal government, but never fulfilled their maximum requirements. Wilson found himself going down an increasingly inconvenient path, supplying weapons to the federal government, while officially denying the volume of these supplies. The main reason for the British government's decision to supply weapons to the Nigerian government was due to the fear that the Soviet Union would expand its influence in the former British colony, as it had already done in a number of countries in the Middle East after the Six-day War. At the beginning of the war, both sides turned to arms suppliers who could meet their needs, and both achieved successes and failures in their search, but as the war progressed, the military and politicians increasingly tended to humanitarian actions. Thus, the British intervention in the civil war in Biafra was a reaction to the position of the USSR in this conflict, which can be considered as a significant factor that influenced the change in the policy of the British authorities in favor of supporting the federalist government of Nigeria. Fearing its possible dependence on Soviet aid, Great Britain entered into a competitive struggle with the USSR for the place of the main sponsor of the local government.

Theoretical significance of the thesis. The theoretical significance of the dissertation research lies in the fact that the totality of the results obtained by the author, theoretical conclusions and provisions makes a certain contribution to the study of the problem of involvement of third countries in internal conflicts, as well as the features of the internationalization of conflicts in Africa. In addition, the author has collected, summarized and systematized significant factual material on the history of Nigeria's foreign policy from 1967 to 1970.

An important part of the study is that the process of combating secessionist sentiments in the state and subordination of foreign policy actions to these goals were considered in the interaction of the country with regional and extra-regional actors, as well as international organizations.

For the first time, English-, French- and Russian-language sources introduced into scientific circulation contribute to a comprehensive study of this problem. The theoretical significance is also expressed in the systematization of knowledge on this and related topics, in the development of an understanding of the essence of multidimensional and multi-vector ethno-political conflicts in countries rich in minerals. The main provisions of the dissertation are of interest to specialists and researchers-Africanists involved in political processes and international relations with the participation of African countries.

Practical significance of the research is due to the fact that the analysis of the genesis of the crisis events in Nigeria, identification of ways to achieve military and political stability, as well as patterns of participation of great powers in this process is important for further study and forecasting of political processes on the African continent. The work can be used by international organizations in their practical activities, as well as in the process of teaching the modern history of Africa, in the development of special courses on the history of Nigeria and Africa.

The main conclusions and provisions of the work can be taken into account in further research by specialists engaged in the study of political conflicts and ways to resolve them.

The results of the dissertation research may be of interest to the state authorities of Russia, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Reliability and validity of research findings is provided by a representative source and information base, a systematic approach to the analysis of the problems posed, an appeal to expert assessments of Russian, Western and African researchers, and the use of various scientific research methods.

Approbation of the thesis. The main results and conclusions of the dissertation research are reflected in 3 scientific publications of the dissertation on the research topic. Including 1 article published in a peer-reviewed scientific publication included in the list

of RUDN⁹³, and 2 articles in publications included in the international citation databases Web of Science and Scopus⁹⁴.

Some theoretical positions and conclusions, as well as suggestions and recommendations were presented by the author in reports and drafts at conferences and other scientific events, such as: XIX scientific conference of students, postgraduates and young scientists «Dialogue of civilizations: East-West».

Structure of the thesis. The dissertation consists of the introduction, three chapters, conclusion, list of sources and literature.

⁹³ Posibi, A.P. The Nigerian Civil War and the Soviet Union's Involvement into the Conflict // *Asia and Africa Today*. 2019. Is. 5. P. 48-52.

⁹⁴ Posibi, A.P. The aftermath of the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970): the struggle for peaceful coexistence between parties in post-war Nigeria // *Aziya i Afrika segodnya*. 2021. № 6. P. 71-77; Posibi, A.P. Historical Analysis of the Position of African Countries in the Nigerian Civil War 1967–1970 // *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Asian and African Studies*. 2020. Vol. 12. Iss. 2. P. 302–311.

CHAPTER 1. THIRD PARTY INVOLVEMENT IN INTRA-STATE ARMED CONFLICTS

Any society where distinct groups (social, ethnic, religious, class, etc.) of its members have diverging interests is fraught with conflicts in various spheres: economy, culture, social sphere, politics. Moreover, each conflict in society is a unique and inimitable phenomenon, characterized by a variety of forms of its manifestation. Because of this, there is a point of view that it is impossible to develop any more or less general methodology for the study of this phenomenon. Methodological features of research procedures are determined by the characteristics of each specific conflict.

In our opinion, it is necessary to make an understanding of the nature of the internal armed conflict by constructing extensive generalizations and theoretical abstractions that could «capture» the essence of this phenomenon. Investigating this phenomenon, it is first necessary to form an extremely broad idea of the essence of social conflict in general, and then, adding essential and distinctive features to the received definition, give a general concept of internal armed conflict as a kind of conflict relations in social systems and, finally, proceed to the study of the phenomenon of involvement of third parties in the conflict.

1.1. The concept of Third-Party Involvement in Intra-State Armed Conflicts

In order to understand the nature of the internal armed conflict and at the same time its social essence, it is important to clarify what constitutes a conflict in general and a social conflict in particular.

The interpretation of the conflict, similar to that given in the «Short Dictionary of Sociology», is generally accepted in Russian literature. Following the translation of the term from Latin («clash of sides, opinions, forces»), the following definition is given: «the highest stage of the development of contradictions in the system of relations between people, social groups, social institutions, society as a whole, which is characterized by the strengthening of opposing tendencies and interests of social communities and individuals»⁹⁵.

⁹⁵ Краткий словарь по социологии. М.: Политиздат, 1989. С. 125.

The International Dictionary of Sociological Terms, which gives definitions adopted in various fields of social science, emphasizes: «In sociology, conflict is a clash of opposing interests, goals, views, ideologies between individuals, social groups, classes»⁹⁶.

The English sociologist E. Giddens gave the following definition of conflict: «By conflict I mean a real struggle between acting people or groups, regardless of what the origins of this struggle are, its methods and means mobilized by each of their parties»⁹⁷.

In these and similar interpretations, the connection of conflict with contradiction, opposition of interests, etc. is noted as the initial one. In our opinion, the connection of conflict with contradiction is most adequately expressed in the well-known Hegel-Marx formula about the unity and struggle of opposites. The conflict here is directly related to the «struggle» of opposing forces and trends of development, with the contradiction between them. But opposites are not external forces. They belong to a certain whole, unity, whether it is a family or a production team in a conflict of individuals or small groups, whether it is a society (tribe, nationality, modern nation, as a rule, organized and self-identifying through the state) in a conflict of classes, other social strata, ethnic or demographic groups, workers in certain sectors of the economy, etc. At the same time, we are talking not only about the opposite, but also about the unity of interests, which creates an objective basis for resolving the conflict⁹⁸.

Of course, the divergence of interests can be so significant that unity «cannot withstand» the pressure and splits. However, this does not mean its complete loss. Instead of broken families, new ones are being created from their wreckage. The disintegration of the State takes place within the framework of a broader regional community and ends with the creation of new States from the same constituent parts. Finally, the struggle of classes at the end of the existence of a certain formation may end in their death (as in the fall of ancient Rome), but new classes are gradually formed from the same people during the restructuring of economic relations.

⁹⁶ Словарь социологических терминов. - Варшава: ПАН, 1991. С. 80-81.

⁹⁷ Giddens, A. *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Cambridge: Polity. 1984. P. 52.

⁹⁸ Cunningham, D.E. Preventing Civil War // *World Politics*. 2016. 68(02). P. 307–340.

Apparently, the idea that an internal conflict is a social contradiction at the stage of its real resolution by the subjects involved in it can act as a starting point in our study. At the same time, it is important to take into account that any internal conflict is not just a contradiction that has arisen between certain social actors within a single state, but a contradiction that is somehow realized and evaluated by them.

The primary factor that shapes the dynamics between individuals within a society is their internal struggle. This represents a mode of interaction between individuals who are either currently or potentially involved in social activities, and whose drive is based on conflicting sets of values, norms, interests, and necessities. The crucial component of social conflict is that these individuals operate within a larger network of interconnections, which is subject to alteration (either fortified or weakened) as a result of the conflict⁹⁹.

The progression of internal conflict, and its shift towards a stage of severe exacerbation and military confrontation, depends significantly on how the initial events that lead to its development are interpreted. The mass consciousness and the leaders of the relevant social groups play a crucial role in determining the importance attached to the conflict. Each party perceives the conflict as a problem that requires resolution, and three primary factors are predominant in this resolution:

Firstly, the degree of significance of a broader network of connections, the benefits and losses arising from the previous state and its destabilization. All these factors can be described as an evaluation of the pre-conflict situation. Secondly, the degree of consciousness of their own interests and their readiness to take risks to realize them. Finally, the perception of the opposing parties, the ability to consider the interests of the opponent¹⁰⁰.

The normal development of an internal conflict, as well as any social conflict in general, assumes that each of the parties is able to take into account the interests of the opposing side. This approach creates the possibility of a relatively peaceful conflict

⁹⁹ Fearon, J.D., David D.L. Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War // American Political Science Review. 2003. Vol. 1. P. 75–90.

¹⁰⁰ Stitt, A. Mediation: A Practical Guide. London: Cavendish. 2004. P. 132.

unfolding through the negotiation process and making adjustments to the previous system of relations in a direction and scale acceptable to each of the parties.

However, it often happens that the party initiating the conflict proceeds from a negative assessment of the previous state of affairs and declares only its own interests, without taking into account the interests of the opposite side. In this case, the opposing side is forced to take special measures to protect its interests, which are perceived and interpreted by the initiator of the conflict as a desire to protect the status quo. As a result, both sides may suffer some damage, which is attributed to the opposing side in the conflict¹⁰¹.

Such a situation is fraught with the use of violence: already at the initial stage of the conflict, each of the parties begins to demonstrate force or the threat of its use. In this case, the conflict deepens, since the forceful influence necessarily meets with opposition associated with the mobilization of resources of resistance to force. Violence creates secondary and tertiary factors of deepening the conflict situation, which sometimes displace the original cause of the conflict from the minds of the parties.

The greater the desire for the use of force is observed in a conflict, the more likely it is that one of the parties will switch to the practical use of force, initially for demonstrative purposes or on a limited scale, up to the use of means of armed struggle.

Thus, *the main factors of the conflict can be summarized as follows*.

- The initial state of affairs; the interests of the parties involved in the conflict; the degree of their mutual understanding.
- The initiating party - the reasons and nature of its actions.
- Response measures; the degree of readiness for the negotiation process; the possibility of normal development and resolution of the conflict - changes in the initial state of affairs.
- Lack of mutual understanding, i.e. understanding of the interests of the opposite party.
- Mobilization of resources to defend their interests.

¹⁰¹ Fortna, V.P. Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace after Civil War // International studies quarterly. 2004. № 48(2). P. 278-279.

- Use of force or threat of force (demonstration of force) in the course of defending their interests¹⁰².

Another approach structures the actual process of the genesis of internal conflict based on the identification of possible forms of its occurrence. Adhering to this approach, Professor B. Krasnov identifies six stages of conflict. From his point of view, the **first factor** of a political conflict is characterized by the formed attitude of the parties about a particular contradiction or group of contradictions¹⁰³.

The **second factor** of the conflict is to determine the strategy of the warring parties and the forms of their struggle to resolve the existing contradictions, taking into account the potential and possibilities of using various, including violent means, domestic and international situations.

The **third factor** is associated with the involvement of other participants in the struggle through blocks, alliances, contracts.

The **fourth factor** is the growth of the struggle, up to the crisis, which gradually covers all participants on both sides and develops into a nationwide one.

The **fifth factor** of the conflict is the transition of one of the parties to the practical use of force, initially for demonstrative purposes or on a limited scale.

The **sixth factor** is an armed conflict that begins with a limited conflict (restrictions on the goals, territories covered, the scale and level of military operations, the military means used) and is capable, under certain circumstances, of developing to higher levels of armed struggle (war as a continuation of politics) of all participants¹⁰⁴.

It is not difficult to notice that the author of this approach considers armed conflict as one of the forms of political conflict. The limitations of this approach are manifested in abstraction from two important aspects: from pre-conflict conditions and from the post-conflict stage of the development of political relations. In our opinion, an approach that

¹⁰² Hultman, L. and Dursun, P. Successful or Counterproductive Coercion? The Effect of International Sanctions on Conflict Intensity // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2017. № 61(6). P. 1315–39.

¹⁰³ Краснов Б.И. *Общая и прикладная политология* / Под ред. Жукова В.И., Краснова Б.И. М., 1997. С. 375-376.

¹⁰⁴ Jones, B.T. Altering Capabilities or Imposing Costs? Intervention Strategy and Civil War Outcomes // *International Studies Quarterly*. 2017. № 61(1). P. 52–63.

takes into account these aspects is methodologically more valuable for the analysis of internal armed conflicts.

The practice of resolving internal conflicts raises the question: is it necessary to consider contradictions that are not accompanied by open armed struggle as the basis for forceful intervention¹⁰⁵? If so, what forms of contradictions should be included in the conceptual definition of an armed internal conflict? What parameters should be used to determine the subject, goals, and content of military operations to resolve internal conflicts?

As a subject of forceful intervention in the settlement of an internal conflict, it is necessary to single out positions that include the social status of an ethnic group, a political niche, spheres of not only domestic, but also foreign policy, interstate influence and control. The positions of the ethnos, the people, and the state in the course of resolving the internal conflict are their place within the power structures of these entities. Force in these circumstances will be in the nature of the settlement of claims for the expansion of administrative and managerial powers in the relevant region and at the appropriate level¹⁰⁶.

The second subject of the use of force in the settlement of internal conflicts can be characterized as spatial problems: territory and its status (territorial space), resources (natural resources and control over their movement, financial flows, military-strategic benefits) – economic space, as well as ethnic identity, religious beliefs, traditions and spiritual values, rights and freedom is an ideological space.

Based on three options for the outcome of the settlement of internal conflicts: reconciliation, peaceful division and war, the real political significance of these goals and objectives is ambiguous.

In the foreseeable future, there will be no other alternatives in the settlement of internal conflicts, except, relying on constitutional foundations and international law, to prevent a situation where the winner gets everything according to the principle of «the

¹⁰⁵ Степанов Е.И. Методология анализа социальных конфликтов. Социальные конфликты в современной России. М. 1999. С. 41.

¹⁰⁶ Karlén, N. The Legacy of Foreign Patrons: External State Support and Conflict Recurrence // Journal of Peace Research. 2017. № 54(4). P. 499–512.

end justifies the means». They are associated with macropolitical forms of settlement of ethnopolitical conflicts, which generally determine the strategic content of the use of force in the conflict: genocide; forced resettlement of the population; division or separation of territory (self-determination); integration or assimilation by methods of managing ethnic differences; hegemonic control; arbitration (participation of a third party); cantonization or federalization; separation of representative and executive powers on the basis of ethnic quotas. In the sphere of the national-state structure, the strategic goals of a military operation are actually determined by specific and constantly present contradictions: territory and its status, territory and power¹⁰⁷.

The tactical objectives of military intervention determine: the creation of conditions for the prevention of internal conflict in the initial stage of its origin by measures of a political (administrative) nature; localization of the conflict area when it occurs, gaining time for the deployment of additional forces; covering the most important state facilities, preventing their capture (destruction) by illegal armed groups; reflection, defeat of invading armed groups, suppression of the activities of illegal armed groups in the conflict zone; creation of military-political conditions for the restoration of constitutional legality and law and order in the zone of internal conflict; elimination of the consequences of large-scale disasters and accidents, etc.¹⁰⁸.

The objectives of intervening in an ethno-political conflict can be achieved through various means, including: if the conflict is imposed from external sources and the conflicting parties have some degree of agreement; if one of the parties compels the other to surrender; if a significant transformation occurs in one or both sides of the conflict that renders its continuation meaningless; if "hidden bargaining" takes place, where one party responds constructively to the other's constructive actions until the situation is resolved; if the party that instigated the conflict withdraws after facing strong resistance from the other side, abandoning its original goal, thus ending the conflict; or if one party is excluded from the social interaction system controlled by the victor.

¹⁰⁷ Kim, S.K. Third-Party Intervention in Civil Wars and the Prospects for Postwar Development // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2017. № 61(3). P. 631-633.

¹⁰⁸ Lake, D.A. Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War // *American Political Science Review*. 1992. № 86(01). P. 24-37.

Analyzing the levels of force intervention (strategic, tactical) and the conditions of intervention, we can conclude that their spectrum is extremely wide and ambiguous. The goal of the general theory of conflict resolution is presented as a synthesis of individual branches of knowledge, the result of interaction between various disciplines, including the military. Therefore, the purpose of forceful intervention in internal conflicts should be formulated depending on the problems that underlie the conflict interaction of an ethnic group, a people and a state or their coalition. Domestic problems, reduced to the desire to secede from a given State or the demand for greater autonomy within the existing State, to the recognition or protection of the rights of minorities, are also an incomplete list of initial data for formulating the purpose of forceful intervention¹⁰⁹.

A more likely goal of forceful intervention in an internal conflict in line with its constructive development is settlement. At the same time, there are two approaches to its goals: «the first leads people to independence, the second manifests itself not so quickly, but more purposefully leads people to enslavement»¹¹⁰. In other words, the first approach may offer some form of political self-determination to one or another conflicting party, the second - not¹¹¹.

Conflict resolution is the desired goal of all conflictological expertise¹¹². Within this framework, the use of force can mean «understanding our task as conflict management, and not as conflict resolution is a paradigm shift», which changes the perception of the conflict itself, the ways it ends, the role of force in it and its effectiveness¹¹³. But even during the settlement, genocide, ethnocide, ethnic cleansing or other ways of excluding people and their groups from social interaction are possible¹¹⁴.

¹⁰⁹ Slantchev, B.L., Ahmer, T. Mutual Optimism as a Rationalist Explanation of War // *American Journal of Political Science*. 2011. № 55(1). P. 135–148.

¹¹⁰ Токвиль А. Антология мировой политической мысли. Т. 1. М. 1998. С. 714.

¹¹¹ Rauchhaus, R.W. Asymmetric Information, Mediation, and Conflict Management // *World Politics*. 2006. № 58(2). P. 207–241.

¹¹² Степанов Е.И. Методологическое обеспечение конфликтологических исследований // *Социальные конфликты: экспертиза, прогнозирование, технологии разрешения*. Вып. 7. М., 1994. С. 23.

¹¹³ Arruch K. *Culture and Conflict Resolution*. Washington, DC, 1998. P. 103.

¹¹⁴ Kriesberg L. *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation Resolution*. - Lanham. Boulder. New York. Oxford. 1998. P. 262-263.

The resolution of an internal conflict means such actions, as a result of which qualitative changes occur in the relations between the parties to the conflict. At the same time, the subject of the dispute ceases to exist, at least as a factor capable of catalyzing a new armed confrontation, and the participants in the operation seek recognition based on the results of their mission. But forceful intervention cannot end only because of the cessation of interaction between the opposing sides. The most effective way of its application is to ensure the civil aspects of the elimination of contradictions, but it is possible when all citizens in the country become equal, preserving their ethnic differences, then it will take place as a single civil nation.

The resolution of an internal conflict means: the elimination of the object of conflict between the parties and the establishment of priority or other rules for the mutual use of the object of compensation by one of the parties for the transfer of the object to the other party; the separation of the conflicting parties; the transfer of relations to another plane. This presupposes the identification of a common interest among the parties, etc. Objectively achievable goals in a military operation to resolve internal conflicts delay the prospects for their resolution. Modern structural and dynamic indicators of internal conflicts may be due to the search for more effective technologies for conducting operations due to recent differences in empirical and conceptual approaches to the study of conflicts¹¹⁵.

There is a concept of «termination of the conflict», although it does not fully correspond to the Russian translation of «ending» or «completion», but it means such a termination (usually open phases) of the conflict, in which conflict actions are terminated most often due to the intervention of a «third party». At the same time, the problems that gave rise to the conflict do not find either resolution or settlement. The termination of the conflict is one of the most important markers of effectiveness of the influence of international organizations, intermediary non-state structures, and «armed interventions» on internal conflicts¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁵ Мнацаканян М.О. Этносоциология: нации, национальная психология и межнациональные конфликты. М. 1998. С. 64—66.

¹¹⁶ Svensson, I. Who Brings Which Peace?: Neutral versus Biased Mediation and Institutional Peace Arrangements in Civil Wars // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2009. № 53(3). P. 456.

In recent decades, it has become quite common for conflicts that are not strictly limited to a single country to occur on an international scale. During civil wars, foreign military forces may intervene in support of one side or another, in an attempt to influence the outcome of the internal armed conflict. This phenomenon has several underlying reasons:

Due to increased interdependence between countries, any civil war can potentially affect the interests of other states. Likewise, the behavior of other states can have an impact on the course and outcome of a civil war, even in the absence of direct intervention.

Differences in ideology between states can also play a role in the internationalization of internal conflicts

The existence of military-political alliances and groups of states that seek stability within their own bloc can lead to efforts to destabilize political regimes in opposing blocs¹¹⁷. The instability of many political regimes, particularly in developing countries, creates favorable conditions for the internationalization of internal conflicts.

The Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s stands out as a notable example of foreign intervention in an internal armed conflict, illustrating its internationalization. However, it was not until the Vietnam War that legal issues concerning the internationalization of internal armed conflicts were first discussed. Since then, various conflicts such as those in Hungary, Congo, Angola, Yemen, the Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Nicaragua, Chad, Bangladesh, Cyprus, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, and Ukraine have also been internationalized. Each of these conflicts has its own unique structure that defines its individual characteristics, setting it apart from similar social phenomena. Nonetheless, internationalized non-international armed conflicts share a number of typical specific features that enable them to be classified as a separate category¹¹⁸.

The conflicts being discussed have two distinct aspects, domestic and international, and typically involve an armed opposition that fights to overthrow the existing

¹¹⁷ Tamm, H. The Origins of Transnational Alliances: Rulers, Rebels, and Political Survival in the Congo Wars // *International Security*. 2016. № 41(1). P. 147–181.

¹¹⁸ Thyne, C.L. Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2006. 50(6). P. 937–961.

government and change the political regime of the country. This opposition consists mainly of citizens who have emigrated abroad and has the necessary military-political infrastructure on foreign soil. It receives political, military-technical, financial, and diplomatic support from a foreign state, often a neighboring country. Such conflicts are typical of Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Yugoslavia.

It is worth noting that neither the Hague Conventions of 1907 nor the Geneva Conventions of 1949 contain provisions regarding internationalized conflicts of a non-international nature. Therefore, the legal classification of such conflicts must be based mainly on state practice and international law doctrine.

It is reasonable to conclude that the current international legal framework, based on the UN Charter's principle of non-use of force, does not adequately address modern realities. Non-international armed conflicts are now more prevalent than interstate conflicts.

M. Akehurst, an English international lawyer in the mid-1980s, argued that there is no international law prohibiting civil wars. The UN Charter only prohibits the use or threat of force in international relations¹¹⁹, and neither the rebels nor the ruling power are in violation of international law¹²⁰. The only role of international law in this case is to prevent states from interfering in the internal struggles of other states.

However, L. Henkin pointed out that while all states agree that intervention is illegal, they do not agree on what constitutes illegal intervention. In another study, he argued that international law prohibiting interference in internal wars is not well-established, especially when the main ideological struggle of our time manifests in internal conflicts. Modern international law still has differing opinions on the assistance provided by third states to parties involved in internal conflicts.

E.I. Skakunov states that providing assistance to the rebellious side in an internal conflict is considered illegal and qualified as "subversive interference" in international practice. However, while the United Nations General Assembly acknowledges the

¹¹⁹ The UN Charter (full text) // UN. URL: <https://www.un.org/ru/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹²⁰ Международное право в современном мире. М. 1991. С. 85.

illegality of subversive interference, international law must also consider the principle of reciprocity. If the existing government relies solely on foreign aid to remain in power and has lost popular support, it creates conditions for legitimate counter-intervention on the side of the rebels, particularly if they are fighting for the independence of their country¹²¹.

Assessing the involvement of third states in an internal conflict is complicated due to the different prohibitions on providing assistance to the rebels and the government. Providing virtually any assistance (except humanitarian) to the rebels is prohibited, while supplying money and weapons to the existing authorities during any type of civil war is allowed, but sending troops to help the authorities is prohibited except in cases of countering subversive activities¹²².

E.I. Skakunov suggests applying the principle of proportionality to each specific internal conflict to balance the prohibitions on providing assistance to both sides. This would extend a neutrality regime to each conflict, prohibiting the supply of weapons and financial assistance to both sides, putting them on equal footing with each other in legal terms. This would prevent subversive interference by puppet governments and exclude the possibility of abuse of the right to self-defense by legitimate governments supported by states for ideological reasons¹²³.

Third-party intervention in conflict management is clearly a very complex topic. IR and peace studies scholars have already extensively investigated several aspects, namely the characteristics of the actors, approaches, unintended consequences and factors that determine the propensity to intervene in conflicts to identify settlements. However, there are still many other different problems that need to be deeply scrutinized. The continuous changes in the security environment at all levels, the diversification and hybridity of threats, and the enormity of the implications of contemporary conflicts require a process of adaptation on the part of actors and generate changes in their preferences and interests. This usually applies to states (as interests are normally

¹²¹ Bas, M.A., Schub, R.J. How Uncertainty about War Outcomes Affects War Onset // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2016. 60(6). P. 1099–1128.

¹²² Swan G.O. Self-Determination and the United Nations Charter // *Indian Journal of International Law*. 1982. Vol. 22. No 2. P. 271-276.

¹²³ Umozurite O. *Self-Determination in International Law* Hamden, 1972. P. 3.

associated with the governmental sphere), but also affects intergovernmental and non-governmental actors, that is to say, IOs and NGOs.

In conclusion, a wide variety of involvement strategies is available for third parties to use in an attempt to manage internal conflict. Nonetheless, external actors do not always consider the full range of options. The above-mentioned involvement strategies can give interveners leverage and aid them in efforts to mediate and manage internal conflict. This leverage is frequently diplomatic in nature, not simply military, providing an advantageous basis for soft intervention in conflicts, especially when the extremes of withdrawal and military intervention are inappropriate and may even be counterproductive. The problem is that these non-coercive involvement may not raise the costs of noncompliance sufficiently. Hence, as the previous discussions of economic sanctions and military enforcement suggest, it is necessary at times to link diplomacy with the threat or use of force to produce breakthroughs in the negotiation process. So, third parties intervene according to external and internal factors, and this impacts a conflict outcome in a way which is not necessarily and not always successful or suitable.

1.2. General factors and causes of intra-state conflicts

It is possible to distinguish conditionally several groups of factors that can provoke a conflict and lead to its escalation into an armed phase. At the same time, it should be noted that in real conflicts, the interaction and interweaving of factors from different groups is very often observed. However, for the purposes of the study, these groups can be characterized as follows: factors of a military-military nature, factors of a socio-economic nature and factors of a socio-psychological nature.

The first group of factors includes contradictions arising during the establishment and regulation of power relations at various levels. At the international level, we are talking about the impact on the conflicts of the great Powers. This was especially true in the framework of the bipolar system of international relations, when the confrontation of superpowers for spheres of influence in the world aggravated local conflicts.

But even after the end of the Cold War, when the only superpower left in the world was the United States, the number of conflicts did not decrease. In the 1990s, some

scientists wrote that «new conflicts arise due to the fact that the fear of the intervention of superpowers has weakened»¹²⁴. The thesis of international non-interference in conflicts has spread, which leads to the fact that the latter are increasingly emerging at the national and local levels¹²⁵.

However, the last decade has witnessed an increase in the number of conflicts under the leadership and with the participation of the United States to «save» dysfunctional states, their «democratization and liberalization»¹²⁶.

The fight against the terrorist threat has taken on special weight, taking the form of a «global war against terrorism», during which alliances of states from previously opposing camps are formed¹²⁷. The main reason for the emergence of the concept of the war against terrorism was the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In October 2001, the USA adopted the Law on Patriotism, in which the fight against terrorism was practically equated to war in legal terms. For the first time, a new concept of war was implemented during the campaign in Afghanistan. In the fall of 2002, the «doctrine of preventive war» was proclaimed, according to which the United States appropriated the right to use force against terrorists and states supporting them anywhere in the world. Then, in the spring of 2003, Iraq became the testing ground for the American concept.

The group of factors of power usually includes: the geographical location of the country and the availability of its natural resources (not only minerals, but also food); economic potential, military power, population size, moral and political factors, the quality of governance of the country; the level of development of science and technology, etc. At the same time, the socio-economic component is gaining more weight than exclusively military force. After all, embedding the country in the zone of economic influence allows for a long-term and much less resource-intensive policy.

¹²⁴ Goodpaster A.J. When Diplomacy Is Not Enough: Managing Multinational Military Interventions // A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. Carnegie Corporation of New York. July 1996. P. 43.

¹²⁵ The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, 20.12.1996. URL: <https://www.csmonitor.com/> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹²⁶ Montgomery, J.D., Rondinell, D.A. A Path to Reconstruction // Harvard International Review. Cambridge. 2004. No 26 (2). P. 26; Eizenstat S.E, Porter, J.E., Weinstein, J.M.. Rebuilding Weak States // Foreign Affairs. 2005. No 84 (1). P. 141-142.

¹²⁷ Beck, Y. The Silence of Words: on Terror and War // Security Dialogue. 2003. No 34 (3). P. 258.

Economically weak African States represent strength as a military potential. In the mid-1990s, Tropical Africa was the fifth largest arms market, although its share in total arms imports was about 4%¹²⁸. To date, despite the relative reduction in military spending, the share of Tropical Africa in global arms imports remains high. A report by the U.S. Bureau of Research and Intelligence identified smuggling and massive legal arms shipments to Africa as the main causes of African conflicts. Considering this problem difficult to solve, the authors of the report advocated the creation of a reliable mechanism for controlling the flow of weapons¹²⁹.

The decision-making process regarding the use of military force is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the leadership's readiness and ability, their level of authority, the strength of their position within the country, their ability to garner support from influential domestic political groups and quell opposition, and their psychological attitudes. In authoritarian regimes, leaders in Africa have often resorted to force to resolve internal conflicts, as exemplified by the actions of Nigerian leader General S. Abacha in 1994. In this instance, Abacha ordered a contingent of 500 soldiers to the Bakassi peninsula, which was the subject of a territorial dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, marking the first such military deployment in 25 years¹³⁰.

The second group of conflict-causing factors includes factors of socio-economic order. Most researchers consider these to be socio-economic reasons. We are talking, first of all, about some form of struggle for material and natural resources. Resources have always had a great potential for conflict. According to the American scientist K. Mitchell, the main subjects of the conflict are «the use of resources or ownership of them; the exclusive right to resources; control over both existing and potential resources»¹³¹. Professor Sandler Todd believes that in the 21st century it is territorial disputes and

¹²⁸ World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers // US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Washington, 1996. URL: www.acda.gov (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹²⁹ «Компас» № 19 // ИТАР-ТАСС. 07.05.2002. С.7.

¹³⁰ Кравченко В.С. Африканские конфликты: генезис, типология, проблемы урегулирования (1990-2006 гг.) : дис. ... канд. полит. наук : 23.00.04 Москва. 2006. С. 30.

¹³¹ Юридическая конфликтология. М. 1995. С. 187.

clashes over resources that will be the most fertile ground for civil wars and interstate conflicts¹³².

In addition to the lack of resources, socio-political factors also contribute to conflicts. These include the marginalization of young people in conditions of accelerated urbanization, as well as smuggling and massive legal arms shipments to Africa. At the same time, as the authors of the report of the US Bureau of Research and Intelligence rightly note, this problem «cannot be solved soon, because the network of arms dealers is too complex, and the mechanism for controlling the supply of weapons has not yet been formed»¹³³.

Young people lose their jobs and prospects, become a source of instability and violence. Migration, urbanization associated with the loss of traditional landmarks and the adoption of alien values¹³⁴. Lack of prospects, identity crisis is one of the main reasons for the involvement of young people in conflicts. War is becoming a means of survival for thousands of young people.

In this regard, the recruitment of former participants in conflicts into the ranks of participants in new civil wars is a serious problem. It was reported that many of those who took part in armed conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone as children in the 1990s were recruited to participate in «missions» in Guinea and Ivory Coast, and on the side of both belligerents¹³⁵.

Among the factors provoking African conflicts is the problem of refugees. According to some data, there were over 3 million refugees in African countries in 2003 (almost 30% of their total number in the world) and about 13.5 million people, or more than half of the 25 million displaced persons¹³⁶.

¹³² Todd, S. Economic Analysis of Conflict // The Journal of Conflict Resolution. 2000. No 44 (6). P. 724-725.

¹³³ Черный континент в состоянии политического кризиса // Компас № 19. ИТАР ТАСС 07.03.2002. С. 5.

¹³⁴ Garunzi, D. Coordinator Europa-Africa Programme North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. Europe Africa Dialogue Programme. Why Conflict recurs in Africa // Juillet. 2005. URL: <http://www.whycol.int/TE/North\South\Centre\Programmes/Europe/DA> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹³⁵ West Africa Roving Warriors Recruited for New Conficss. NY. April 13 2005.URL: <https://allafrica.com/stories/200504130701.html> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹³⁶ Human Rights Watch World Report 2003 // Africa Overview. URL: <http://www.hrw.org/wr3/Africa.html> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

Refugees pose a significant threat to the stability and security of the countries where they seek asylum. There are several reasons for this danger. Firstly, refugees are a financial burden on the host country, diverting funds that could otherwise be used for economic and social development. Secondly, refugees can bring with them diseases, crime, and illegal trade in weapons and drugs, which often result in anger and resentment from the local population. Thirdly, refugees can become targets of attack by their own state or armed groups, leading to further instability in the region.

In addition to the threats posed by refugees, there are socio-psychological factors that contribute to conflict. Ethnic and religious tensions often arise when there is a lack of effort to establish interethnic relations, level socio-economic and cultural development, and solve administrative and territorial issues. In some cases, the struggle for power among various ethnic groups, as well as their fears for their safety, can lead to rivalry and create rigid stereotypes that distort perceptions of the opposite side.

Oppression of ethnic minorities can take various forms, including forced assimilation, expulsion, and even genocide. When these actions are taken, the conflict is often exacerbated.

Examples of conflict stemming from these factors can be seen in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Burundi, and Rwanda. The politicization of refugees can also contribute to the use of refugee camps as support bases for armed rebel groups, pulling the displaced population into active hostilities. Additionally, the impoverished existence of many refugees often leads to the formation of gangs and the involvement of fighters in robberies and terrorizing the local population.

To prevent these conflicts, it is essential to establish policies that promote interethnic relations, level socio-economic and cultural development, and address administrative and territorial issues in a fair and equitable manner. Failure to address these issues can lead to the oppression of ethnic minorities and exacerbate existing conflicts.

Numerous studies show that ethnic differences are often taken as the fundamental cause of confrontation. However, countries with ethnically diverse populations are not necessarily more prone to armed conflict than others. This gives grounds to say that even

in those armed conflicts, the participants of which belong to different ethnic groups, ethnicity alone is not enough as the cause of the conflict.

M. Klare, an American researcher, suggests that the severity of ethnic and religious conflicts is impacted by the breakdown or even the complete collapse of central authorities. In countries such as Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the weak state structures that were established after gaining independence were not equipped to handle the increasing demands of their population for basic necessities such as housing and food. As a result, people lose confidence in the state's ability to fulfill their needs, and instead turn to more traditional, kinship-based forms of social organization. This leads to competition and conflict between groups as they struggle to access the limited resources of the state. R. Lemarchand, a French scientist, adds that in most cases, violent ethnic conflicts occur due to the failure of states, rather than causing their collapse¹³⁷.

Different ways of resolving ethnic conflicts are possible. For example, Kaufman adheres to an extreme point of view, believing that civil wars with an ethnic background can be stopped only by forcibly dividing the warring nations¹³⁸. This approach is called «ethnic cleansing»; its supporters are convinced that a person belongs to either one or another ethnic group, while, however, the fact of mixed marriages and children born in them is not taken into account.

It is obvious that in order to prevent conflicts on ethnic grounds, it is necessary to protect the rights of minorities in multinational and multi-ethnic States. Of course, the State should help minorities to preserve their culture, traditions, etc.

The religious factor is also playing an increasingly important role in modern conflicts. Religious conflicts reflect a complex of contradictions concerning relations between confessions. Most conflicts of this kind arise due to the disproportionate

¹³⁷ Ethnic Violence, Conflict Resolution and Cultural Pluralism - Report of the UNRISD/UNDP International Seminar on Ethnic Diversity and Public Policies, New York 17-19 August 1994 // United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva, February 1995. P. 14.

¹³⁸ Kaufman, C. Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars // International Security. 1996. Vol. 20 (4). P. 136-175.

representation of a particular religious group in the authorities or as a result of attempts by one group to impose its religion on the entire population of the country.

In the last decade, Islam has often become the banner of the political elite in Muslim and mixed-faith countries that use religion to embody their own political ambitions. The establishment of sharia as the basis of state legislation is often the starting point for the beginning of a conflict. Conflicts between the secular authorities and the radical trend of Islamic fundamentalism, between representatives of fundamentalist parties and groups and moderate adherents of Islam, between adherents of Islam, on the one hand, and Christians and professing other religions, on the other, are becoming a trend of the times. The problem is complicated, in most cases, by the acute demographic situation, lack of resources, the struggle for power, which contributes to the politicization of Islam and the growth of political and religious confrontation in individual countries and the world as a whole. The network of militant Islamist organizations and fundamentalism pose a serious threat not only to adherents of other religions, but also to the peaceful life of Muslims themselves. All of the above allows us to draw the following conclusions.

Any conflict is caused by a combination of reasons and attempts to see in it only economic or, say, only ethnic roots, in our opinion, lead to a dead end. Thus, explaining the crisis situation by economic reasons, they seek to prove that the inability to provide themselves with an acceptable standard of living leads people to conflicts and violence. Indeed, crisis situations occur more often in poor countries, but often not the poorest states become the scene of bloody conflicts (for example, Yugoslavia) and, conversely, not every poor and undemocratic country is torn apart by conflicts.

The masses of people are mobilized by politicians, and therefore politics cannot be ignored when analyzing the causes of the emergence and escalation of an armed conflict.

At the same time, economic conditions today are the most significant and long-term cause of intra-State armed conflicts. The reduction in the volume of renewable resources (soil erosion, deforestation, reduction of water reserves), as well as the need for sources of mineral and strategic raw materials are currently the most serious conflict factors.

Ethnic contradictions also remain valid in the era of globalization. Ethnic heterogeneity in itself is not the cause of an armed conflict, but conflicting parties often define themselves in ethnic terms. Ethnic differences play a role in such conflicts as a tool used by political leaders to mobilize.

Social instability not only creates conditions for a tense struggle for power between various parts of the country's social and political elite. It also takes away a sense of confidence and certainty from a huge number of people, having a devastating impact on their lives. The feeling of belonging to one's group at such times becomes a support for many ordinary people, sometimes the only reference point that helps them understand what is happening. Thus, in any conflict arising against the background of large-scale social changes and destabilization, political leaders receive support if they manage to present their position as a struggle for national identity and social justice.

The reasons why an actor decides to play the role of third-party and to intervene in a conflict, thus, may vary. The presence of bias has an impact which deserves to be deeply investigated, but through its relationship with the conflict management techniques that third-parties employ and the range of issues they address. This wider approach, which puts together preferences and tools, provides a more complete picture of how third-parties can efficaciously serve the conflict management process in various ways.

The traditional classification places interventions into three key categories: diplomatic, economic and military. The systematic choice of one category or the other can be assumed as the dependent variable of interest, given their increasing costs. While diplomatic action and military interventions are the extreme opposites in the model, economic tools occupy middle range positions, with a difference in intensity, efficacy and responsiveness to expectations. Diplomacy is traditionally associated to third-party techniques, as played by states, IOs and NGOs, including official public statements of opposition or support for a disputant, promotion of ceasefire and direct diplomatic assistance.

Corbetta and Regan observe that investigations of neutral interventions have focused on several intervention techniques, ranging from mediation to peacekeeping, while those on non-neutral type of behaviour have concentrated on one type of

intervention only – the military one – ranging from the provision of military assistance to the actual use of force in support of one of the disputants. The general expectation is that great powers are more likely to become involved in other states' conflicts militarily because they have the capabilities and power to do so, and because of the breadth of their foreign policy interests¹³⁹.

The consequence of exclusive focus on the military is that the question of whether joiners may display different behaviours depending on the intervention technique they use is left unaddressed.

Non-neutral interventions, in fact, are characterized by the idea that the decision-makers' foreign policy menu contains only two options: non-intervention and military intervention.

Economic interventions rather occupy a middle position between diplomatic and military tools and range from positive conditionality (the promise of economic aid to a disputant), to aggressive economic sanctions. The debate about the actual effectiveness of such interventions is ample and involving. The use of sanctions necessarily involves economic costs not only for the target, but also for those who impose sanctions, and scholars agree on the fact that the key feature of economic intervention lies in the sanctioner's ability to communicate intentions. They, in fact, involve sunk costs for the sanctioning state, and such costs increase the credibility of the sender's signal.

Mediation and joining has also been at the core of several studies in the area of conflict management, and are usually posited in two separate bodies of literature, not always sufficiently linked, as observed by Corbetta¹⁴⁰. Across the board, scholars have stressed the effectiveness of coercive conflict management and the availability of multiple intervention techniques in both intrastate studies, as different forms of third-party interventions. Such topics have been dominated by investigations on non-neutral type of behaviour, which, for the most part, is exclusively focused on military interventions,

¹³⁹ Volgy TJ, Corbetta R, Grant KA and Baird RG (eds). *Major Powers and the Quest for Status in International Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2011. P. 45-51.

¹⁴⁰ Corbetta, R. *Between Indifference and Coercion: Third-Party Intervention Techniques in Ongoing Disputes // Conflict Management and Peace Science*. Vol. 32. № 1. 2015. P. 3–27.

obviously easier to observe and document. Thus, they offer a more complex approach to conflict management which involves several different options for third parties.

Recalling previous empirical work on the 1946–2001 period dataset on third-party non-neutral interventions in post-Second World War interstate conflicts, Corbetta and Dixon explore non-neutral third-parties' propensity to use diplomatic, economic or military intervention techniques¹⁴¹.

In the end, the authors demonstrate that choosing different forms of third-party intervention, diplomatic, military or economic tools, depends on their preferences for one side of the conflict and antagonism toward the other(s). This has an inevitable effect on the conflict outcome and on the probability of a successful settlement, for at least two reasons: firstly, the social proximity to the disputants, and secondly, the level of desirability of the techniques they may expect.

The relationship between the selected form of intervention used by the third party and the outcomes of a conflict has been and still is at the core of a huge part of the literature. Scholars have also investigated other more specific aspects of such relations, that is to say whether interventions may tend to shorten or lengthen the duration of conflicts and/or impact on the expected duration of a conflict¹⁴².

An international conflict is a dynamic process that escalates and de-escalates over time, passing through distinct phases ranging from violent confrontation to nonviolent hostilities. Successful third-party intervention depends, to a great extent, on the correct recognition of the stages of a given conflict and implementing correct strategies in accord with that. In this respect, when violence breaks out, peacekeeping usually emerges as the most urgent strategy, since without separating antagonists and reducing psychological escalation it is impossible to handle and resolve the conflict, but as soon as it is possible to transfer the contradictions into a negotiated channel, peacemaking should enter the process. If extensive use of military force, in the form of peacekeeping, goes on despite de-escalation in violence, this would create new problems and re-escalate the conflict.

¹⁴¹ Corbetta R., Dixon W.J. Danger beyond dyads: Third party participants in interstate disputes // *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. 2005. № 22. P. 39–61.

¹⁴² Regan, P.M. "Third-party interventions and the duration of intrastate conflicts // *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 2002. Vol. 46. № 1. P. 55-73.

Similarly, if peacekeeping is attempted, but nothing else later, the result would be continuation of the problem, since without proper peacemaking efforts, peacekeeping by itself can-not reverse the underlying causes of conflict.

As a result, in successfully coping with international conflicts in the post-Cold War era, a need for a comprehensive strategy arises, combining peacekeeping and peacemaking in the overall resolution process. It should be kept in mind that since the problem is many-sided, there cannot be any single, universal form. The wisest thing to do, therefore, is to act proactively from many directions in accord with the requirements of situations. But in the final analysis, the successful combination of peacekeeping and peacemaking will determine the expected outcome of international conflict resolution.

1.3. Third Party involvement in intra-state armed conflicts in Africa

The involvement of third countries in internal armed conflicts was most vividly depicted on the African continent. These facts took place in various subregions and were accompanied by the use of various forms and methods of involving third actors. In this paragraph, the author will illustrate the international political phenomenon under consideration by the example of the internationalization of the armed conflict in Central Africa since 1998, the epicenter of which was the DRC.

The leader of the uprising that ended Mobutu's dictatorship L.D. Kabila capitalized on the presence of a large Hutu refugee camp in Goma, where there was no central government control, to launch an armed attack against the weakened regime of Mobutu in Kinshasa. Kabila also leveraged the Banyamulenge rebellion, which was organized by armed organizations of the Tutsi community to seize power in the provinces of East Kivu in the DRC and fight against extremist Hutu forces («Interhamwe») trying to continue the genocide in their new homeland. These plans were orchestrated by Rwanda and Uganda, who saw Kabila as a means to address the problem of the Hutu armed formations «Interhamwe» in the DRC. By joining the Tutsi rebels and subduing two-thirds of the country's territory, Kabila took control of state resources and allowed for rampant corruption and exploitation by both foreign and Congolese participants. Western private

companies, such as Erythage Oil, also took advantage of the unstable situation in Zaire to sell weapons and mercenaries and promote their interests on the continent¹⁴³.

The exploitation of natural resources has started to play a new role in conflicts as the "commercialization of military presence" in the DRC has begun¹⁴⁴. Unlike traditional arms trade, this involves illegal military activities in mining areas for commercial interests. The complex relationships between parties to the conflict, criminal groups, and military-political associations have attracted adventurers and mercenaries to the DRC's natural resources. L.-D. Kabila was supported by neighboring countries, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, during the conflict. Despite this, no one intervened to stop the rebels' assistance. The US, France, and Belgium sent contingents and funds to Brazzaville in preparation for the worst and to protect their citizens in Kinshasa.

During L.-D. Kabila's struggle for power, African leaders attempted to assist him in resolving internal issues to end the violence. Nelson Mandela, the South African President, stated that his country had close ties with Zaire and could negotiate to influence events. A special meeting of the Organization of African Unity was scheduled to discuss the civil war in Zaire, but it ended in vain due to the absence of several heads of state. South African President Mandela attempted to negotiate with Kabila in early May 1997 but it did not yield positive results. Tutsi troops entered Kinshasa in May 1997 after successful battles with government forces, and Kabila declared himself the head of Zaire, renaming it the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this action, he received financial assistance from the United States and military assistance from Uganda, Rwanda and Angola.

Western nations had placed their trust in Kabila, offering him the opportunity to form a powerful consortium consisting of more than one hundred firms and banks from the United States, Western Europe, and South Africa. However, this offer was contingent

¹⁴³ ADSOCZ – Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre – a very diverse association of left-wing anti-Mabout forces in the east of the country and in Katanga. The people who created the FNLK also joined him for tactical purposes.

¹⁴⁴ This term was introduced by Christian Dietrich. Dietrich C. Monnaie forte: l'économie criminalisée des diamants dans la République démocratique du Congo et les pays voisins. Ottawa (Canada), 2002. 80 p.

upon the exclusion of Congolese companies and would ultimately lead to the expropriation of the country's economy. Kabila declined the offer and instead developed a long-term plan to gradually liberate his country from the dominance of Western corporations and advisors. The government focused on supporting national entrepreneurship and cultivating economic and political ties with China, Iran, Libya, and Russia, while also advocating for a customs and economic confederation for the entire African continent and the creation of an economic community for all developing and former socialist nations.

Kabila intended to negotiate with Russia regarding concession cooperation in the diamond industry after the signing of the Russian-Angolan "diamond" agreements in 1999-2000, inviting both Russia and China to participate in regional energy development. These actions were not well-received by the West. Anglo-American and Belgian Unibra and Western corporations halted their operations in the Congo in early 2000 while simultaneously defending their interests. They initiated ethnic conflicts in diamond and resource-rich areas with the support of local tribes, mercenaries, and NATO advisors, drawing in troops from neighboring Uganda and Rwanda.

On July 27, 1998, Kabila urged Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi to immediately withdraw their troops from the Congo¹⁴⁵. Kigali claimed that their military presence was necessary to combat Hutu extremists hiding from Rwandan justice, while Uganda refused to withdraw its troops under the pretext of maintaining border security allegedly violated by Congolese rebels. Burundi was part of the same group, although it had less influence on the region's destabilization. Nevertheless, its military units, along with those of Rwanda, were present in the Congo. Although the authorities of Bujumbura believed that there were bases of Burundian Hutu rebels on Congolese soil, this was likely not the only motive for the persistence of these three eastern neighbors. They were dissatisfied with the regime of Kabila, which could limit their windfall from the extraction of Congolese resources. The purpose of this alliance, as noted in the editorial of the journal "French

¹⁴⁵ Mwamba, L.D. Dictionnaire de reference des dates et des evenements historiques eb Republique Democratique du Congo. Bruxelles: Melodic. 2010. P. 234.

Documentation," was to «delve deeper into the fabulously rich natural resources of eastern Congo»¹⁴⁶.

Rebels from Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi sought refuge in the DRC while UNITA militias from Angola also used the country's territory to gather strength in their fight against the government, which was further complicated by the entry of Sudanese guerrillas. The situation was worsened by the increased activities of anti-government groups in neighboring Congo-Brazzaville, resulting in a mass influx of refugees to the DRC. The merging of internal and external conflicts in the country led to the destabilization of Central Africa.

L.-D. Kabila had the support of Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Chad, Sudan, and Libya, while Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi fought against him.

Zimbabwe and Namibia were the first to intervene in the conflict and had been supporting Kabila since the beginning of the insurgency. Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe justified his actions by citing the OAU's decision to support legitimate governments by any means, including military solutions. Mugabe's alliance with Kabila enhanced his status as a regional power after South Africa's democratic reforms and diplomatic reintegration had eclipsed him. Zimbabwe secured the support of the South African Development Community (SADC) for its actions in the DRC, despite initial opposition from South Africa.

Zimbabwe has obtained approval from SADC to deploy troops to the DRC in order to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity¹⁴⁷. In addition to political benefits, Zimbabwe's alliance with Kinshasa has opened up new possibilities for cooperation with the resource-rich DRC.

Former Zimbabwean president R. Mugabe supported L.-D. Kabila, and before the conflict began, the DRC awarded Zimbabwe a \$200 million contract for the supply of

¹⁴⁶ La régionalisation du conflit entre 1998 et 2003. 13.02.2009. URL: <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/dossiers/conflit-grands-lacs/regionalisation-conflit.shtml> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹⁴⁷ Сидорова Г.М. Вооруженные конфликты в практике внешнеполитических отношений государств района Великих Африканских озер : автореферат дис. ... доктора полит. наук: 23.00.04. М. 2016. С. 200-206.

food and military equipment. However, despite public opposition, Mugabe sent approximately 10,000 soldiers to the DRC and provided \$200 million in assistance to Kabila's army¹⁴⁸.

Namibia was one of the first countries to support Kabila, with President Sam Nujoma changing his stance under the influence of Zimbabweans and joining the military coalition. Namibia supplied the DRC army with weapons and sent 2,000 soldiers, a quarter of the national army, to the country. Angola also joined the conflict after a brief period of neutrality, with their military support being the most significant. Angolan soldiers, accompanied by tanks and armored personnel carriers, moved towards the town of Kitona, which was home to a large rebel base, to assist Kabila in controlling the western front¹⁴⁹.

The conflict in Central Africa was internationalized due to various factors, including the following:

1. The ascension of L.-D. Kabila to power in May 1998 created a complex military-political situation in the DRC, which became the epicenter of the "Great African War" that claimed over 5 million lives. Although the conflict was officially declared over in July 2002 with the signing of the Pretoria Peace Agreement, hostilities continued until July 2003. The conflict had multiple causes.

2. The inexperienced new leader inherited a troubled financial situation, a weak economy, low standards of living, and social contradictions, leading to the DRC being categorized as a "failed state."

3. Despite efforts to establish central authority, several armed groups operating in the provinces opposed the country's leader, creating a lack of political regime and vulnerability to intervention.

4. Ethnic conflicts arose due to unresolved tensions between Hutus and Tutsis, exacerbated by the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, causing the Hutus to seek refuge in the

¹⁴⁸ Щенников В. Огнеопасное наследие Мобуту // Азия и Африка сегодня. 1999. № 5. С. 11; Васильев А.М. Воюющий континент // Красная звезда. 2001, 17 февраля.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

DRC, leading to tensions with local populations and further conflict. The conflict between the DRC and Rwanda intensified the already-existing ethnic tensions.

5. Neighboring countries such as Zambia and Zimbabwe took advantage of the DRC's political weakness to pursue their interests in Congolese raw materials.

6. The combination of internal and external factors led to a prolonged military-political crisis, with the eastern provinces of the DRC becoming a platform for neighboring states' confrontations. The conflict, classified as international, spiraled out of control and drew in new forces, posing a threat to regional and international security.

In early 2001, the precarious political situation in the DRC was fully exposed when L.D. Kabila, who had failed to lead the country out of a prolonged crisis, was assassinated as a result of a conspiracy¹⁵⁰. This marked the beginning of a transition period that was accompanied by the impact of the involvement of foreign participants in the civil war.

In an effort to resolve the situation, a meeting of the leaders of the DRC and Rwanda was held in Abuja on June 25, 2004, at the initiative and with the participation of the President of Nigeria, O. Obasanjo. The Heads of State decided to establish a mechanism to monitor the disarmament of Hutu militias operating in the eastern part of the DRC.

During the 3rd Summit of the African Union in Addis Ababa on July 8, 2004, it was decided to create a mechanism to control the common borders of the DRC and Rwanda. MONUC was actively involved in this process and had already begun to study the possible timing of the creation of this body to resolve disputed issues between the DRC and Rwanda.

The meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the DRC, Uganda, and Rwanda took place in Kigali on October 25 and 26, 2004, with the participation of observers from the European Union, the African Union, MONUC, as well as Burundi, which announced its intention to participate in negotiations on a settlement in the Great African Lakes region. The main outcome of the meeting was the signing of a trilateral agreement on

¹⁵⁰ Willame J.-C. *Les Faiseurs de paix au Congo*. Bruxelles: Complexe, 2007. P. 41.

security, based on previously reached agreements and called the "Trilateral Agreement Plus".

The UN and the African Union, among other members of the world community, are credited with organizing and hosting the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy, and Sustainable Development in RVAO. The conference, which brought together representatives from 11 countries in the region and observers from other nations and organizations, was held in Dar es Salaam on November 19-20, 2004, following two and a half years of preparation¹⁵¹. During the conference, various initiatives were proposed, including those focused on peace and security, effective governance, economic development and integration, and humanitarian and social issues.

Thanks to the efforts of partners from Western countries, tensions in the Great African Lakes region were temporarily reduced, and diplomatic pressure was exerted on opponents of stabilization in the area. However, in late 2004, concerns about reconciliation between the DRC and its eastern neighbors were replaced by anxiety when a new border conflict emerged with Rwanda. The military operation was launched against the Democratic Union for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), an opposition movement based in North Kivu.

To address this issue, signatories of the Agreement on a Joint Mechanism for Monitoring Border Surveillance, namely the DRC, Rwanda, and Uganda, established a Trilateral Commission. The commission's first ministerial-level meeting took place on February 2, 2005, in Washington, with the participation of UN experts. The participants discussed using established mechanisms to settle disputes and decided to create a subcommittee on security, defense, and diplomacy. They also explored the possibility of involving Burundi in their efforts. Finally, on February 23, in Kampala, the parties agreed

¹⁵¹ Sebahara Pamphile. *La Conférence internationale sur l'Afrique des Grands lacs. Enjeux et impact sur la paix et le développement en RDC // Rapport du groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité (GRIP)*. Bruxelles 2006.

to establish a "joint intelligence, operational and analytical group" to exchange information on security issues of mutual interest¹⁵².

The military-political crisis in the Great African Lakes region has deepened due to several reasons:

1. Despite some efforts to strengthen stability, the change of political power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) did not significantly improve security in the central region of Africa. The DRC remains the epicenter of conflicts and a threat to regional and international security.

2. The appointment of Joseph Kabila as the new President of the DRC after the murder of his father Laurent-Désiré Kabila was met with negative reactions from many political and public figures, partly due to his Tutsi ethnic origin, which is a sensitive issue in traditional African society.

3. The political class in the DRC was plagued by disunity, clannishness, and enmity between political parties and associations.

4. The presence of a strong armed opposition group, the RCD/Goma, which refused to recognize the central government and disarm, added to the complexity of the situation.

5. Reconciliation between warring factions was superficial, which led to the emergence of new illegal armed groups, both Congolese and foreign, and increased armed confrontations.

6. The situation was further destabilized by the presence of militants from Rwanda and Uganda on DRC territory, which strained relations between these countries and fueled the growth of the Hutu association on the territory of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda.

7. International organizations' efforts to resolve the crisis were ineffective.

One proposed solution to the protracted political crisis in the DRC was the establishment of a transitional period, during which power would be transferred from the

¹⁵² Семнадцатый доклад Генерального секретаря о Миссии Организации Объединенных Наций в Демократической Республике Конго / СБ ООН. 15.03.2005. URL: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/267/52/PDF/N0526752.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

appointed President to a legitimate one. The Constitution of the Transitional Period of April 2, 2003, provided for the post of President and four vice-Presidents in the upper echelon of power. Joseph Kabila was elected President for the transitional period and sworn in on April 7, 2003.

Summing up the study of the specifics of the involvement of third countries in the internal conflict in Africa, it is worth concluding that the internal conflict carries a number of features typical of African conflicts: the struggle between ethnopolitical groups for power and resources; the importance of the ethnicity factor; the game of politicians on ethnic feelings, contributing to the polarization of ethnic relations; the presence of the mineral factor, which aggravated the course of the conflict; the inability of the authorities to resolve pressing social and ethnic contradictions; the destruction of traditional institutions, as well as the protracted nature of the confrontation. For example, military actions on the territory of the DRC (1998-2003) attracted the attention and efforts of neighboring states, as a result of which the conflict acquired a regional character. The DRC became the epicenter of the crisis development of Central Africa and the Great Lakes sub-region of Africa, and was on the verge of disintegration, as large armed associations with a clan basis fought for power on its territory. During the conflict, foreign participants, directly or through intermediaries, took control of most of the mineral deposits of DR Congo, such as gold and diamonds. These resources were in the hands of Angola, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Uganda, which cooperated with Western Powers in this area, and sometimes fully acted in their interests. This demonstrates the regularity of new forms of intervention, when the main beneficiary does not act directly, but through a regional intermediary. Unregulated ambitions of Western countries have led to an international war in the center of the African continent, which has become a real threat to international security and created a humanitarian catastrophe.

CHAPTER 2. INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR OF 1967-1970

Taking into account the complexity of modern armed conflicts, it is important to understand the causes of their origin, the goals of the warring parties, as well as the specifics of local conditions and geographical context. Theoretical justification of the prevention of armed conflicts or modeling of concepts of conflict containment is possible only with a deep knowledge of the realities of a particular country, including the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. In this chapter, the author will consider a set of reasons that caused the civil war in Nigeria, including taking into account its colonial past, as well as the main actors who were involved in this conflict. The author then touches upon the issue of internationalization of the conflict, namely, the composition of the actors, the idea and form of support for one of the parties are studied.

2.1. Background of the Nigerian Civil War

The socio-political causes of the war were connected with the heavy colonial legacy left by the British to the young state, the aggravation of ethnic contradictions, the political and socio-economic inequality of various Nigerian ethnic groups, the weakness of the central government and its main support of the army, the inability of the central government to solve these problems in a timely manner.

In the early hours of Saturday, 15 January 1966, Nigerian prime minister Tafawa Balewa wrapped up a late-night meeting with three cabinet ministers at his official residence in the Ikoyi neighbourhood of Lagos, and had begun to prepare to retire for the night when he became aware that some sort of a conflagration was taking place at the gates of his walled compound. There, a small contingent of troops under the command of Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna, a brigade major at 2 Brigade HQ in Lagos, and one of five majors central to the planning and execution of the January 1966 coup, was demanding entrance. The police detachment at the gate was overpowered, after which the rebel troops forced members of the domestic staff to lead them into the residence and into the bedroom of the prime minister¹⁵³.

¹⁵³ Achebe, C. *There Was a Country*. New York: The Penguin Press. 2012. P. 43.

There Tafawa Balewa met the intruders with calm composure, requesting that he be allowed time to pray before his arrest. Then, wearing slippers and a white gown, he was led away from the residence and placed inside a waiting military vehicle in which he was driven away in the darkness, to be neither heard of nor seen alive again.

There has been a great deal of controversy over the fate of Tafawa Balewa in the hours following his abduction. Eyewitnesses at the scene report that he was saluted by troops and assured that he was not to be held personally accountable for the political situation in Nigeria. He was, however, found dead in a plantation not far from the town of Ifo, leaning against a tree in a seated position. He had apparently been en route to Calabar in the far southeast of the country. The assumption has always been that he was murdered, but circumstantial evidence tends not to support this, while recent reminiscences of surviving players in the episode have suggested that he died of an asthmatic attack during the process of his abduction and removal from Lagos.

Elsewhere in the country a similar series of coordinated actions was in progress. A coup masterminded by five Nigerian army majors was underway. Along with the running to ground and killing of several high-ranking army command elements in a coup that appears in general to have been somewhat haphazardly planned. The decision to take or spare the lives of individual targets, and there were quite a list of these, was left to the discretion of the participating officers who were tasked with particular regional operations. In this regard the killings of Tafawa Balewa and Ahmadu Bello were ill advised to say the least, and what is more, the failure of the coup plotters to locate and liquidate the most vital target under the circumstances, the General Officer Commanding, Major-General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, was an absolute disaster.

Aguiyi-Ironsi in fact appeared to lead a bit of a charmed life for those few vital hours, adroitly keeping one step ahead of mutinous troops once he had become aware of what was afoot. It is worth noting that Aguiyi-Ironsi was an Igbo, as were a majority of the coup plotters, which presented an interesting conundrum for analysts later attempting to portray the coup as an Igbo plot to seize power in the country. In point of fact, and notwithstanding Aguiyi-Ironsi's subsequent stifling, and then crushing of the coup,

enough will existed in many quarters of the country to portray the episode thus that it still, in the minds of many observers, remained an all-Igbo affair.

Another point worth noting is that once the dust had settled and the coup had been effectively crushed, the military nonetheless very readily assumed power, installing military commander Aguiyi-Ironsi as head of state, which, even if, as is generally accepted to date in disinterested circles, the coup did not have overtly ethnocentric overtones, it nonetheless resulted in an Igbo head of state.

This was all in all the extraordinary career path of an extremely impressive soldier. As a head of state however, Aguiyi-Ironsi was less impressive. His signature failing during the six months that he was in office was his determination to be fair-minded, honest, ethnically impartial and manifestly transparent, all of which runs so contrary to the Nigerian political mindset that his tenure was doomed almost before it began.

The initial popular response to the stifling of coup was overwhelmingly positive. Apart from imprisoning the principal coup plotters, purging the main administrative structures and establishing military governors in each of the three territories of the federation, Aguiyi-Ironsi established a think-tank to identify where and how things had gone so horribly wrong, and to come up with a solution. In fact, the problem seemed quite obvious. It had been the federal system and the entrenched regionalism that had been the foundation of the collapse of the first republic, so a series of commissions was established to look into the matter. A general consensus was reasonably quickly reached, tending to be driven by the south, that a unitary republic would be a desirable alternative to the current federal structure¹⁵⁴.

Aguiyi-Ironsi accepted this fact, although he also seemed quite cognizant of the dangers of such a move. As usual it was in the north where a merger of the human and political resources of Nigeria as a whole represented the greatest danger, and for all the usual reasons. However, when weighed up as a whole, it appeared, on the surface, that unification would be a popular solution to the current crisis, which led in May 1966 to a constitutional suspension and modification decree, what came to be known as the

¹⁵⁴ Siollun, M. *Oil, Politics and Violence: Nigeria's Military Coup Culture (1966-1976)*. New York: Algora. 2009. P. 44.

Unification Decree, and which in essence transformed the regions into a series of provinces with broadly unchanged borders and a largely unaltered system of administration. It is worth noting that under military rule the country was being governed on a unitary basis anyway, with a supreme military council at the centre and a military governor in each region, each following an essentially military chain of command. The Unification Decree really just formalized and codified this fact.

However, a new anti-Igbo movement has begun to rise among officials and military in northern Nigeria. An Igbo military chief, Igbo coup plotters who had been spared execution and were now imprisoned mainly in the east, an Igbo-dominated commission of inquiry into the terms of unification, and the general jubilation in the east at the delivery of the Unification Decree, all presented the opportunity for a whispering campaign to stir up and utilize all the old and well-established fears and grievances of a lethargic north against the dynamic and ebullient south.

And so it was. The northern leadership besieged the local military governor with threats of secession, a disturbance which reached State House, causing Aguiyi-Ironsi to pour oil on troubled waters by attempting to achieve all things for all people. Meanwhile, the first signs of the pogrom began to spread across the northern and western cities, while the dissatisfied northern leadership provoked xenophobic ideas that were implicitly present in public sentiment.

When the tempest was unleashed, the sheer organization behind it belied subsequent claims of spontaneity and improvisation. Attacks against expatriate Igbos began on 29 May, a few days after the public announcement of the Unification Decree, beginning in the northern capital of Kaduna, but very quickly spreading as far afield as Kano, Jos, Zaria, Gusau, Sokoto, Katsina, Bauchi and Funtua, to name but a few. Well-organized gangs began hunting down and targeting easterners in their midst, killing and maiming with clubs, daggers, machetes, bows and arrows, and indeed any other improvised weapons that came to hand¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵⁵ de St Jorre, John. *The Nigerian Civil War*. L.: Hodder & Stroughton. 1972. P. 67.

In the context of the Nigerian Civil War, which is the focus of this narrative, this episode has been judged extremely important. Southerners, but Igbos in particular, had been given a preview of the type of institutionalized violence that had in fact been tangible in the wings since the earliest iterations of modern Nigeria. In the first instance the British had been on hand to moderate emotions, and in the second, during the lifespan of the first republic, guarantees of northern ascendancy had tended to placate the firebrands, but with the worst-possible scenario looming, and the object of northern hatred very much on hand, northern sentiments exploded into violence in a manner highly suggestive of the fact that this would be neither the worst nor the last popular response of its kind.

Estimates of the death toll are necessarily vague, but no less that 3,000 eastern Nigerians were killed in this purge, which lasted for several weeks over May and June 1966. Very few western Nigerians were targeted, further underlining the orchestrated nature of the episode. It was eastern Nigerians that were specifically identified, with Igbos being the majority. Even Igbos located among mid-western Nigerians were singled out, sending a clear message that the antipathy generally felt for the group was alive and well in greater Nigeria. If discussion in the east regarding secession had a point of genesis, then this would undoubtedly have been it¹⁵⁶.

However, much worse was to come. The Aguiyi-Ironsi regime response to this episode was placatory, which simply emboldened the northern political elite to make increasingly forceful demands under the threat of secession. These included the abrogation of the Unification Decree, the trial and severe punishment of the January coup plotters and a guarantee that no investigation into the May–June pogrom would be undertaken. The latter demand, of course, provides as much evidence as could be needed that the emirs of the region were behind the organization of the purges. Along with this, dark rumours began to circulate that an even greater programme of ethnic bloodletting was imminent in the north. News of this reached Aguiyi-Ironsi, who sought the counsel of the chiefs of the army, police and Special Branch who all urged him to discount the rumours as baseless.

¹⁵⁶ Gould, M. *The Biafran War: The Struggle for Modern Nigeria*. L.: I.B. Taurus. 2012. P. 96.

About six weeks later, however, on 29 July, army officers from northern Nigeria launched a second coup which toppled the Aguiyi-Ironsi regime, costing Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi his life, and effectively plunging Nigeria into a crisis from which it would not emerge for another four years. And indeed, Aguiyi-Ironsi was not the only in-house killing. In total seven high-ranking military officers were executed, or murdered, depending on the position from which the killings are viewed. The killing of these officers enraged the northern rank and file, rendering some sort of revenge action within the wider military structure almost inevitable.

It would, however, be naive to suppose that revenge was the only motivation for the military coup of 6 July 1966. A more subtle cultural anxiety was probably what lay most acutely at the root of what took place. The code word for the commencement of the coup had been *Araba*, meaning, in the Hausa language, secession, which offers the clearest possible indication of what fundamentally drove the coup. The northern sense that the earlier January coup had been an Igbo plot to gain substantive control of the republic had been reinforced by intensive and somewhat subterranean politicking in the north, which buttressed a general perception that swift and prompt action would be required in order to forestall a continuation of the creeping Igbo dominance of Nigeria that had once again become a tangible blip on the energized cultural radar of the north¹⁵⁷.

The chronology of the July 1966 coup has been exhaustively covered in many researches, and is in its finer detail not specifically relevant to this narrative, other than in the emergence of Aguiyi-Ironsi's military chief of staff, Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon, as the new head of the armed forces, and in due course as head of state. Another relevant point, of course, was the systematic killing of men and officers of eastern origin in a manner sadistically brutal, openly blatant and systematic, included among them Aguiyi-Ironsi himself. The military head of state was abducted from the home of the military governor of the west, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Adekunle Fajuyi, along with a number of others, and subjected to extremely crude abuse and torture before being shot dead.

¹⁵⁷ Baxter, P. Biafra: The Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970. Durban. Helion & Co by Henry Ling Ltd. 2014. P. 21.

In the initial massacre of eastern military personnel based in various locations in the north and west (the coup did not affect the east), some 300 individuals were reported killed. However, as the aftermath continued, a more systematic hunt for eastern servicemen in hiding in the north continued. A great many were killed in often horrific circumstances, with only a handful, against almost astronomical odds, succeeding in escaping from the north and across the Niger River into the east. And then in due course, as the killings began to assume genocidal proportions, attention shifted from the military, after which eastern civilians, in particular Igbos, began to be hunted down in cities across the north and west in a miasma of officially orchestrated killings. This ultimately claimed the lives of more than 30,000 individuals, almost all of them Igbo¹⁵⁸.

Colonel Madiebo recounts the chilling experiences of an army sergeant-major in whose company he spent a night in hiding, alongside other Igbo soldiers, in a hut adjacent to a railway station platform in the small northern town of Ayalagu. This sergeant-major was an Igbo serving in the 3rd Battalion in Kaduna. He survived a massacre in the early hours of 30 July 1966.

These events, which took place mainly during the third quarter of 1966, prompted a mass exodus of easterners from the north and west. The feeling among these refugees, as well as the military leadership and the general population of the east, was that the events underway in the rest of Nigeria presaged a systematic extermination of the Igbo, not only in the north and the west, but elsewhere in Nigeria too. The question of eastern secession, an issue that had been fermenting under the surface for some time, now began to be openly mooted as the only practical way that the majority population of the east could hope to survive in Nigeria. The process, however, did not resolve immediately. There followed an inevitable political process, but by the end of 1966, eastern military governor, Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu, had privately come to accept that secession was inevitable. Inevitable also would be civil war¹⁵⁹.

¹⁵⁸ Okpaku, L. *Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood*. Westport. Greenwood Publishing Company. 1972 and 1987. P. 41.

¹⁵⁹ Herskovits, J. *Nigeria: Power and Democracy in Africa*. New York: Foreign Policy Association. 1982. P. 8.

All this is of vital importance in achieving a clear understanding of the dynamics of the Nigerian Civil War. There were, of course, a great many other nuances that helped paint the character of this, one of the first and most awful African civil conflicts, but personality and ego certainly were among the most potent.

However, in the months subsequent to the July coup, and the pogroms that followed, a political crisis emerged that was much bigger and much more deeply rooted than any of the individual personalities currently dominating the stage. Prior to the coup an estimated 1,300,000 easterners, mainly, but not exclusively, Igbos, had been resident in other regions. Of these about 800,000 were resident in the north and about 500,000 elsewhere in the federation¹⁶⁰.

Of these, at a conservative estimate, 30,000 did not survive the purge, with an obvious figure far in excess of this of people injured, maimed, displaced and traumatized. It is impossible to overstate the severity of the circumstances and the depth of feeling in the east as a flood of refugees began to make their way across the Niger River with tales of horror that excited all the fear and incredulity to be expected in the home population.

Colonel Ojukwu was therefore not only confronted by a massive refugee problem in a region already land- and resource-pressured, but by the inescapable sense that the combined peoples of the east had no place in the federation, were not wanted as a regional ethnic partner, and that assimilation of the Igbo into the federation was being suffered for no better reason than the oil revenues it contributed to the federal treasury.

Meanwhile, the repatriation of many influential and powerful Igbos back to the east from other regions in the federation bolstered the regional body politic that Ojukwu had at his disposal, giving him a highly productive and influential political circle to work with, but also making it difficult for him to ignore a powerful groundswell of emerging opinion that the only means that the Igbo had to guarantee their survival was to secede from the federation¹⁶¹.

¹⁶⁰ Herskovits, J. Op. cit. P. 43.

¹⁶¹ Venter, Al.J. Biafra Genocide: Nigeria: Bloodletting and mass starvation 1967–1970. Barnsley: Pen & Sword. 2018. P. 69-71.

At this time Colonel Gowon, soon to be self promoted to major-general, began to display his own leadership mettle. This mettle, although it did not lack shrewdness of its own, was nonetheless in the early stages very much the shrewdness of others. The most significant other at that time tended to be the incumbent permanent secretaries of departments and ministries who, once civilian heads of departments had been ousted by the military, remained very powerful within the political-administrative establishment in the absence of any meaningful understanding of government on the part of a junta of none-too-clear-thinking soldiers.

The tendency of the establishment then was to try and consolidate the strong core of government embodied in the Supreme Military Council, in the interests, first and foremost, of consolidating power, but of course also in the interests of accruing wealth which, within the Nigerian system, political supremacy automatically implied. There was, therefore, an inbuilt resistance to the devolution of any power away from the federal core to the regions. This, of course, conflicted sharply with the position of the eastern region, which declared devolution as a basic precondition for the east remaining in the federation. It was clear impasse¹⁶².

Colonel Gowon, therefore, as something of a man of straw, led a federal political agenda, which was aimed ostensibly at finding a mutually agreeable solution to the eastern secessionist agenda, but at the same time determined to concede absolutely nothing to fairly genuine eastern concerns. The machinations of this agenda consumed the final months of 1966 and the opening months of 1967 in a generally fruitless, largely disingenuous and often overtly threatening process, which Colonel Ojukwu complied with only very superficially, since he also had very little practical interest in compromise.

The process ended with a meeting of all four regional governors, convened in the southern Ghanaian town of Aburi. The objective of the Aburi Conference was to reach some sort of broad agreement on the future complexion of Nigeria. The effort was doomed, however, largely for the reasons cited above, but also because Ojukwu did not

¹⁶² Ibid. P. 73.

recognize Gowon's leadership of the Supreme Military Council, even though the conference fundamentally starred only these two individuals¹⁶³.

Nonetheless, a working formula was achieved that on the surface appeared to favour Ojukwu. Substantial control over the regions would devolve away from the centre, while at the same time the army would be reorganized to redistribute battalions back to their regions of majority representation. This, in theory, would serve to depoliticize the army, although at the same time it was also something of an admission that a complete ethnic merger in Nigeria was, at that point at least, impossible. The net result of this would be that battalions would thereafter tend be loyal first to their ethnicity before any concept of a united federal army. Furthermore it was agreed that the treasury would consider ways to assist eastern refugees and to guarantee payment to date for federal civil servants displaced by the purges. Central responsibility would be reduced to the coordination of common services, interregional economic relations, and of course foreign affairs.

All this on paper was extremely encouraging, but in practical terms it was a pipe dream, and it is doubtful whether Ojukwu believed it for a moment. Throughout the process, eastern procurement officers, pre-empting a crisis, had been touring eastern and western Europe acquiring weapons, suggesting, that at the very least, Colonel Ojukwu was spreading his options. Gowon, on the other hand, had put his signature to the draft document without wielding sufficient authority to carry the powerful permanent secretaries along with him, or even many of the sceptics among his own military colleagues. He has since been portrayed, in the context of the Aburi Conference, as well-meaning but witless, naive and ill advised, returning to a federal alignment favoured by his civilian political advisers at the moment he arrived back in Lagos.

Frederick Forsyth, who incidentally took very much the above view of Gowon's performance in Aburi, nonetheless acutely described the upshot of the conference with the comment that within "a few days of Gowon's return to Lagos the Aburi agreements began to die on the vine". When the findings of the conference were made public, the communiqué document, unsurprisingly, bore almost no resemblance to what had been

¹⁶³ Nolte, I. Obafemi Awolowo and the making of Remo. Edinburgh: University Press. 2009. P. 199.

agreed at Aburi. Colonel Ojukwu was ready for this and immediately responded by issuing an edict that all federal revenues collected in the east would thereafter be diverted internally to deal with the problem of displaced people, not including oil revenues, which were in any case collected in Lagos. This was fighting talk and, moreover, the mere mention of oil revenues sent shivers down the collective spine of the federation. Gowon responded almost immediately with what was dubbed Decree Eight¹⁶⁴.

On the surface Decree Eight appeared to be reasonably true to the main points of the Aburi Agreement, but the illusion was broken by the fine print which allowed for all powers devolved by provisions of the Aburi Agreement to be fairly easily retrieved, either through a state of emergency or a simple decision at the centre that such action was necessary. Likewise, a clause was included that regional governors could not exercise their power in a manner detrimental to the centre, the criterion for which would naturally be decided in Lagos.

Decree Eight was promptly rejected in the east, where preparations for separation continued. In Lagos, however, an ebullient Gowon had more to announce. On 23 April 1967, the fact was made public that the three regions of Nigeria would be divided into 12 states, with the east forewarned that stern measures would be taken in the instance of any difficulty generated from there. The political objective of this was to break up the clear ethnic identity of each state and nullify the potential for individual states, such as the east, forming sufficient consensus to secede.

This again ran contrary to the fundamental eastern tenet of greater autonomy in the regions, and as Gowon went ahead with the planning of a reorganized federation, the eastern consultative assembly met and formally empowered Colonel Ojukwu to secede.

Ojukwu accepted the mandate, and in the early hours of 30 May 1967 he read the proclamation of secession against a backdrop of the Biafran flag, addressing a specially invited corps of diplomats, judges and senior public servants at the governor's official residence in Enugu¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶⁴ Gould, M. *The Biafran War: The Struggle for Modern Nigeria*. L.: Tauris. 2013. P. 46-48.

¹⁶⁵ Gould, M. *Op. cit.* P. 54.

The matter then rested on the federal response. A sense of the calm before the storm descended on the nation, and on the east in particular, as the population held its breath in anticipation. There was a sense that possibly the Supreme Military Council might blink, and the Aburi Agreement be revisited. However, when on 6 July 1967 Nigerian artillery shells began to rain down on the town of Ogoja, ten miles from the border with the north, it was clear that the game was on.

Undoubtedly Ironsi's decision ordering the unification of the civil service and the confirmation of greater centralised government, hastened the demise of his short-lived regime and made the North determined to bring the rest of the country back under its control. Indeed, following the second coup, it was with the greatest difficulty that the newly appointed *de facto* head of state had restrained his Northern brother officers from overrunning and crushing the power of the East. Fear of such an invasion by the North only exacerbated the East's desire to break free from the Federation and the oppression of the North. The West also felt oppression from the North, firstly because of a reluctance to withdraw Northern troops stationed in the West and secondly because of her vulnerability and isolation should the East secede from the confederation. As late as May 1967 Chief Awolowo, the Western region Yoruba leader, declared in a speech to the Western opinion-formers: Only a peaceful solution must be found to arrest the present worsening stalemate and restore normalcy. The Eastern Region must be encouraged to remain part of the Federation. If the Eastern Region is allowed by acts of omission or commission to secede from or opt out of Nigeria, then the Western Region and Lagos must also stay out of the Federation¹⁶⁶.

Finally, it was the intransigence and irreconcilable differences between Gowon, the *de facto* leader of the Federation, and Ojukwu, the Eastern Regional governor, appointed by Ironsi, the former leader, that determined an inexorable slide towards civil war. When he assumed power Gowon's position was extremely precarious. He was only acceptable to the North because he was a Northerner, albeit a Middle Belter, and to the South because he was Christian. One of his first moves on taking power was to rescind Ironsi's decree

¹⁶⁶ Kirk-Greene, T. Fellow St Anthony's College, Oxford. Interviewed on 12 February 2008. P. 414.

34, thus immediately placating the North. However his position remained tenuous, particularly in his relations with Awolowo and the West, although he did placate him by bringing him into his administration as his deputy. But it was his relationship with Ojukwu that proved intractable. For his part Ojukwu never accepted Gowon's position and refused to serve under him. He would only compromise by serving the Federation as Gowon's equal, an impossible state of affairs for controlling and running such a large and diverse country as Nigeria.

2.2 The precursors of the internationalization of the Nigerian civil war

The civil war in Nigeria could have remained an intra-State conflict if there had been no colonial legacy affecting the development of the State. At the same time, it is worth noting that thanks to the colonial administration, Nigeria became a single state. Great Britain began expansion into these territories in the first half of the 19th century and completed by the beginning of the 20th century. In the established «Colonies and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria» and «Protectorate of Northern Nigeria», the new government needed to build a management system taking into account their historical features, that is, the presence of heterogeneous political structures there.

On the one hand, the British tried to create a single economic space (for example, by building the Lagos-Kano railway, which initiated the export of peanuts from the Northern regions from the Atlantic coast), as well as redirect finances from the economically self-sufficient South, which receives most of the revenue from customs duties on goods imported through seaports, for subsidized North.

As for the contours of the political system, the theorists and practitioners of colonial administration believed that in order to prevent ethnic clashes between peoples, it was necessary to maintain a minimum distance, not to assimilate, not to create a single ethnic space¹⁶⁷.

Thus, describing the pre-colonial state formations, the Governor-General of the colony of Nigeria H. Clifford (1919-1925) pointed out that «it is impossible to imagine that this diversity of numerous autonomous states, separated by geographical distance,

¹⁶⁷ Ukiwo U. On the Study of Ethnicity in Nigeria // UK Department for International Development. 2016. URL: <http://www3.qeh.ox.ac.uk/pdf/crisewps/workingpaper12.pdf> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

historical and religious strife, cultural barrier, inhabited by various peoples, can turn into a homogeneous nation. In this case, a deadly explosion is inevitable, which will undermine the foundations of the self-government system being laid»¹⁶⁸.

For the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1807 was a year to celebrate, but in southern Nigeria it gradually left the infrastructure of shipping fleets, agents and middlemen without a commodity in which to trade. However, changing industrial and economic conditions in Britain and Europe meant increasing demand for soap as well as for vegetable oils, the best of which was palm oil. The move from the slave trade to the palm oil trade in what became the Oil River States of southern Nigeria was fairly swift.

By 1860 this trade had expanded in the Delta region to £1,000,000 per annum¹⁶⁹, leading to continuous friction between British traders and also to ongoing raids by the indigenous population. Furthermore, the French and Germans had started to take an active interest in trade on the Niger. Goldie Taubman, an ex-British Army officer, had been sent out to Nigeria by his family to manage a near bankrupt palm-oil trading company, called Holland and Jacques. Holland and Jacques changed its name to the Central African Trading Company and by 1879 Goldie, who had conveniently dropped his German sounding surname, had amalgamated three competitive rivals into the United Africa Company¹⁷⁰. He had achieved this by convincing his competitors of two facts. Firstly, that they could sustain their production of palm oil and protect it from the vagaries of world market prices by joining forces and controlling the price they paid to the African producers and middlemen. The world price for vegetable oils had fallen as supplies from West Africa and other sources had increased. Secondly, he persuaded them that it was a way of countering increasing competition from French trading companies.

George Goldie was ambitious to expand his company's interest and keep control of trade in Nigeria. Goldie argued that 'with old established markets closing in our many factories, with India producing cotton fabrics not only for her own use but for export, it

¹⁶⁸ Address to Nigerian Council by Sir Hugh Clifford, Lagos, 1920 // African Proconsuls. European Governors in Africa / ed. Gann L.H., Duignan P. New York/London/Stanford: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan Publishers & Hoover Institution. 1978. 548 p.

¹⁶⁹ Schwarz, W. Nigeria. London: Pall Mall Press. 1968. P. 78.

¹⁷⁰ Pakenham, T. The Scramble for Africa. London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 1991. P. 184.

would be suicidal to abandon to our rival powers the only great remaining underdeveloped opening for British goods'¹⁷¹. His main fear was of competition from the French and he was concerned that the French government would annex the middle and lower Niger to give their traders a monopoly. Goldie's plan was that his company would take over the middle and lower Niger providing that the British government grant him a royal charter for his company. The company would then control this large territory as a monopoly and as a private colony. Goldie also had ambitions over the Sokoto Empire in Northern Nigeria, where he believed further rich trading opportunities were to be gained. His company already depended on trade in ivory and shea butter (a kind of margarine) from the Islamic kingdom of Nupe.

In 1886 Goldie had his request granted, and his renamed Niger Company gained its royal charter, which had been granted because of strong French colonial ambitions and also Germany's late volte-face with regard to colonies. In the meantime, although Sir George Goldie, as he became, had his charter company he was still vulnerable to French competition and the duplicitous indigenous rulers. Britain therefore agreed to fund a military force to protect the Royal Niger Company. The formation of the West African Frontier Force in 1898 was put under the command of Captain Frederick Lugard, a brave, diminutive, upper-class Englishman, who had found a degree of dubious fame in East Africa over his dealings with other competing colonial powers¹⁷².

In 1900 Sir Frederick Lugard, as he had now become, was appointed to the important post of high commissioner for the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. His resources for subjugating this vast new territory were severely limited. This, and the parsimony of his political masters, determined the style of his rule over this territory. He interfered as little as possible with the social structure of his vast new territory and fostered a policy of indirect rule. For example, he allowed Muslim law to run alongside British law as a dual system. Also, in agreement with the Caliph of Sokoto, he excluded Christian missionaries so that there would be limited interference with the Muslim religion. Of course, his resources in manpower and equipment may have been limited,

¹⁷¹ Schwarz, W. Nigeria. London: Pall Mall Press. 1968. P. 79.

¹⁷² Miller, C. The Lunatic Express. London: Penguin. 2001.P. 203.

but in the words of Hilaire Belloc: Whatever happens, we have got The Maxim gun and they have not¹⁷³.

Unfortunately, the indirect rule approach, although laudable at the time, meant that in the future when Nigeria became independent it would help to foster the divisiveness which was to have such a devastating effect in the years leading up to the civil war. At the time, Lugard's prime objective was to create and protect trade, because the perceived wisdom was that colonial activity was only good if the new territory was financially viable and indeed could add value to Britain's commercial power. As it happened, Northern Nigeria was hopelessly insolvent commercially and had to rely on subsidies from the South to balance its books. Indeed, when Lugard was appointed the country's first Governor General in 1912 he actually amalgamated the exchequers of both areas and he made the South contribute the North's deficit from alcohol duty.

Not only had Lugard's control of Northern Nigeria created the right atmosphere to induce divisiveness in the future, but it also fostered much hatred and distrust between the peoples. On his appointment as Governor General of the whole country he decided to keep the country split as two administrative zones, the North and the South. He refused to listen to the advice of others who proposed that the administration of Nigeria would be better served if it were split into more than two regions. One suggestion was for four areas: North, Central, West and East. The other was for five regions: the Hausa States, the Chad Territory, the Benue Provinces, the Western Provinces and the Eastern Provinces. If he had heeded this advice it is much more likely that as indigenous political aspirations began to grow, although potentially regionalized, they would have had a greater national flavour and would not have been as enmeshed in ethnicity and religion as they became, with such disastrous results. It seems that Lugard was determined to administer the country simply as two units, firstly because he did not want to break up the rule in the North which he had so successfully instigated, but secondly because he planned his administration as a continuous one and did not want a break because of his absences when back in Britain¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷³ Pakenham, T. *The Scramble for Africa*. L.: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991. P.184.

¹⁷⁴ Pakenham, T. *The Scramble for Africa*. L.: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 1991. P. 184.

Although there were many positive aspects to Lugard's rule, on balance he helped create and left behind a country which would be ill-prepared to cope with the rigours of self-government in the future. Not only had he refused to listen to the advice to have more than two administrative areas, which may well have paved the way for better government, but by curtailing the spread of missionary activity in Northern Nigeria, he hindered the spread of western-style education in the North. As the North had many fewer educated people than the South, and as Nigerians took over from Europeans, it was only natural that these vacancies were filled by those educated people who mainly came from the South. This meant that in the years before the civil war there were tens of thousands of Southern, mainly Eastern, Nigerians working in the North. Arguably this caused resentment and friction between the better paid Southerners and the less well-off Northerners who had had to accept much of the menial work.

Education also played its part in Lugard's efforts at indirect rule in the South. Missionaries had encouraged the growth of education in the South and had promoted further education in Britain for their brighter protégés; indeed the freed slave Samuel Crowther, who later became Bishop of the Niger, was an early example. Lugard's attempts at indirect rule were somewhat thwarted by western-educated people who questioned Britain's presence in the country, such as Herbert Macaulay, the grandson of Bishop Crowther and founder of the first nationalist party in 1923. Indeed in the East, where there had been no heritage of chieftain rule, there was a history of democracy emanating upwards from the villages, and indirect rule was found to be very difficult. Lugard appointed government chiefs, known as warrant chiefs, in the areas. These were anathema to the Igbo people, who conclusively rejected them¹⁷⁵.

1913 saw the amalgamation of Nigeria into three administrative areas: the crown colony of Lagos and the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria. Initially from this period, especially in the South, a gradual political consciousness and unity developed. Southerners were especially adept at absorbing western-style education, and this meant that a new professional class of people came into being, outside of tribalism. By being

¹⁷⁵ Gould, M. *The Biafran War: The Struggle for Modern Nigeria*. L.: Tauris. 2013. P. 33.

mainly excluded from the European administration, but indoctrinated with European ideals of political freedom, this class became politically aware in the new country, indeed questioning the very reason for European presence in their country. Embryo nationalism was created following protests in 1908 over the imposition of a general rate to fund new water schemes in Lagos.

The most outspoken critic of the British presence in Nigeria came from the aforementioned Herbert Macaulay who, on 24 June 1923, formed with his colleagues the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Its initial aims sought municipal status and self-government for Lagos, together with plans for national compulsory primary education, as well as secondary education facilities and the Nigerianisation of the civil service. Opposition to Macaulay and his party mainly came from students at King's College Lagos, who formed the Lagos Youth Movement in 1934. This movement was strengthened three years later with the arrival of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, who had trained in America and had successfully run a newspaper in the Gold Coast for three years. However, these early political aspirations centered on gaining political power at town council level. It was not until 1944, when Britain and America signed the Atlantic Charter, which confirmed the right of self-determination by people for control of their homelands, that political awareness took on a greater national and nationalistic fervor. In 1946 under the terms of a new constitution, a national legislature, together with three regional assemblies, was brought into being. 1945 saw the first meeting of the National Council of Nigerians and Cameroons (NCNC), with Herbert Macaulay as president and Nnamdi Azikiwe as secretary. Interestingly Macaulay was a Yoruba and Azikiwe an Igbo. The NCNC was not a political party as such but represented all people who had an interest in Nigeria obtaining internal self-government within the British Empire.

However, tribal unity in the South was to be short-lived. The Yoruba elite increasingly felt that the party, the NCNC, was being dominated by Azikiwe and his Igbo supporters, and 1951 saw the formation of the Action Group Party dominated by Yorubas from Nigeria's Western region. At its inaugural meeting it sought to 'bring and organize within its fold all nationalists in the Western Region, so that they may work together as a united group, and submit themselves to party loyalty and discipline'. In order to establish

itself as a serious political party it was prepared to use all modern methods of political party discipline, but, and most importantly, it also enlisted the support and help of all the traditional Yoruba leaders.

This effectively made it an ethnically dominated party. With the establishment of the Action Group led by Obafemi Awolowo, within the Yoruba-dominated Western Region, and the NCNC led by Nnamdi Azikiwe and mainly supported by Igbos from the East, Nigerian politics took on a distinctly regional and ethnic style. This was confirmed when the Northern leaders established the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) led by the Sardauna of Sokoto. Indeed, following the agreement of the Macpherson Constitution¹⁷⁶, which allowed for popular elections in all three regions, the establishment of Nigerian politics on ethnic lines was confirmed, with each mainly ethnic party being elected within each region. The North was to make its ethnicity even more divisive when Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, became premier of Northern Nigeria and promoted a 'Northernization Policy', whereby appointments to the Northern Nigerian Civil Service were to be given to qualified Northern Nigerians in preference to other Nigerians, and where there were none available then Europeans were to be employed¹⁷⁷.

In addition to the desire to form a single economic space on the territory of the colony of Nigeria, it was important for the colonial authorities to create an export-oriented extractive sector of the economy. The minerals, the search for which in the colony in 1903 was identified as the most promising, were bitumen, coal and oil.

In 1907, the colonial authorities of South Nigeria has given British companies the exclusive right to explore and extract oil. For several decades, the exploration of the territory has been episodic and sluggish.

¹⁷⁶ Lynn, Nigeria, Part 2 (), Doc. 232 Co 554/279. 2001. № 8. P. 18. On the general structure of the constitution, 'We all agreed that unity will not be achieved by attempting to concentrate all power at the centre but rather by further decentralisation of authority to the Regions.'

¹⁷⁷ Opiya, E., Why Biafra? Aburi Prelude to the Biafran Tragedy. San Rafael: Leswing Press. 1972. P. 35.

Only in 1951 Shell/D'Arcy discovered three profitable fields for commercial production (Oloibiri, Afam, Bomu)¹⁷⁸. In the Eastern Region in 1958, a pipeline was built to Port Harcourt, from where oil from Oloibiri began to be exported.

The British often artificially built the subordinate position of some peoples in relation to others. Thus, in many «native administrations» in the districts of the Eastern Niger Delta, the sub-ethnic groups Ijo, Nembe and Calabari, performed the functions of «native authorities» for Ogbia, Abua and Odual¹⁷⁹.

U. Ukio believes that the growth of ethnicity was also promoted by one of the duties assigned by the colonial authorities to traditional rulers – to preserve the historical heritage. In this regard, they began to defend their identity from attempts to «steal» it by neighboring groups, to declare those traditions that were characteristic of several groups as their own, and to suspect that the traditions of neighbors are their distorted cultural traditions¹⁸⁰.

The written recording of historical traditions also had a negative impact on ethnic interaction. For example, preparing for the publication of a textbook on the history of the Southern Nigeria by a missionary school teacher, in which Ibibio and Igbo were called «slaves», led to protests from Ibibio and led to the creation of the Ibibio State Union association, which defended the group interests of this ethnic group.

The formation of ethnicity was facilitated by the competitive struggle for material goods between different groups separated by ethnic borders¹⁸¹. As the competition grew, ethnic relations became more tense. The colonial authorities were extremely reluctant to accept local educated graduates of missionary schools into their ranks. And «even in the

¹⁷⁸ Steyn, P. Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria. 1903-1958. URL: <https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/2735/1/Oil%20exploration%20in%20colonial%20Nigeria.pdf>. (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹⁷⁹ Steyn, P. Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria. 1903-1958. URL: <https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/2735/1/Oil%20exploration%20in%20colonial%20Nigeria.pdf>. (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹⁸⁰ Okonta, I. The Coastal-Hinterland Factor in the transformation of ethnic identities in Nigeria's Niger Delta [Electronic resource] // Oxford-Sciences Po. URL: http://oxpo.politics.ox.ac.uk/projects/state_and_ethnic_definition/ukiwo-okonta_paper.pdf (accessed: 12.08.2022).

¹⁸¹ Nnoli, O. The dynamics of ethnic politics in Nigeria // ODU: Journal of West African Studies. 1976. № 14. P. 10-21.

mid-1950s, out of 26 permanent secretaries, 25 were Europeans, among the heads of departments, only one also came from the local population». The bulk of Nigerians employed in the clerical service received less than 100 pounds. On the contrary, European officials, when entering the service in the colonial apparatus, received a salary of at least 450 pounds, which after several years of service increased to 1 thousand pounds. The reason for this policy, according to Z.N. Sokova, was the fear of the spread of nationalist and anti-colonial ideas among graduates of missionary schools¹⁸².

Another explanation is put forward by Fr. Nnoli, he linked the growing shortage of goods in Nigeria with major economic shocks in the Old and New World: the economic crisis in the United States in 1928 and the Second World War.

These events forced Great Britain to reduce spending on government and commercial structures in the colonies since the early 1930s. In the 1950s, realizing their imminent departure, the British «began to show even more indifference to the amount of administrative expenses»¹⁸³.

An additional factor in the growth of interethnic tension was the policy of the colonial authorities towards migrants, which consisted in their isolated settlement, and not in «dissolving» among the indigenous people and their assimilation.

The first bloody interethnic clashes between northerners and southerners occurred in Kano in 1953, when, as a result of an attack on Sabon gari («New City»), 35 people were killed and 251 wounded. Igbo turned out to be the most among the victims¹⁸⁴. However, armed hostility reached a large scale on the eve of the civil war (1967-1971) – these were pogroms of Igbo in the North and retaliatory pogroms of Northerners in Igboland.

¹⁸² Сокова З.Н. Чиновники в системе колониального управления (на примере Западной Африки) // Вестник Тюменского государственного университета. 2001. №4. С. 46.

¹⁸³ Субботин В.А. Великобритания и ее колонии. Тропическая Африка в 1918-1960 гг. М.: Наука. 1992. С. 121.

¹⁸⁴ Nwaka, J.C. Dynamism of Conflict in Kano: Response to a Threatened Identity // Collective Identities, Governance and Empowerment in Megacities. 2008. URL: http://www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/urbanplanet/identities/ws2/017%20Nwaka.pdf (accessed: 12.08.2022).

At the same time, the desire to psychologically adapt to other cities and economic difficulties pushed migrants to communicate with people of the same identity. This led to the emergence and popularization of fraternal unions in the period between 1928 and 1949¹⁸⁵.

The largest among them were Ibibio Social Union (1928) and Ijaw Rivers Union (1930). They performed those social, economic and cultural functions that were not carried out by the state, helped to maintain contact with their native places, provided financial support (for example, the large Igbo Community Association paid monthly shillings and sixpence to its unemployed family members).

In this environment, the participants of the fraternities directed anger at their compatriots from other ethnic groups, with whom they were forced to compete economically. By the 1950s, some local unions had turned into influential pan-ethnic associations, for example, the Igbo Union, the Children of Oduduva, (Yoruba unification), Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa and Jam'iyyar Jama Arewa (hausa unification)¹⁸⁶. They established contacts with regional governments and began receiving financial assistance from them, and also opened their branches in rural areas, through which they relayed the ideas of ethnic nationalism in rural settlements¹⁸⁷.

Unresolved economic, social and interethnic problems pushed the participants of the local unions to formulate political demands that formed the basis of the ideological programs of political parties.

To aid in this thesis, it is beneficial to briefly discuss two effects of British colonial rule. The first concerns the importance of British economic interests, while the second refers to the arbitrary joining of various territories and peoples into one Nigerian colony. While some argue that British rule was the cause of ethnic conflict and violence in post-colonial Nigeria, the focus here is specifically on how these two factors contributed to a

¹⁸⁵ Денисова Т.С. Рабочий класс современной Нигерии. М.: Наука. 1983. С. 76.

¹⁸⁶ Следзевский И.В. Хаусанские эмираты Северной Нигерии. Хозяйство и общественно-политический строй. М.: Наука. 1974. С. 67.

¹⁸⁷ Ukiwo U. On the Study of Ethnicity in Nigeria [Electronic resource] // UK Department for International Development. 2016. URL: <http://www3.qeh.ox.ac.uk/pdf/crisewps/workingpaper12.pdf> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

particular form of ethnically charged political-economic conflict during Nigeria's early years of independence. At different times, British diplomacy either intensified or lessened these conflicts before they ultimately led to civil war. The secession of Biafra directly involved the British government and companies because the crisis intersected with their established political-economic interests¹⁸⁸.

Following the Anglo-French Convention of 1898, Britain's Colonial Office aimed to save money by merging its newly acquired protectorates. One such amalgamation resulted in the creation of the singular Nigerian colony in 1914¹⁸⁹. Its first governor, Lord Lugard, was well-versed in colonial governance and mindful of the economic demands of imperial rule. As he noted in his memoirs, "the partition of Africa was due primarily to the economic necessity of increasing the supplies of raw materials and food to meet the needs of industrial Europe"¹⁹⁰.

The establishment of Nigeria prompted actions to secure a crucial type of raw material - minerals, particularly oil. In January 1914, the colonial administration passed Mineral Oil Ordinance No. 17, which restricted oil prospecting solely to British companies. This allowed a Shell and British Petroleum (BP) consortium to gain an early monopoly on oil exploration, though commercially viable quantities of oil were not discovered in the Niger Delta until 1956, a few years before independence. British colonial rule proved advantageous for other British corporations, such as the United Africa Company (UAC), a subsidiary of Unilever and descendant of the Royal Niger Company. By the time of the civil war, the UAC controlled 41.3% of Nigeria's import and external trade. Nigerian finance was dominated by subsidiaries of major British banks, including Barclays and Lloyds. Overall, Nigeria was Britain's most critical market in "black" Africa¹⁹¹.

¹⁸⁸ Blank, G. Britain, Biafra and the Balance of Payments: The Formation of London's 'One Nigeria' Policy // *Revue française de civilisation britannique*. 2013. Vol. 18. № 2. P. 12-15.

¹⁸⁹ Carland, J. *The Colonial Office and Nigeria, 1898-1914*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1985. P. 130-134.

¹⁹⁰ Lugard, F.D. *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*. London: Frank Cass. 1965. P. 613.

¹⁹¹ Rowell, A., Marriott, J., Stockman, L. *The Next Gulf. London, Washington and Oil Conflict in Nigeria*. London: Constable. 2005. P. 67.

Given the significant economic and geopolitical consequences at stake, British politicians and colonial administrators exercised great caution when it came to the issue of Nigerian independence. They carefully nurtured "individual liberal nationalist leaders" through constitutional reforms and development planning, while also implementing "anti-leftist measures" to suppress Marxists. This approach paid off, as Nigeria emerged as a leader of the moderate faction of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) after gaining independence in 1960, with Nigerian leaders rejecting socialist policies and nationalization measures. Additionally, Nigeria's economic importance grew with the election of the Wilson government in 1964, as the Labour Party looked to Commonwealth trade to address persistent balance of payments issues¹⁹².

However, the British ideal of Nigeria becoming a showcase of Western-style liberal democracy in Africa was quickly shattered. Nigeria's amalgamation in 1914 was intended to unify administrations rather than peoples, as more than 250 ethnic groups were brought together with little consideration for their shared history. Three ethnic groups dominated, with each claiming one of three regions as their power base: the Christian Igbo in the East, the Muslim Hausa/Fulani in the North, and the mixed Muslim/Christian Yoruba in the West. Education, economic, and political inequalities fueled conflict between these regions even during the colonial period, and both the North and West threatened secession before 1960¹⁹³.

The discovery of oil had a significant impact on Nigeria, leading to institutional changes even before independence. The colonial government established a commission in 1958 to suggest changes to revenue allocation, which included discontinuing the practice of returning mining rents and royalties to the regions. This adjustment weakened the powers of the regions in favor of the national government. The competition for control of national revenue became more important than regional revenue strategies.

After independence, Nigeria faced frequent political crises due to struggles between political parties representing the three major ethnic groups. In response, Igbo

¹⁹² Tijani, H.I. *Britain, Leftist Nationalists and the Transfer of Power in Nigeria, 1945-1965*. New York: Routledge, 2006. P. 51-54.

¹⁹³ Bangura, Y. *Britain and Commonwealth Africa*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1983. P. 74. P. 194-195.

officers launched a coup in January 1966 against the Northern-derived leadership, resulting in the rise of Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi. Despite ethnic tensions, the mood throughout the country was one of reformist exaltation, with widespread support for a purge of corrupt politicians and outdated institutions. However, there were concerns that the new regime might stray from Nigeria's moderate path in domestic and international politics and become less cooperative towards expatriate economic interests¹⁹⁴.

Ironsi's ambitious domestic plans ultimately weakened his grip on power, leading him to appoint military governors to the four regions, including Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Ojukwu in the East, and announcing his intention to transform Nigeria into a unitary state. This move was met with opposition from Northern politicians and soldiers, resulting in a 'countercoup' that led to Ironsi's execution and the appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon as the new military leader. Gowon faced pressure to allow Northern secession, but he resolutely defended Nigerian unity against Igbo separatists, exacerbating centrifugal tendencies in the process. The Black Thursday massacre of Igbo shopkeepers and civil servants in the North shattered Igbo confidence in Nigerian unity and gave Ojukwu a popular mandate to seek secession. Despite some regions opposing secession, tensions remained high, and by the winter of 1967, preparations were underway for an Eastern secession¹⁹⁵.

The initial response of London to the Eastern secession, which was declared on 30 May 1967, has been described in different ways as being non-committal, disorganized, and hedging their bets. Two days after the formation of Biafra, George Thomas, the Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, spoke to the Royal Commonwealth Society and refused to take sides in the conflict. On 6 June, the Labour government's first statement on the matter was that they could not recognize the Eastern region at that stage but left open the possibility of doing so in the future. These ambiguous statements may appear to contradict the British government's later public justifications for their policy. If

¹⁹⁴ Nigeria: The New Regime // TNA, DO 221/85, 6, Commonwealth Relations Office. 10 February 1966. P. 2-4.

¹⁹⁵ Circular Telegram From the Department of State to All African Posts // Foreign Relations of the United States. Volume XXIV, 1964-68. 2 August 1966

London was genuinely concerned about Africa's fragmentation, why didn't they denounce the secession from the beginning? If London felt obligated to support the legal Commonwealth government, why didn't they immediately back the FMG? An analysis of primary documents suggests that London's initial policy was never as committed to the FMG during the crisis's early months as later claimed. The non-committal nature of London's response was a result of a debate within the government and civil service about how best to serve British interests, particularly economic interests, during a time of great turmoil and uncertainty. This debate can be divided into four stages: pre-secession deliberations, secession and loyalty demands, the decision to provide arms, and a shift to the "quick kill".

Despite their support for Gowon and a preference for the North, British officials cautioned Nigeria's new leadership early on against taking actions that could worsen secessionist tensions. The British government opposed the Federal government's plan to separate the oil-producing regions of Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers from the predominantly Igbo areas, which aimed to weaken Ojukwu. The British warned that such a move could increase the likelihood of Eastern secession and civil war, and they made it clear that any harm to the British community or interests resulting from arbitrary constitutional changes would strain their relationship with Nigeria. They were even willing to consider breaking with the Federal Government over the importance of Shell-BP oil installations in the East¹⁹⁶.

However, as constitutional negotiations loomed, the Commonwealth Office instructed the British High Commissioner in Lagos to consider British interests in Nigeria, which were based on two main factors: a united Nigeria's role in promoting moderation in African and global affairs, and extensive British commercial interests, particularly in the Delta area's oil installations. While secession was unpalatable, it became clear that Britain's preference for a united Nigeria could clash with its commercial

¹⁹⁶ TNA, PREM 13/1040, Briefing notes for the Prime Minister for his meeting with the Nigerian High Commissioner, Brigadier Ogundipe and Mr. V. A. Adegoye, 28 September 1966. P. 6.

and investment interests. If the Federation couldn't stay together, the British government would have to choose a side¹⁹⁷.

The High Commission cautioned the Commonwealth Office in mid-February 1967 that the UK's interests in the East were vital, and the government should not declare its stance on a possible Eastern secession beforehand. If the East became independent, the UK would want to establish cordial relations without self-imposed limitations. However, as long as the federation remained united, the UK would need to guarantee that British firms, particularly Shell-BP, would comply with all legitimate orders from the FMG and not submit to any Eastern demands for revenue payments or blockades. The Commonwealth Office followed this advice and adopted a "wait and see" approach to Eastern secession, without any sentimental attachment to colonial Nigeria or concerns about African "balkanization".

However, the tone from Lagos changed when David Hunt, a pro-Federal "superhawk," became the new British High Commissioner in late February. Hunt was linked to the Nigerian elite, married to the niece of a Lagos shipping merchant, and had a close relationship with Harold Wilson. Biafran supporters claimed that Hunt was biased against the Igbo and the East, and documents show that his reports compared Ojukwu and the Eastern Government to Hitler and the Nazis. Hunt also warned of Ojukwu's affinity for socialism and the Eastern Bloc and suggested that paranoia was an «Ibo characteristic»¹⁹⁸.

Hunt arrived in Lagos at the same time that Ojukwu threatened to secede on February 25. Ojukwu promised to defend the East by force if necessary and to break away from the Federation by March 31 if the FMG did not follow through with the Aburi agreement. Hunt realized that it was wise to take a "wait and see" approach, given the possibility of secession. He agreed with the Commonwealth Office that Britain should not promise Gowon that it would never acknowledge the breakaway East¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁷ TNA, PREM 13/1040, Briefing notes for the Prime Minister for his meeting with the Nigerian High Commissioner, Brigadier Ogundipe and Mr. V. A. Adegoye, 28 September 1966. P. 8.

¹⁹⁸ Waugh, A., Cronje, S. Biafra: Britain's Shame. London: Joseph. 1969. P. 54.

¹⁹⁹ See Hunt, D. On the Spot: An Ambassador Remembers. London: Peter Davies. 1975. P. 168.

However, Ojukwu only issued a decree seizing federal revenues, causing the FMG to suspend Nigerian Airways flights and cease postal and money-order transactions. Fears were renewed on May 1 when the Western Region's most prominent politician declared that the West would follow the East if it seceded. The Commonwealth Office became anxious, noting that British interests in Nigeria would suffer if the country were to break up. The UK had a trade turnover of over £180 million per year with Nigeria and had invested over £200 million in the Federation, with most of it in oil and in the Eastern Region. The separation of Nigeria would harm business confidence and eliminate the economic advantages of a large single market. Given these competing interests, the Commonwealth Office concluded that the UK should maintain informal contact with the East but wait to recognize it until other influential governments had done so²⁰⁰.

A few days later, the West and General Africa Department (WGAD) of the Commonwealth Office approved arguments presented by the authoritative Overseas Policy and Defense Committee (OPD). The WGAD speculated that if Britain took the lead in recognizing secession, it would face strong criticism in the rest of Africa. However, the WGAD also noted that Britain's most important commercial interests were in the East and recommended delaying a decision. Despite concerns about "balkanization," Britain ultimately recognized the oil-rich, secessionist East²⁰¹.

Shell-BP was also concerned about being caught in the middle of the Federal Military Government and the East, particularly with regard to oil revenues. The company refused to sign any agreement with the FMG that would prevent it from paying to another government or authority. Nevertheless, an agreement was reached before the secession, although it did not resolve the underlying problem²⁰². Shell-BP agreed to consult with the FMG and pay the disputed revenue amount into a special frozen account with their agreement. The OPD approved of this proposal, but there was a significant flaw: no provision was made for a situation in which the FMG refused to allow such a payment. As it turned out, that is exactly what happened.

²⁰⁰ Diamond, S. Who Killed Biafra? // *Dialectical Anthropology*. 2007. Vol. 31. P. 339-362.

²⁰¹ TNA, FCO 25/232, WGAD to Secretary of State, 11 May 1967. P. 61.

²⁰² Stremmlau, J. *The International Politics of the Civil War 1967-70*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 68.

Thus, the main fault lines in the interethnic interaction of large and small ethnic groups in Nigeria were identified during the colonial period. This was facilitated by the implementation of a policy of isolated development of regions, the creation of isolated enclaves of migrating ethnic groups in large cities. An «ethnic pyramid» was built when three ethnic groups were selected at the national level, whose opinions were more taken into account by the colonial authorities, and at the local level in ethnically heterogeneous regions, some peoples were placed in a politically dependent position in relation to others.

In summary, it is clear that the British government favored maintaining a united and stable Nigeria over the potential chaos of multiple radical nationalist successor states. The British officials had worked to establish and maintain this status quo in collaboration with Nigerian elites during the late colonial period up to Gowon's coup. When this status quo became unsustainable due to conflicting interests among the elites, the UK government prioritized protecting its economic interests, particularly its investments in Shell-BP and the flow of oil from the Niger Delta. Despite rhetoric about Commonwealth obligations, the UK was open to recognizing an independent Eastern government if it proved viable, and it adopted a wait-and-see policy in light of the macroeconomic significance of oil. However, Gowon's decision to impose a blockade on Eastern oil ended this policy, and the UK government provided arms to Lagos to ensure the defeat of Biafra and protect Shell-BP oil installations. While not everyone endorsed the One Nigeria policy, the British government's primary concern remained protecting its economic interests. George Thomas's proposal for a peace offensive in September was the last attempt to achieve a compromise that would serve British economic interests while accommodating the interests of Lagos and Enugu.

2.3 The key foreign actors in the Nigerian civil war

The civil war in Nigeria has become a conflict that has attracted the attention of the international community. As noted in the first chapter, involvement in an internal conflict can occur through the efforts of both States and international and non-governmental organizations. In addition to the great Powers that were responsible for the stability of the international system after World War II, other actors were involved in this conflict. In

this paragraph, the author will consider the role of the universal international organization of the United Nations, and the regional international organization of the Organization of African Unity. The author will also describe the role of superpowers and great powers in this conflict. The paragraph will also consider the activities of non-State actors.

The United Kingdom being the former colonial power, Whitehall had usually supplied the Nigerian federal army with weaponry. Even so, Her Majesty's Government (HMG) initially wavered in its decision about which side to support, leading the federal government of Nigeria to turn to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union's involvement in the Nigerian Civil War baffled contemporary observers, including Moscow's Cold War rivals. As noted by a number of scholars of Soviet foreign policy in Africa, the first post-independence decade (1957–67) had provided no indication of the coming alliance. In fact, in Nigeria of all places, early Soviet advances had been met with a distinctively cold-shouldered response. During the period of the First Republic (1960–66), the administration of Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa kept the Soviets at bay, forging close ties with Nigeria's 'traditional' partners in the West, particularly their former British colonial masters²⁰³. From Moscow's point of view, when it came to Soviet relations with independent Africa, the 1960s was a period of high but eventually dashed hopes. Under Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviets exerted considerable efforts courting the newly independent African states. Whereas Stalin and his ideologues had harboured deep suspicion of African nationalists like Kwame Nkrumah or Jomo Kenyatta, Khrushchev was confident of Africa's eventual 'progressive' choice, pushing robustly for the expansion of diplomatic ties on the continent²⁰⁴. In 1960–61, the Soviet Union founded two important institutions whose very creation reflected Khrushchev's growing optimism: the Institute for African Studies and the People's Friendship University, named after the martyred Congolese nationalist Patrice Lumumba. The Institute for African Studies would eventually emerge as a flagship institution formulating and overseeing

²⁰³ Matusevich, M. *No easy row for a Russian hoe: Ideology and pragmatism in Nigerian-Soviet relations, 1960–1991*. Trenton: Africa World Press. 2003. P. 302.

²⁰⁴ Free, L. *The attitudes, hopes and fears of Nigerians*. Princeton: Institute for International Social Research. 1964. P. 43.

Soviet policy in Africa, while Lumumba University drew thousands of third world students (including many thousands Africans) to study in the USSR²⁰⁵.

Nigeria was one of the most consistently anti-Soviet and pro-Western countries in sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1960s. The influence of the USSR in this region was not strong enough, so it took two years of hard work to establish diplomatic relations. Before independence, Nigeria received more Soviet attention than any other West African state, but later the USSR criticized the federal constitution and the power of the northern elements. Nevertheless, the USSR would have liked to establish closer ties, but Nigeria refused offers of Soviet political and economic contacts. The government was completely pro-British, as Chief Anthony Enahoro said: «We are Western and capitalist in our worldview»²⁰⁶. In the beginning, Nigerian foreign policy as a whole was pragmatic, conciliatory, pro-Western and pro-United Nations. The defense pact with Great Britain in 1960 and Nigeria's policy towards the Congo particularly irritated the USSR. Communist literature was banned and no Nigerian student was allowed to study in Moscow. Even after the establishment of diplomatic relations, Nigeria limited the size of the Soviet mission and was reluctant to accept assistance. Finally, after 1964, the USSR entered the Nigerian market with a turnover of \$ 4.6 million. Nevertheless, relations at this stage remained cautious and cool.

USSR reacted cautiously to the series of political crises which plagued Nigeria during its first years of independence. In 1964 the country was on the verge of anarchy and disintegration as result of the violence accompanying the elections. After the obvious rigging of the 1965 elections, alienation from the government reached its peak. However, the USSR continued to maintain its limited contacts and encourage the development of a neutralist foreign policy. Even at this early stage, support for existing political mechanisms and recognition of the unpredictability of radical groups defined Soviet relations with Nigeria.

²⁰⁵ Мазов С.В. Африканские студенты в Москве в Год Африки (по архивным материалам) // Восток. 1999. №. 3. P. 91–93.

²⁰⁶ Allison, G.T. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1971. P. 54.

Given the strained relationship between the Tafawa Balewa administration and the Soviet Union, it was not surprising that Moscow reacted positively to the January 1966 military coup that ousted Balewa from power. Soviet commentary on the event criticized the failures of the First Republic, including its dependence on Western monopolies and lack of progress in social and economic reforms. Pravda published an article stating, "The success of the coup has demonstrated the precariousness and unpopularity of the former regime, which had been portrayed by Western propaganda as a 'model democracy' and 'governmental wisdom' for the rest of Africa." Additionally, Radio Moscow declared, "The shop window of the West has been shattered". The Soviets anticipated that General Ironsi, the new head of state, would adopt a different, more progressive approach to Nigeria's foreign affairs than his predecessor, who they considered "reactionary." They believed that such a change would create a foundation for further development and strengthen Nigeria's independence²⁰⁷.

Alas, the Ironsi regime failed to live up to these expectations and before long the Soviet official commentary returned to its earlier pessimistic assessments of Nigeria²⁰⁸. In the aftermath of the January coup General Ironsi banned all political parties, including the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party (SWAFP), which Moscow viewed as progressive. Furthermore, the new regime sought to isolate (and even imprison) the younger, more radical officers involved in the original coup, while upholding its traditional ties with the West and confirming its business commitments to foreign concerns. The new government also emphasized its principled opposition to nationalization—a source of particular irritation for the Soviets who had hoped for a clean break with the past. Soon enough Moscow began to voice its growing concern about Nigeria's 'progressive choice': Very little has changed in the country in recent months. The state machinery, though slightly reduced, is still in the hands of those who served the old regime and the foreign monopolies. What is more, the government has made it clear that it will encourage foreign capital in Nigeria.... And the people are hardly to be satisfied

²⁰⁷ Ibid. P. 212.

²⁰⁸ Matusevich M. No easy row for a Russian hoe: Ideology and pragmatism in Nigerian-Soviet relations, 1960-1991. Africa World Press, 2003. P. 197.

with half measures. They just insist on rejecting the past in all forms and manifestations²⁰⁹.

Disillusionment likely accounted for the Soviets' ready acquiescence to the second coup, in July 1966, even though it was executed by a group of Northern officers who represented the interests of the 'feudal North', in the past routinely decried by the Soviet propaganda. Moscow was clearly looking for any signs of another reversal and apparently found such ray of hope when the new rulers released from prison a prominent Yoruba politician, Obafemi Awolowo, who (prior to being jailed for seven years by the Balewa administration) had gained some standing with the Soviet Union during the First Republic²¹⁰. Subsequently, the Soviet commentary warmed up considerably to the new Nigerian leader, the 32-year-old Yakubu Gowon, who was now being complimented on his alleged sensitivity to the problems of ethnicity and a sensible approach to the increasingly combustible situation in the north of the country. Soviet observers of the Nigerian scene were clearly channeling the official line when they argued for the preservation of the federation and suggested that it could serve as a basis for progressive socio-economic reforms. The Soviets did reflect on the terrifying plight of the Ibos in the North, but seemed to believe (or at least intimated so in their official pronouncements) that their safety could be guaranteed under the unitary arrangement. And as usual, the ultimate rationalization came from the standard appeals to (imagined) class solidarity: Nigeria is one country and the successful solution to the problem lies not in a greater or lesser autonomy for her regions but in the uniting of all progressive forces on a basis of wholly national interests in the struggle for a better life for the working masses in all regions and all nationalities in the country²¹¹.

As the likelihood of Eastern secession grew through late 1966 and the early part of 1967, the Gowon administration took note of Moscow's friendly neutrality. His primary focus still remained on the traditional Western partners whom he approached on

²⁰⁹ Политические партии Африки / [Ред. коллегия: В. Г. Солодовников (отв. ред.) и др.]. АН СССР. Ин-т Африки. М.: Наука, 1970. С. 328.

²¹⁰ Политические партии Африки / [Ред. коллегия: В. Г. Солодовников (отв. ред.) и др.]. АН СССР. Ин-т Африки. М.: Наука, 1970. С. 330.

²¹¹ Korshunov, Y. Reports from Nigeria // *Za Rubezhom* (Moscow). No. 24. 9–15 June 1967. P. 48.

numerous occasions pushing for commitments of military assistance in case of the war erupting in the East. Both the British and the Americans expressed their support for the unity of Nigeria but, to Gowon's great frustration, treaded carefully and unequivocally rebuffed his repeated requests for troops, tactical aircraft and a naval presence²¹². Frustrated with the West's intransigence and clearly aiming to play on the usual Cold War apprehensions, Gowon hinted at the possibility of going to 'other sources'—a threat that neither Americans nor the British apparently took too seriously, at least not seriously enough to modify their non-committal stances vis-à-vis the Biafran secession, which did materialize on 30 May 1967.

The Soviet decision to support the federalist side in the Nigerian Civil War marked a decisive departure from Moscow's previous ideology driven commitments in the Third World and particularly in Africa. Burned by a string of fiascos in West and North Africa (Guinea, Ghana, Mali and Algeria) the Soviets came to reassess the utility of ideology in their African engagements. In the 1960s, the USSR suffered a fiasco in its policy in West and North Africa, when it tried to establish its influence in these regions. In Guinea, which became the first colony in Africa to gain independence, the USSR was unable to establish friendly relations with the new government and lost its economic and cultural ties. In Ghana, Mali and Algeria, the USSR also failed to gain significant influence, which led to a loss of prestige among the national liberation movements in Africa and a further decline in its international status. By throwing their weight behind a side whose leadership had exactly zero interest in «socialist orientation», the Soviets effectively accepted the primacy of pragmatic geopolitics over ideology. The Biafran War was indeed a Cold War conflict but of a very peculiar kind, with alliances forged and maintained across the usual ideological divides: surprisingly, Moscow, London and Washington found themselves supporting (although with widely different degrees of enthusiasm) the same faction in the war, betting, as it were, on the federalists' superior numbers and resources. From the Soviet point of view, this was a winning bet. Even though the wartime Western fears

²¹² Memorandum from Edward Hamilton of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Rostow)', Foreign relations of the United States, 1964– 1968. Vol. 24. Africa, Document 387. Washington. 31 May 1967. URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d387> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

(stoked by Biafran propaganda) of the Soviet Union's ascendancy in West Africa would prove to be largely unfounded, the Soviets did increase their visibility and influence in a region formerly closed to them.

London in its fear of losing influence in Nigeria began to dispatch arms deliveries too. Initially, after Ojukwu had declared Biafran independence, the Wilson government adopted a 'neutral' position, though it continued to fill the Nigerian government's orders for supplies of arms²¹³. But British support for the FMG soon became clear, reflecting an understanding of its national interests. Those interests were economic in the first place: 'secession would threaten the security of the 3,500 subjects in the Eastern region and put investments at risk, especially in the oil industry'²¹⁴. Shell-British Petroleum was a major investor in Nigeria, and over a tenth of British oil imports came from Nigeria. When the Six-Day War broke out in the Middle East in June 1967, the importance of securing oil imports from Nigeria was reinforced. Second, the British feared the implications of the breakup of states in Africa: 'if the principle of secession on a tribal basis were once accepted there would be chaos on the [African] continent'. Third, there were 'geopolitical concerns'. Nigeria was potentially a major power in Africa; a breakup of the federation would reduce such power – and allow France and its francophone allies in the region to exercise more influence. The UK also needed to balance Soviet support for the FMG (the Soviets were also selling arms to it)²¹⁵.

Arms sales were justified by the government because it was «undoubtedly right to help an ex-colony and fellow Commonwealth country when it faced secession ... to change our policy now when both sides have reached virtually irreconcilable positions, would have a catastrophic effect on our relations with the Federal Government and would put our interests in Nigeria in jeopardy»²¹⁶.

²¹³ Young, J.W. *The Labour governments 1964–70* . Vol. 2: International policy. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2003. P. 200.

²¹⁴ Young, J.W. *The Labour governments 1964–70* . Vol. 2: International policy. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2003. P. 198.

²¹⁵ Young, J.W. *The Labour governments 1964–70* . Vol. 2: International policy. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2003. P. 201.

²¹⁶ Young, J.W. *The Labour governments 1964–70* . Vol. 2: International policy. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2003. P. 199.

In August 1968, in Parliament, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, George Thomson, publicly defended arms sales in this way: Our supplies have amounted to «about 15 % by value of Nigeria's total arms purchases ... [I]f we were to cut off our supply of defense equipment unilaterally ... we would, I believe, lose our capacity to influence the Federal Government»²¹⁷.

The 15 % figure was inaccurate: the UK had supplied most Nigerian arms imports in 1963, less than 40 % in 1964–66, but almost half in 1967. It was revealed after the war that British arms imports amounted to considerably more than that during the war itself: British supplies made up 79.19 % of Nigerian imports in 1968 and an astonishing 97.36 % in 1969²¹⁸. It would have damaged the FMG's war effort had the UK cut off arms supplies, and almost certainly led the FMG to acquire supplies from the USSR: this made the issue of a British arms embargo on Nigeria such a potent one. In comparison, at the start of the conflict, the US had refused to supply arms to either side (arguably an easier decision than that facing the UK, given that the US had not been a major arms supplier to Nigeria)²¹⁹, in June 1968 France and the Netherlands announced an arms embargo on Nigeria (though within two months the French government was supplying arms to Biafra) and a month later Belgium did so²²⁰.

The French government officially declared its support for the separatist province of Biafra on 31 July 1968, fourteen months after the outset of the Nigerian Civil War. A Foreign Ministry communiqué stated that «the current conflict must be resolved on the basis of the right of self-determination»²²¹. In a speech to the National Assembly on 2 October 1968, French Foreign Minister Michel Debré stated that the war in Biafra was a «kind of genocide», with «thousands of children being evacuated in physical conditions

²¹⁷ House of Commons, Sitting of 27 August 1968, Hansard, volume 769, col. 1447. P. 4.

²¹⁸ Cronje, S. *The world and Nigeria: The diplomatic history of the Biafran war, 1967–1970*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson. 1972. P. 54.

²¹⁹ Information Memorandum from the Western Africa Country Director, Bureau of African Affairs (Melbourne) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Affairs (Palmer), 18 April 1968, Department of State, Central Files, POL 1 NIGERIA-US, in *Foreign relations of the United States, 1964–1968*, Vol. 24, document 396.

²²⁰ Stremlau, J.J. *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970*. NY: Princeton University Press. 2016. P. 297.

²²¹ Bach, D. *Le Général de Gaulle et la guerre civile au Nigeria // Canadian Journal of African Studies*. 1980. Vol. 14. No. 2. P. 261.

that makes one think of the worst horrors of the last world war»²²². France, however, categorically refused to officially recognize Biafra, a possibility President Charles de Gaulle ruled out as early as 14 December 1967²²³. At the same time it was well known that France was supporting Biafran leader General Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu with covert military aid throughout the war, including mercenaries and weapons²²⁴.

After the «official» decision for limited French support for Biafra on 27 September 1967, French intervention took two forms. First, the mercenary networks that had fought in Katanga were reactivated. Foccart refused to discuss the mercenary operations in his journals and interviews, and said only that the mercenaries were handled by the French ambassador to Gabon, Maurice Delaunay²²⁵. It appears that the Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage (SDECE) took responsibility for French mercenary recruitment for Biafra and was at least partially behind the abortive operation to retake Calabar on the Cross River in December 1967. The French mercenary experience in Biafra was no more successful than in Katanga, and member of the European Parliament Raymond Offroy, following an official visit to Ojukwu in February 1969, stated: «It was thus possible for us to say that the mercenary aid played no role at all in the resistance of Ojukwu's army»²²⁶.

The primary aspect of French military aid to Biafra was the delivery of weapons. Biafra was experiencing significant shortages not only in heavy weaponry, but also in small arms and ammunition. Portugal and Czechoslovakia also provided weapons to Biafra, but Czechoslovakia ceased doing so after being invaded by the Soviet Union in

²²² Déclaration du gouvernement sur la politique étrangère. Speech by Michel Debré at the French National Assembly. 2 October 1968. URL: www.assembleenationale.fr/histoire/michel-debre/discours/02101968.asp (accessed: 12.08.2022).

²²³ Foccart, J. *Tous les soirs avec de Gaulle: journal de l'Élysée I, 1965–1967*. Paris: Fayard/Jeune Afrique. 1997. P. 787.

²²⁴ Diamond, S. *Who killed Biafra?* London: Britain-Biafra Association. 1970. P. 67.

²²⁵ Foccart, J. *Foccart parle—I—entretiens avec Philippe Gaillard*. Paris: Fayard/Jeune Afrique, 1997. P. 268–269, 274–279.

²²⁶ Offroy, R. *Quand le cœur a raison*. Paris: Pensée Universelle. 1972. P. 64.

1968²²⁷. To acquire arms directly from European dealers, the Biafrans established an office in Paris called the "Biafran Historical Research Centre"²²⁸.

On either October 17th or 18th, 1967, De Gaulle decided to initiate routine French arms shipments to Biafra. He was initially hesitant to send weapons from French stockpiles, and only relented after Foccart proposed using captured German and Italian weapons from World War II with the serial numbers erased. To give the impression that France was restocking the Ivory Coast's arsenal as specified in their usual military aid agreements, the weapons were not delivered directly to Ojukwu, but instead passed through the President of Ivory Coast, a French henchman Houphouët-Boigny. The first French weapons arrived in Libreville, Gabon on November 8th, 1967, for onward shipment to Biafra. The French arms sent to Ojukwu were always limited in quantity²²⁹.

While in retrospect the French commitment to Biafra may have seemed extensive, it was in fact very limited. Other than SDECE advisors and mercenaries, France was never directly involved in the war, and most importantly, did not jeopardize its relations with the UK. The arms shipments and mercenaries, while expensive, were nowhere near as costly in lives or credits as direct military intervention. Had Biafra won, France would have Ojukwu's greatest friend and ally, but when Biafra lost, France had very little to lose, and was able to extract itself relatively easily from the situation and restore relations with Nigeria. France did make one final gesture toward Biafra, however, which was to help protect Ojukwu from Nigerian efforts to extradite him during his prolonged exile after the war²³⁰.

The US and the UK had a shared goal of keeping Nigeria aligned with the West during the Cold War, but initially, the US was content to let the UK take the lead in providing military assistance to Nigeria. However, when Nigeria started seeking military aid from other countries and showed signs of vulnerability to communist influence, the

²²⁷ Diamond, S. *Who killed Biafra?* London: Britain-Biafra Association. 1970. P. 71.

²²⁸ Guisnel, J. *Derrière la guerre du Biafra, la France* in Roger Faligot and Jean Guisnel (eds.), *Histoire secrète du Ve République*. Paris: La Découverte Poche. 2007. P. 149.

²²⁹ Guisnel, J. *Derrière la guerre du Biafra, la France* in Roger Faligot and Jean Guisnel (eds.), *Histoire secrète du Ve République*. Paris: La Découverte Poche. 2007. P. 151-152.

²³⁰ Achebe, C. *There was a country: A personal history of Biafra*. London: Allen Lane. 2012. P. 39.

US decided to get involved. Despite this, the US preferred to focus on development aid rather than military aid to avoid escalating the Cold War in Africa. The US only provided military aid to key security partners, like Ethiopia, and even then, its involvement in Africa remained limited compared to other regions²³¹.

Nigerian policy-makers played a crucial role in determining the extent of US military assistance in the country. The Nigerians' pursuit of alternative sources of military aid opened the door for the Americans to enter the Nigerian defence market. However, the Nigerians were cautious about accepting visible American military aid due to their proclaimed non-aligned foreign policy, domestic opposition, and fear of compromising their position in the Cold War and African affairs. Furthermore, Nigerian agency was important in shaping the country's security affairs, as demonstrated by the January 1966 coup that brought Major General Ironsi to power, who favoured a more significant British role in Nigerian security affairs. The Americans seized this opportunity to abandon their plans and hoped the Nigerians would turn to the British. Even after Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon took power following another coup later that year, the American position remained unchanged. During the Nigerian Civil War, the Johnson and Nixon administrations imposed an arms embargo on both sides and left it to Britain to safeguard Western interests in Lagos.

In the first decade of African independence, the US was hesitant to become heavily involved in Africa, preferring to rely on former colonial powers to prevent communist advances. Paris (above all) and London played a significant role in post-colonial African security. However, external powers' influence was dependent on local developments and the collaboration of local elites, making Africa's Cold War heavily influenced by regional, local, and post-colonial factors²³².

In the United States, significant pressures were mounted on the Nixon administration to do something about the situation in Biafra. This period also marked a significant shift in the U.S. humanitarian approach in comparison to its official diplomatic

²³¹ Schmidt, E. *Foreign intervention in Africa: from the Cold War to the War on Terror*. NY. 2013. P. 56.

²³² Shepard, R.B. *Nigeria, Africa, and the United States: from Kennedy to Reagan*. Bloomington. 1991. P. 22.

stance. President Richard Nixon had just been sworn in as the thirty-seventh president of the United States in January 1969 after a contentious election where he defeated Democratic incumbent vice president Hubert Humphrey who became the Democratic party's candidate once President Lyndon B. Johnson declined to run for office.

In 1968 while campaigning for president, Nixon had publicly called for the United States to intervene in the Nigerian civil war he described as a genocide²³³. Nixon was concerned, as were many in the United States, about the atrocities being reported in the news media regarding the war in the West African nation. Nixon's position as a candidate was confronted by the reality of the situation on the ground once he took office. The competing domestic and global issues vying for his attention were difficult to ignore. The nation was still reeling from the aftermath of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, the Vietnam War was still unpopular, and Europe was embroiled in the Prague Spring.

Under President Johnson, the United States maintained a diplomatic position of neutrality on the question of Biafra, by stressing that it is an internal African affair and the Organization of African Union should be the best party to mediate this domestic conflict.

Lyndon Johnson's administration «could do little but support relief efforts led by the Red Cross, Joint Church Aid and Caritas». Walt Rostow, Johnson's National Security Advisor, summed up the administration's effort by saying 'we are doing everything we can, which is very little.' Nixon's statement, coming from a candidate that most believed would win the election in November, gave hope to many on the Biafran side that a new American administration would take a more active role in helping the beleaguered secessionists»²³⁴.

In a diplomatic cable sent on January 11, 1969, in response to certain charges leveled against the United States Government (USG) by the Federal Military Government

²³³ Doron, R. Foreign Policy from Candidate to President: Richard Nixon and the Lesson of Biafra // Not Even Past. 2016. URL: <https://notevenpast.org/foreign-policy-from-candidate-to-president-richard-nixon-and-the-lesson-of-biafra/> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

²³⁴ Obiozor, G.A. The United States and the Nigerian Civil War: An American Dilemma in Africa, 1966–1970 // Nigerian Institute of International Affairs. 1993. P. 77.

of Nigeria, the U.S. Department of State sought to address these charges by articulating the overarching foreign policy position of the United States Government on the question of Nigeria and the raging civil war²³⁵.

Throughout more than eight years of direct relations between Nigeria and the US, USG has consistently supported the concept of Nigerian unity. As is known within FMG, USG tried in critical months of April and May 1967 to persuade the then military governor of Eastern Region and his associates to seek a peaceful solution of their differences with the rest of the country within the framework of one Nigeria. USG deplored secession when it came, has since given neither encouragement nor support to secessionists, and continues to desire a peaceful settlement of the Nigerian crisis negotiated by Nigerians themselves in the context of single Nigeria²³⁶.

In the same document, the United States Government stressed its moral obligation to provide humanitarian support which is consistent with the deeply rooted humanitarian tradition of the United States.

This basic policy of USG in respect of the Nigerian crisis has since the outbreak of civil war been paralleled by another policy, deeply rooted in American tradition, of assisting civilian victims of warfare, a commonly accepted obligation of all nations. USG has accordingly since early 1968 provided assistance in various forms to the Nigerian National Rehabilitation Commission, Nigerian Red Cross, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and private voluntary relief agencies for the relief of civilian victims of Nigerian civil war wherever located.

This “parallel policy” will continue to shape the United States precarious diplomatic engagement with Nigeria and Biafra until the end of the war and will become a singular focus during the reconstruction phase. On the one hand, the United States wants to maintain official diplomatic ties to FMG, while at the same time keeping the doors open for humanitarian support of the Biafra cause. This careful balance is necessary to

²³⁵ Kirk-Green, H.M. *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Sourcebook*. L.: Oxford University Press. 1971. P. 102.

²³⁶ Telegram 5133 from the Department of State to the Embassy in Nigeria // U.S. Department of State. 11 January 1969. URL: <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e5/55256.htm> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

maintain the U.S. economic interest and geopolitical influence in the region, in the wake of the Cold War and what the United States Government perceived to be the growing threat of communism in Africa.

President Nixon upon taking office asked Henry Kissinger, his national security adviser, to undertake a study of the Nigerian relief problem. Kissinger, who has been described as the “right man in the right place at the right time”²³⁷ for his surprising rise to prominence and his remarkable ability to network, did not disappoint. The report, which was articulated in a memorandum on January 28, 1969, provided a rather interesting background to the Nigerian civil war with an astute analysis of the sociopolitical situation in Nigeria. It also shed some light on the interplay of food and politics in the Nigerian conflict, and how the U.S. diplomatic stance has gradually shifted sympathetically toward Biafra to significantly consider relief effort carried out through surrogate international aid organizations.

This report provides perhaps the single most helpful commentary about the true concerns of the United States Government regarding Biafra and some of the justification for the United States neutral diplomatic position on the Nigerian conflict. There were valid concerns about rupturing the relationship with the Nigerian federal government, especially with the increasing xenophobic tenor in Nigeria. Concerns also exist about the diminished role of the British government as an impartial broker of peace and USSR’s interest in supplying arms to the Federal Government of Nigeria. However, there was a recognition that the urgent problem by far was figuring out how to get enough food rations to the starving Biafran civilians.

As noted by D. Kissinger in a letter to the US President «the pressure has been intense; it is bound to grow. Senator Kennedy is now all but calling for an independent Biafra. The public campaign is well-financed and organized—an amalgam in part of

²³⁷ Ferguson, N. The Secret to Henry Kissinger’s Success // Politico Magazine. 20 January 2018. URL: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/20/henry-kissinger-networking-216482> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

genuine concern and left-wing guilt feelings over Vietnam. The same people who picket on our “interference” in Asia also demand we force-feed the starving Nigerians»²³⁸.

Furthermore, the efforts of American civil organizations that provided aid and information to the Biafran rebels should also be acknowledged. Specifically, the American Committee criticized the UN's lack of action in the Nigerian Civil War, arguing that the UN had a responsibility to act due to the genocide being committed against the Igbo people in the secessionist state of Biafra by the Federal Military Government of Nigeria²³⁹. Images of malnourished Biafran women and children had vividly illustrated the tragedy to the American public and stirred the world's conscience. Many of the over 200 ad hoc humanitarian organizations in the US that emerged in response to the famine did not explicitly use the term genocide, but some invoked it to gain support for their efforts to pressure the US government to intervene in Biafra. However, the American Committee to Keep Biafra Alive was the most outspoken organization in the US to claim genocide, using advertising campaigns, political connections, and fundraising to inform the public about the Nigerian Civil War and shape the discourse on the issue of genocide²⁴⁰. The Committee's actions helped to mobilize public support for humanitarian intervention in Biafra and ultimately resulted in a significant change in American foreign policy, which increased humanitarian aid during the Nigerian Civil War.

Although the ad hoc organization played a crucial role in shaping American policy towards the Biafra war, there has been no analysis of the committee's changing stance on genocide, self-determination, and the formation of a separate Biafran state. As the committee members realized that the US government would not violate Nigerian sovereignty for humanitarian purposes, they shifted their focus from advocating for apolitical humanitarianism to calling for political recognition of Biafra²⁴¹. This change in

²³⁸ Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon // U.S. Department of State. 28 January 1969. URL: <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e5/54884.htm> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

²³⁹ Nigeria's civil war: Hate, hunger, and the will to survive // Time. 23 August 1968. P. 20–26.

²⁴⁰ Keck, M.E., Sikkink, K. *Activists beyond borders: Advocacy networks in international politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1998. P. 56.

²⁴¹ Sargent, D.J. *A superpower transformed: The remaking of American foreign relations in the 1970s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. P. 87.

approach also led to a redefinition of genocide by the committee, from the extermination of a group of people to the destruction of a nation-state. By tying the Biafran people to the idea of a nation, activists within the American Committee to Keep Biafra Alive argued that the Nigerian government's prosecution of the war constituted genocide, and that the actual elimination of Biafrans was just one aspect of that definition.

The American Committee viewed the policy of supporting the federalist government as unwise and unethical. Since no humanitarian aid was forthcoming, the committee declared that "humanitarian and political goals are inseparable in the case of Biafra" and concluded that the only way to end genocide in Eastern Nigeria was for the Biafrans to have control over their own sovereign state. After the October 1968, the American Committee officially changed its approach to the Biafran genocide. In a pamphlet on relief efforts, committee member Miriam M. Reik acknowledged that the group had been "naive in our purely humanitarian approach and our hoping for a solution in a relief operation." Since governments were unwilling to intervene and infringe on Nigerian sovereignty to stop the genocide, the American Committee to Keep Biafra Alive determined that "the only viable solution was the establishment of a sovereign political entity - a Biafra that could safeguard its own national interests without foreign intervention and protect its own people from the hostility of neighboring populations"²⁴².

In retrospect, the hopes of the American Committee to Keep Biafra Alive for American-led intervention and recognition of Biafra were unrealistic, as it would have contradicted American foreign policy and endangered its alliance with Great Britain, a key Cold War ally. Additionally, most African nations supported the Nigerian government's fight for unity, making it difficult for the United States to support a secessionist movement in Africa. International organizations, such as the ICRC and UN, played a limited role in the civil war due to the dominance of state actors. Despite the UN's establishment of a human rights regime after WWII, it failed to respond to accusations of genocide in Biafra and even helped legitimize the Nigerian government's

²⁴² Davis, M. *Interpreters for Nigeria: The third world and international public relations*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1977. P. 103.

claim that no genocide was taking place²⁴³. This raises questions about the effectiveness of international organizations in humanitarian crises during civil wars.

In the summer of 1968, the British government faced harsh criticism domestically for supporting Nigeria²⁴⁴. To prove that there was no genocide occurring, the British suggested that international observers be invited. The foreign office proposed the ICRC, but due to tensions with the federal government, observers from Canada, Poland, Sweden, and the UK were ultimately invited²⁴⁵. The UN had not previously intervened in the conflict as member states considered it to be an internal matter. However, due to concerns about famine and UNICEF's advocacy, the UN called for cooperation in providing relief to victims. As a result, UN Secretary General U Thant sent Personal Representative Nils-Göran Gussing to Nigeria on humanitarian activities. When the Nigerian government proposed sending UN observers, U Thant chose Gussing to ensure objectivity and independence in the mission²⁴⁶.

In 1968, the British government faced criticism for supporting Nigeria, so they suggested that international observers be invited to verify that no genocide was occurring. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was initially considered the best option, but tensions between the federal government and ICRC prevented this. Observers from Canada, Poland, Sweden, and the UK were invited instead, with the OAU and the UN also participating²⁴⁷. The UN initially stayed neutral but eventually called for cooperation to provide relief to victims²⁴⁸. U Thant then sent Nils-Göran Gussing to Lagos to facilitate negotiations for relief to Biafra, and when the Nigerian government proposed a UN observer, Gussing was chosen to ensure objectivity and independence.

This chapter has clearly reviewed the internationalization of civil war. The example of countries involved in the internationalization of civil conflicts from a historical

²⁴³ Smith, K.E. *Genocide and the Europeans*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2010. P. 73-78.

²⁴⁴ Commonwealth Office, Memo 'Observers', UK National Archives [hereafter UKNA], FCO 38/225.

²⁴⁵ Stremlau, J.J. *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970*. NY: Princeton University Press. 2016. P. 82-106.

²⁴⁶ Cable from secretary-general to Sadruddin Agha Khan, 29 July 1968. United Nations Archives [hereafter UNA], S 0303-0005-04.

²⁴⁷ Outgoing code cable, from secretary-general to Gussing, 29 August 1968, UNA, S 0303-0005-04.

²⁴⁸ Second interim report by representative of secretary-general to Nigeria on humanitarian activities, 30 October 1968, UNA, S-0884-0014-11.

perspective were identified. The chapter also discusses the precursors of the internationalization of the civil war as well as the major key players of the Nigerian civil war. The USSR and Great Britain, the United States, France and international organizations (the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva (ICRC)) are considered as examples of such.

CHAPTER 3. THE ROLE OF USSR & GREAT BRITAIN IN THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR

As it was emphasized in the second chapter, the civil war in a country like Nigeria attracted the attention of third countries. During the conflict, both the then Federal Military Government of Nigeria and the Biafran regime had the desire to secure diplomatic support as well as military assistance from both the West and the East. This desire coupled with other reasons attracted many countries to declare support and assistance to either the Government of Nigeria or the Biafran regime. The “great powers” sided with opposing parties. External players pursued a number of their own interests, however, the intervention of Great Britain and the USSR deserves the most attention. Great Britain was the former metropolis of Nigeria and retained its influence on the politics of this country due to structural economic and political constraints due to the interconnectedness with British monopolistic capital. The Soviet Union was a significant player who promoted the ambitious goal of destroying colonial influence and supporting national liberation movements. The focus of this chapter is to examine the Great Britain and the Soviet Union’s involvement into the conflict taking into cognizance the diplomatic dimension, military assistance, as well as the humanitarian assistance of both nations.

3.1. The role of the USSR in the involvement of the Nigerian Civil War

When Colonel Ojukwu announced Biafra's secession in 1967, the USSR was unwilling to become involved in another African crisis. Disillusionment with «progressive» states and an awareness that its prestige in Africa had plummeted due to failures in the countries of western and North Africa, where the USSR could not establish its influence, made Moscow cautious. Favorable results were now more important than increased contacts. Yet two and a half years later, USSR's popularity in Nigeria had risen sharply and its conduct during the war had increased its prestige with other African states. Moscow's involvement in the civil war represents a revived Soviet interest in Africa. USSR had five options at the beginning of the civil war. The first option was to remain neutral and give aid to neither side. Moscow's prior involvement in Nigeria was small,

and the civil war was not yet internationalized. Soviet Union had avoided adopting any definite ideological stand on the Nigerian crisis and there was no imperative to take sides, allowing the maximum possible flexibility.

Secondly, the USSR could have given FMG verbal support only. There was also a third alternative - to give material aid to Major-General Yakubu Gowon. The fourth option was that Moscow could have given verbal or, fifth, material support to Biafra by the time the war broke out. The first three options were the only realistic ones, but a position of neutrality would have been entirely possible.

The USSR could not support Biafra as a result of its geopolitical strategy in Africa and the principles of international relations. The USSR supported the concept of "non-infringement of the sovereignty of states", therefore it could not recognize Biafra as an independent state, since this contradicted the principle of the territorial integrity of Nigeria, recognized by the international community. Moreover, the USSR believed that the support of Biafra could lead to the destruction of Nigeria, which was a key player in West Africa and was of strategic importance for Soviet policy in the region.

Moscow hailed the Ironsi coup as «a blow for Britain»²⁴⁹, but it was clearly perplexed. The coup could have created a good springboard for the development of socialist ideology among the masses dissatisfied with colonial rule, but it did not inspire confidence in the stability of the country. Russia's priorities were clearly emerging at this stage: past experience seemed to indicate that a stable government with which it could have profitable relations was more desirable than a potentially more volatile radical state.

USSR did not protest when Ironsi dissolved the parties, including the Nigerian Socialist Workers' and Farmers' Party. This was a Soviet-oriented party founded in Lagos in 1963. Ironsi's power began to decrease and it became clear that his popularity was waning.

When Major General Gowon took over, the prevailing Soviet mood was one of suspicion. A year later, Russia had not only abandoned its position of reservation and non-involvement in Nigerian affairs, but had made a firm commitment to the Federal

²⁴⁹ MIZAN. January/February 1967. Vol. IX. No. 1. P. 71.

Military Government. The Soviet Union had not initially liked Gowon's July coup. It assumed that under Gowon a British-Northern coalition might form again and regain control of the country. After he released Chief Obafemi Awolowo, USSR began to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards Gowon, and by August the Soviet press was praising him. At this stage there were no ulterior motives behind this rapprochement, beyond a desire to maintain profitable economic contacts²⁵⁰.

USSR was forced to take a stand on the question of Igbo separatism quite early on. Ironically, USSR had always championed the Ibos as a forward-looking people, and after the repeated massacres the Soviet press remained silent. The USSR had also always claimed that the North presented the gravest danger to the survival of the Federation, but when Lieutenant-Colonel Odumengwu Ojukwu's Eastern delegation walked out of the conference, which had been held to settle the question of federation, Soviet Union did not support them. Clearly its sympathies with the plight of the Ibos were not so strong as to make it condemn Gowon outright. In January 1967 a Soviet team of economists, metallurgists and engineers went to Nigeria to undertake a study of the possibilities for developing an iron and steel industry. Thus, USSR had already made a de facto commitment to Gowon, and it was only a matter of time before its sympathies for the Ibos would be abandoned in favor of open support for Gowon. The decisive break came on 31 March 1967 when Colonel Ojukwu announced the Eastern Region's firm intention to «decentralize» Nigeria.

As the likelihood of Eastern secession grew through late 1966 and the early part of 1967, the Gowon administration took note of Moscow's friendly neutrality. His primary focus still remained on the traditional Western partners whom he approached on numerous occasions pushing for commitments of military assistance in case of the war erupting in the East. Both the British and the Americans expressed their support for the unity of Nigeria but, to Gowon's great frustration, treaded carefully and unequivocally rebuffed his repeated requests for troops, tactical aircraft and a naval presence. Frustrated with the West's intransigence and clearly aiming to play on the usual cold war

²⁵⁰ Stent, A. The Soviet Union and the Nigerian Civil War: A Triumph of Realism. 1973. Issue 3(2). P. 43-48.

apprehensions, Gowon hinted at the possibility of going to ‘other sources’—a threat that neither Americans nor the British apparently took too seriously, at least not seriously enough to modify their non-committal stances vis-à-vis the Biafran secession, which did materialize on 30 May 1967.

The weeks following the announcement of Biafran independence by Colonel Ojukwu were filled with feverish attempts by the Federal Military Government of Nigeria to procure arms. On July 2, 1967, Gowon sent identical cables to President Lyndon Johnson and Prime Minister Harold Wilson, pleading for immediate sale to the FMG of twelve fighter-bombers, six PT-boats, and twenty-four anti-aircraft guns. He wanted deliveries to begin within forty-eight hours and added that if the US and UK were unable to supply these weapons, he ‘would be forced to get them from any source which would make them available’—a not-so-subtle allusion to the Soviet bloc. The Americans remained unimpressed, however, observing that Nigeria’s political milieu made any significant Communist infiltration highly unlikely.

There was a marked retrenchment in Soviet support for Gowon immediately before the war began. Russia had accused Ojukwu of pursuing tribal separatism under the protection of «Western imperialism». It had signed an important cultural agreement with Gowon on March 28, which was employed five months later for negotiating an arms deal. In effect, it had chosen sides. Immediately after the secession, however, Russia returned to a position of neutrality. Moscow was initially reluctant to become embroiled in the Nigerian conflict.

Late in July, Biafra was still appealing to the USSR for aid, which shows the effectiveness of the Soviet position of neutrality. However, evidence suggests that behind the scenes Moscow was negotiating with the federal government. In June, Edwin Ogbu, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, arrived in Moscow, ostensibly to inspect the Nigerian Embassy. In late June 1967, a four-man Nigerian mission headed to Moscow, prompting immediate rumours that the visit was in fact an arms-procurement expedition²⁵¹. Both Moscow and Lagos issued terse denials but less than a month later

²⁵¹ Astrachan, A. Nigerian mission is accused of seeking Russian arms to fight Biafra // Washington Post. 23 June 1967. P. 19.

another Nigerian delegation went to the Soviet Union. The delegation included Chief Anthony Enahoro, the Commissioner for the Ministries of Information and Labour in the FMG and, significantly, a close political ally of the Soviet-friendly Obafemi Awolowo.

On August 2, Chief Enahoro was received at the Kremlin, and another «cultural» agreement was signed. It seemed like a frivolity for a country confronting an existential crisis. Despite the mounting evidence to the contrary, both sides continued to insist that arts and sports, and not the aircraft and other weapons, constituted the subject of the talks. On 3 August, Radio Moscow quoted a statement by the Nigerian embassy, which dismissed the rumours of an arms deal as ‘Western propaganda’²⁵².

The denials lasted for a few more days until in a meeting with the US ambassador in Lagos on 8 August, Gowon admitted to signing a deal for the procurement of an unspecified number of Czech aircraft but also stressed the strictly commercial nature of the transaction. The federalist leader lamented the lack of support by the British and the Americans and alluded to a ‘spate of anti-Americanism’ sweeping across Nigeria²⁵³.

Soviet military equipment and aircraft began arriving in Nigeria around August 15, and it is reasonable to assume that the two Nigerian missions to Moscow were related to an arms deal. Kano airport was closed when the initial shipment of Soviet equipment arrived, and estimates of the quantity vary. Apparently, the first shipment included twenty MIG-15 fighter trainers, six Czech L-29 Delphin jet fighters, together with some two hundred Soviet technicians who left Nigeria on completing the assembly and testing of the aircraft. The MIGs were flown mainly by Egyptian pilots.

There is no question that the Soviet Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-17 (NATO codenamed ‘Fresco’) was an outstanding fighter jet. During the course of the Vietnam War, the Americans lost about 70 of their planes in aerial combat to them.

Even though considered obsolete by the mid-1960s – and denigrated by many Western aviation ‘experts’ – this stubby, swept wing jet fighter gave an excellent account of itself over Vietnam. Only recently has it been disclosed that in South East Asia, the

²⁵² Radio Moscow (in English for Africa), 20:30 GMT, 3 August 1967.

²⁵³ Telegram from the Embassy in Nigeria to the Department of State’, Foreign relations of the United States, 1964–1968. Vol. 24, Africa, Document 392. Lagos. 8 August 1967. 1700Z. URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d392> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

MiG-17 was secretly flown in combat by Soviet aviators and that it became the favourite combat fighter of most of the top North Vietnamese pilots (including that country's leading ace, the appropriately-named Colonel Tomb).

Because the MiG-17 played a seminal role in air operations against the Biafrans in their 30-month West African conflict, it is important to fully appreciate exactly what this versatile flying machine could do. The prototype MiG-17 first flew in January 1950 and was reported to have exceeded Mach 1 in level flight, with a normal ceiling close to 60,000 feet. It weighed in at about 13,400 lbs (maximum take-off weight) and was armed with two 23 mm cannons, as well as a single 37 mm cannon.

Pilots flying these jets in Nigeria rarely fired the cannon because it was regarded as slow and had a very poor trajectory. While the MiG-17 packed a mighty punch in its air-to-air combat capabilities, the jet was even more effective when unopposed. It roamed Biafran skies at will – constantly in search of targets of opportunity. These included vehicles on the road; Biafran military emplacements; troops on the move; and, without fail, Swedish pioneer aviator and mercenary pilot count Gustav von Rosen's elusive little Swedish Minicons that could pack an inordinately powerful punch.

In October 1969 eight Soviet Antonov-12s each delivered one MiG-17 to Kano International Airport. These were the so-called 'MiG-17 Glatts' and came from East Germany, because that country was retiring its MiG-17As from service. The 'Glatt' bit came from 'gloss pipe' (in German), which indicated these jets were not equipped with afterburners.

The most problem to be faced was that Moscow was never keen on supplying MiG-17s to the Nigerian Air Force: The Soviets were actually dead-set against Westerners getting anywhere near their planes – in large part because the operating parameters of the MiG-17 were still secret.

Quite contrary to the 'spate of anti-Americanism', the Soviet Union enjoyed an immediate surge of popularity in Nigeria. The rapprochement between the FMG and Moscow did not go unnoticed by Nigerian Marxists (many of them self-proclaimed and lacking formal party affiliations) and in some cases resulted in a quick reversal of their previous pacifist stances. For example, the SWAFP founder Tunji Otegbeye, one of

Nigeria's very few bone fide Marxist-Leninists, shifted his earlier anti-war position to a far more bellicose one. 'Total war! Total destruction must be the vow of the Nigerian army.... Crush the vandal Ojukwu', fulminated his party newspaper *Advance* in late August²⁵⁴. And the Soviet Union was now gaining in stature not only among the radicals. Western observers noted the unmistakable signs of a new climate of 'mild pro-Sovietism' emerging within the Nigerian political establishment. In the months following the signing of the 'Czech' arms deal, Soviet-friendly groups began to proliferate in Nigeria. Such front organizations as the Nigerian-Soviet Friendship Society, the Committee of Solidarity with Asia and Africa, and the Nigerian Trade Union Council popularized Soviet achievements and way of life through their publications, numerous meetings, symposia and film screenings. In the fall of 1967, the Soviets opened a new US\$15,000 cultural centre in the district of Surulere in Lagos, and four Moskvich car dealerships opened doors around the country²⁵⁵.

Having learned from their recent debacles in Guinea, Ghana and Mali, the Soviets now moved with caution and, at least on the surface of it, steered clear of ideology. Soviet support for the FMG provided breathing political space to such Nigerian progressives as Otegbeye, who could now claim with some credibility close links with one of the chief guarantors of Nigerian unity. But Moscow apparently understood that the newly found friendship with Lagos had its obvious limitations; their support for the federalist cause notwithstanding, the Soviets could not be perceived as subversive. While humouring their leftist Nigerian supporters, they never failed to stress the affinity of views between the FMG and the country's progressives who may have differed when it came to Marxism and most certainly followed the common cause when it came to the preservation of Nigeria's unity. In fact, the fight against Biafran secessionists, broadly supported by Nigerian progressives, allowed the Soviets to play up the left's legitimacy within Nigeria's political scene (historically inhospitable to the likes of Tunji Otegbeye)²⁵⁶.

²⁵⁴ Orobator, S.E. *Diplomacy and conflict resolution in international relations: The Soviet Union and the Nigerian crisis*. Ibadan: Uniben Press. 1997. P. 104–105.

²⁵⁵ Astrachan, A. Soviets gaining prestige in Nigeria, as U.S. is accused of helping Biafra // *Washington Post*. 9 December 1967. P. 19.

²⁵⁶ Карпович К. За кулисами войны в Нигерии // *Азия и Африка сегодня*. 1969. № 3. С. 19-21 .

Moscow's commentary on the alleged alliance between the Gowon administration and the leftists probably reflected a hope for a postwar expansion of Nigerian political landscape to include the previously ostracized pro-Soviet radicals: 'The support for Gowon's government given by the progressive forces of the country—the trade unions, farmers' organizations, youth and student groups—had a great effect on the struggle for unity in Nigeria'. However, such expectations were conspicuously free of Khrushchevian euphoria and ideological daydreaming²⁵⁷.

Throughout the war, both sides perceived their unusual alliance first and foremost in practical terms. The Soviets had taken advantage of the sponsorship vacuum during the early days and weeks of the war and were not prepared to jeopardize their newly gained popularity with Nigerian elites for the sake of promoting the occasional Marxist-Leninist loyalist. When, in November 1967, Tunji Otegbeye and S. O. Martins (of the Nigerian-Soviet Friendship Society) were arrested by Nigerian authorities upon their return from the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Moscow, the Soviets exhibited remarkable restraint²⁵⁸. In 1969, upon their return from another Soviet junket, Otegbeye and an associate were placed into a preventive detention. Instead of issuing the standard vitriolic denunciations reserved for exactly such situations, Moscow presented the whole affair as an unfortunate misunderstanding. A Pravda commentary emphasized the arrested radicals' stated commitment to the upholding of Nigeria's unity and even their alleged loyalty to the federalist regime: The arrest of Dr. T. Otegbeye and S. Martins evoked deep perplexity among progressive Nigerian society. Their political views and convictions were never a secret from anyone. At the same time it was well known that their political and social activity, based on their convictions, was never directed against the interests of the Nigerian government. On the contrary, Dr. T. Otegbeye and S. Martins won broad «acceptance inside the country and beyond its

²⁵⁷ Matusевич, M. *Strange Bedfellows: An Unlikely Alliance between the Soviet Union and Nigeria during the Biafran War in Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide The Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967–1970*. ed. by A. Dirk Moses, Lasse Heerten. 2017. P. 211.

²⁵⁸ Otegbeye, T. *The turbulent decade*. Lagos: VisionLink Nigeria. 1999. P. 187.

borders as honest, consistent patriots, fighters for the true independence, unity, revitalization and prosperity of Nigeria»²⁵⁹.

Such incidents revealed the extent of Soviet pragmatism and opportunism, a significant departure from the earlier, ideology-driven approach to the conduct of Moscow's African diplomacy.

Although the USSR maintained neutrality at the diplomatic level, it still provided military-technical assistance to the federal government. The federal government and USSR consistently claimed that these arms purchases were «strictly for cash on a commercial basis»²⁶⁰. Nigerian officials also insisted that the arms deals implied no political obligations. In an interview with Soviet journalists, Chief Enahoro emphasized the irrelevance of Soviet internal development for Nigeria.' Clearly, The Soviet Union had no illusion about the prospects for socialism in Nigeria, and its sole aim was to increase viable economic and cultural contacts.

By mid-autumn 1967, the alliance between the Kremlin and the Federal Military Government had been acknowledged by both sides. While presenting his credentials in Moscow, the new Nigerian ambassador in the Soviet Union, George T. Kurubo, spoke warmly of Soviet assistance and thanked the USSR for the 'practical support for the government of Nigeria in its efforts for the maintenance and consolidation of Nigeria'²⁶¹. Almost simultaneously with Kurubo's arrival in Moscow, the Soviets finally conceded their backing of the FMG. On 17 October, Lagos made public a letter to Gowon dispatched a few days earlier by the Soviet premier Alexei Kosygin. The letter left little doubt that the Soviets had chosen sides in the conflict and it articulated Soviet support for the FMG in no uncertain terms. 'The Soviet people', explained Kosygin, 'fully understand the desire of the Nigerian government to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of the Nigerian state and to prevent the country from being dismembered'. Once

²⁵⁹ Matusевич, M. *No Easy Row for a Russian Hoe: Ideology and Pragmatism in Nigerian-Soviet Relations, 1960-1991*. Trenton: Africa World Press. 2003. P. 47-48.

²⁶⁰ Stent, A. *The Soviet Union and the Nigerian Civil War: A Triumph of Realism*. 1973. *Issue 3(2)*. P. 43-48.

²⁶¹ Matusевич, M. *No Easy Row for a Russian Hoe: Ideology and Pragmatism in Nigerian-Soviet Relations, 1960-1991*. Trenton: Africa World Press. 2003. P. 61.

made public, Kosygin's letter presented a framework for the expansion of Nigerian-Soviet ties—the Soviet Union, it suggested, was uniquely positioned to help safeguard Nigeria's territorial integrity because of its own experience of forging a multiethnic nation. This latter point clearly carried some weight with the Nigerian side. In reference to the Nigerian government's decision to allow for the circulation of Soviet print matter in the country, the vice chancellor of the University of Lagos and respected historian, Professor Saburi Biobaku, expressed hope that these materials would help Nigerians better understand the Soviet people and their history of building a united country in a context of great ethnic diversity²⁶².

Over the next two years the contacts between Moscow and Lagos proliferated – a source of some concern for Nigeria's customary friends in the West and their African allies. The Soviets inaugurated their new embassy compound in Lagos – a massive, forbidding-looking, fortress like structure of glass and concrete; they expanded their diplomatic staff from nine to fourteen, which now included a military attaché – one Colonel Medvedev, whom the notoriously flamboyant Nigerian press pronounced to be 'an armored warfare expert, late of Kiev, Peking, Cairo, and Khartoum'²⁶³. Having opened its doors on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian revolution, the new embassy sponsored a series of commemorative events in Lagos, including an exhibit of Soviet scientific achievements and a film festival. Soviet ambassador Alexander Romanov, who in his gregariousness cut an unusual diplomat figure for a Soviet, became the toast of Lagos high society – playing tennis at the prestigious Ikoyi Club and navigating Lagos traffic in his large-sized Mercedes-Benz²⁶⁴. By some contemporary accounts, the Soviet ambassador was a ubiquitous sight at numerous diplomatic functions, scoring appearances on national television and generally sporting one of the busiest social schedules in town. His willingness to speak publicly about the Soviet Union's interest in expanding its ties with Nigeria encouraged at least some Nigerian politicians to expect more aid, especially at the time when Nigeria's Western partners (primarily Great Britain

²⁶² Карпович К. За кулисами войны в Нигерии // Азия и Африка сегодня. 1969. № 3. С. 20.

²⁶³ Friendly, A. Nigeria cements close Soviet tie// New York Times. 22 November 1968. P. 1.

²⁶⁴ Friendly, A. Nigeria cements close Soviet tie// New York Times. 22 November 1968. P. 13.

and the US) preferred to proceed with caution. At a press conference with Romanov, in November 1967, Nigeria's commissioner of works and housing, Femi Okunnu, appealed to the ambassador to 'use his good offices to secure Soviet aid for the reconstruction of war-damaged bridges and roads'²⁶⁵. In December, while opening yet another Soviet book exhibit in Lagos, the Commissioner of Education, Wenike Briggs, openly marvelled at the Soviet people's 'present interest in Nigeria', which, he remarked, 'placed them further ahead than any other country in the world'²⁶⁶.

Ideological issues did not motivate the Soviet involvement in the Nigerian crisis. Before the coups, the Soviets had criticized the North as «feudal», supported the Ibos as a «progressive» people, and denounced secessionist aims. These were consistent themes in Soviet writings. The Eastern Region had always advocated closer ties with the USSR, which the federal government had vetoed.

The Soviet Union's calculated risk in the Nigerian civil war had paid off with an enormous increase in Soviet influence. After the war was over, Nigeria's ambassador in Moscow said that Soviet aid to his country was the most important factor in the defeat of the Biafran secessionists, «more than any other single thing - more than all other things together». Even before the war was over, Nigerian views about the USSR had become increasingly complimentary.

Soviet involvement in the Nigerian civil war had important consequences not only for political but also for economic contacts with Africa. The history of Soviet foreign aid to sub-Saharan Africa parallels its political fortunes - a series of largely frustrating ventures. These ranged from the apocryphal shipment of Soviet snow ploughs to tropical Guinea to building an atomic reactor for underdeveloped Ghana²⁶⁷. Economic aid yielded few political dividends in the early 1960s. In 1970 Moscow began to pursue a more realistic and ultimately more profitable economic strategy in Nigeria. The Soviets and Nigerians signed a protocol in June 1970 on geological prospecting and research in Nigeria for finding iron ore, coking coal, and fluxes for the projected metallurgical

²⁶⁵ Press Release № F2480 / Federal Ministry of Information. Lagos. 2 November 1967. P. 4.

²⁶⁶ Press Release no. F2826 / Federal Ministry of Information. Lagos. 16 December 1967. P. 2.

²⁶⁷ Stent, A. The Soviet Union and the Nigerian Civil War: A Triumph of Realism. 1973. Issue 3(2). P. 43-48.

complex. This was to last five years and cost 58-millions pounds²⁶⁸. It was agreed that construction of the iron and steel project would begin in 1974. Further agreements to this effect were signed in 1970 which specified more precisely the cost and scope of the steelworks and the prospecting. The steel works were to produce 800,000 tons of steel a year. It is clear that the USSR was carefully investigating the costs and structure of the projects before committing itself to construction. In addition, it set up centers for the sale and servicing of Soviet machinery under joint Nigerian and Soviet ownership. These mixed companies were also becoming important in Soviet supplies of automobiles to Nigeria. Since 1968 and till 1969, over 2,500 Soviet motor vehicles were sold in Nigeria, and the «Moskvich» car was an increasingly familiar sight in the streets of Lagos. By 1968, Nigeria was in a position to import up to – not a spectacular number but a dramatic increase nevertheless when compared with the prewar period. By the end of the decade Moskvich cars would become a familiar sight on the streets of Nigerian cities. A Nigerian journalist noted at the time that the federal troops were now using ‘almost as many left-hand drive Soviet trucks as British field cars’²⁶⁹.

Trade protocols are also an important feature of Soviet-Nigerian aid agreements. The USSR has increased its share in the Nigerian cocoa market considerably. In 1969 it was importing 17,445 tons of cocoa from Nigeria, compared to Britain's imports of 38,717 tons and West Germany's imports of 26,745 tons. In 1971 a new trade protocol was signed. The Soviet Union was to supply Nigeria with 200,000 tons of cement, and agreements were made on payment and transit. According to a Soviet source, the Nigerians wanted long-term trade agreements based on guaranteed mutual deliveries for a 3–5-year period, paid for in local currency or by means of commodity settlements. The USSR continued to import traditional Nigerian commodities, but presumably, once the iron and steel and petrochemical projects were completed, it expected to import oil and minerals as part of the repayment. Whereas Nigerian-Soviet trade was worth 1 million rubles in 1963, it was worth 30 million rubles in 1970, and the figure was rising²⁷⁰.

²⁶⁸ Alexeyev, R. Nigeria on the Road of National Development // International Affairs. 1972. P. 37.

²⁶⁹ ECOTASS. 19 February 1968. quoted in Nigerian Review. May/June 1968. P. 11.

²⁷⁰ Forsyth, F. Buried for 50 Years: Britain's Shameful role in the Biafra War // Guardian Newspaper Lagos. 2020. № 4. P. 5.

The Soviet Union had also given a \$20 million loan to build an 800-bed hospital in Enugu. Other negotiations were concerned with Soviet interest in developing the petrochemical industry in Nigeria, and possible training of the Nigerians for satellite development. In 1970, about 1,000 Nigerian students were studying in the USSR - after years of lack of cooperation in this area²⁷¹.

The Soviets had announced their intention to expand their bilateral trade agreements with Nigeria to include military and economic assistance. They had their eyes on a truly large prize: a contract to build one of the largest steel mills in all of Africa, at a cost of a then astonishing \$120 million²⁷². That steel investment later became the Ajaokuta Steel Mill in northern Nigeria—the poster child of corruption and white elephant projects in Africa—that went on to gulp over \$4.6 billion of the Nigerian taxpayers' money although very little steel was produced²⁷³.

The Nigerian ambassador in Moscow said, «The important thing is that the Soviet Union made no noise about the assistance it has rendered to Nigeria. The newspaper *West Africa* remarked: What the Russians are now interested in is not revolution in other states, but the political support of those states in international affairs, whatever the nature of their internal regimes»²⁷⁴.

The last year of the war saw a flurry of activities underscoring and showcasing the expanding bilateral ties—ministerial exchanges, the inauguration of a weekly Aeroflot route between Moscow and Lagos, an opening of a Nigerian-Soviet Chamber of Commerce, visits by trade unionists, geologists, technical experts, circus performers and even Orthodox and Muslim clergymen. In early March 1969, British and American diplomats were unnerved to witness Soviet warships docking in Lagos Harbour during

²⁷¹ Stent, A. *The Soviet Union and the Nigerian Civil War: A Triumph of Realism*. 1973. *Issue 3(2)*. P. 45.

²⁷² Guest, R. *The Shackled Continent: Power, Corruption, and African Lives*. Washington: Smithsonian Books. 2004. P. 45.

²⁷³ The [Nigerian] House of Representatives asked the Federal Government to investigate the alleged «massive» looting of equipment at the Ajoakuta Steel Company Limited and the National Iron-Ore Mining Company, Itakpe, and bring the perpetrators to book. The House, in a resolution in Abuja, observed that the Ajaokuta steel plant had cost Nigerian tax payers over \$4.6bn without producing one sheet of steel in its many years of existence. See Ameh, J. Reps move to halt looting of Ajaokuta Steel Company equipment // *Punch*. October 30, 2009. P. 2.

²⁷⁴ Alexeyev, R. *Nigeria on the Road of National Development // International Affairs*. 1972. P. 39.

the first official visit to Nigeria by the Soviet navy²⁷⁵. On the surface it seemed that the future of Nigerian-Soviet relations was bright and their continuous growth assured. But some contemporary observers (not all of them disinterested) began to notice the signs of possible discontent. Declarations of friendship and solidarity with Moscow notwithstanding and despite the West's refusal to provide meaningful military aid to the FMG in its hour of need, Gowon had never disowned Nigeria's Western allies. As early as April 1969, a US intelligence memorandum argued that Nigerians had never overcome their deep-seated mistrust of Soviet motives and were careful to limit the scope of Soviet ideological activities in the country. The MiGs and 122-mm guns were welcome but the Marxist-Leninist ideology apparently not so much.

Western diplomats looked on warily as the Nigerian-Soviet rapprochement continued seemingly unabated, but the old colonial hands remained sceptical about the potential of this love affair turning into a long-term relationship. US and British officials, in particular, preferred to view the Nigerian-Soviet rapprochement as a fluke, a temporary development occasioned by a fleeting wartime alliance. Mindful of recent Soviet failures in such places as Guinea, Ghana and Mali they cautioned their home offices not to panic²⁷⁶. As one British diplomat put it at the time, 'The Russians have yet to plumb the depths of Nigerian ingratitude'²⁷⁷.

When the war was over there was a natural feeling of gratitude for the help that the Soviet Union had provided. Nigeria's ambassador in Moscow announced that 'the sky is the limit' for future economic and technical co-operation. An Agreement on Economic

²⁷⁵ Apple, R.W. Jr. Soviet improving ties with Nigeria // *New York Times*. 9 March 1969. P. 5. The naval visit, it turns out, was clouded by a scandal that revealed the fragility of the Nigerian-Soviet partnership. A Soviet seaman jumped the ship in Lagos and Ambassador Romanov apparently overstepped the boundaries laid out by the diplomatic protocol by presenting demands to the Nigerian police to apprehend and return the defector. Romanov also had a run in with the Nigerian navy commander Admiral Joseph Wey, whom he reportedly suspected of interfering with the schedule of the naval visit: Research memorandum from the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Hughes) to Secretary of State Rogers // *Foreign relations of the United States. 1969–1972. Vol. E-5. Documents on Africa. 1969–1972. Document 53. Washington. 2 April 1969. P. 5.*

²⁷⁶ Matusевич, M. *Strange Bedfellows: An Unlikely Alliance between the Soviet Union and Nigeria during the Biafran War in Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide The Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967–1970.* ed. by A. Dirk Moses, Lasse Heerten. 2017. P. 215.

²⁷⁷ Friendly, A. Nigeria cements close Soviet tie// *New York Times*. 22 November 1968. P. 8.

and Technical Assistance was signed while the war was still in progress, in November 1968, and work continued on implementing this. Benefiting from the Ghanaian experience and from a healthy distrust of foreign governments, the agreement lays down stringent regulations concerning the payment of technical assistance personnel and omits the amount of Soviet credit offered²⁷⁸.

However, the euphoria that accompanied the end of the war was clearly only a passing phase, and then Nigeria had settled into the course, begun tentatively by the civilian government, of gradually developing closer ties with one of the world's two superpowers. Opinions on this issue in the government are divided: Some ministers and senior government officials wanted fuller economic contacts with socialist countries as part of an overall strategy to diversify the economy, while others expressed caution. This note had been present since independence, and even at the height of the civil war was still being expressed. The Soviet Union was conducting a feasibility survey for an iron and steel complex, and was giving assistance in the medical, veterinary and educational fields, but not on any great scale. It had also expressed an interest in assisting Nigeria's oil industry, and in April 1972 an agreement was signed with Technocport for the construction of an oil production training center, for which the federal government has earmarked £N1 million²⁷⁹.

Political scientist Robert Legvold, writing during the Nigerian Civil War, noted the irony of the Soviet Union allying itself with the very forces that it had previously decried as reactionary and against the people 'whom Soviet commentators had always considered the most progressive and sympathetic'²⁸⁰. Prior to the Biafran secession, the Eastern Region of Nigeria advocated for closer ties with the USSR and even entered into agreements with Moscow independently of the federal centre in Lagos. On the eve of the war an Ibo served as Nigeria's ambassador in Moscow (who reportedly threw a party to celebrate the Biafran secession) and the Easterners were overrepresented among Nigerian

²⁷⁸ Agreement on Economic and Technical Co-operation between the Government of the U.S.S.R. and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria / in Nigeria's Treaties in Force, Vol. I: for the period of 1 October 1960 to 30 June 1970. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information. 1971. P. 3-4.

²⁷⁹ Stevens, C. The Soviet Union and Black Africa. NY: Holmes & Meier Pub. P. 183.

²⁸⁰ Legvold, R. Soviet policy in West Africa. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1970. P. 45.

students studying at Soviet institutions of higher learning. In the aftermath of the outbreak of the war and the conclusion of the Nigerian-Soviet arms deal, the Ibo students picketed the Nigerian embassy in Moscow and fought pitched battles with their pro-federalist peers in the dorm of the Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow²⁸¹. A prominent Soviet foreign correspondent (Yevgenii Korshunov) visited the Eastern Region in early 1967 and wrote warmly about meeting his old Ibo friends, many of them enthusiastic Russophiles and advocates of the Nigerian-Soviet friendship. Among those who first informed Korshunov about the horrors experienced by the Ibos fleeing the North were the editor of the *West African*, Pilot Herbert Unegbu, and a renowned Biafran Marxist and one-time president of the Nigerian-Soviet friendship Society, Paul Nwokedi. Ojukwu himself received a sympathetic treatment in Korshunov's reporting: Ojukwu, Korshunov claimed, saw socialism as a preferred path of development for independent Africa²⁸².

Throughout the early months of the war, the Biafran propaganda made repeated appeals to Soviet leadership to reconsider their emerging alliance with Lagos. Notably, the Biafrans stressed the affinity between Moscow's progressive values and their own (alleged) leftist credentials. While the Gowon regime represented 'one of the last bastions of feudalism in the modern world' Biafra, they insisted, was much closer to Soviet ideals, a 'natural ally' of the Soviet Union. By instigating the 'feudal pogroms of 30,000 Ibos' Biafra's federalist opponents had more in common with the 'dead Czar of USSR than with the modern leaders of the modern [sic] Soviet Union'²⁸³.

Following the revelations of Soviet arms deliveries starting in mid-August 1967 and especially in the aftermath of the publication of Kosygin's letter a couple of months later, the Biafrans abandoned restraint, and their anti-Soviet rhetoric began to gain in intensity. Even the Biafra-Soviet Friendship Society demonstratively severed all connections to Moscow and appealed to its members to denounce these latest imperialist newcomers. Enugu became the sight of vociferous anti-Soviet demonstrations, while Ibo

²⁸¹ Nigerian foes fight in Moscow // *New York Times*. 2 April 1968. P. 21.

²⁸² Korshunov, Y. Reports from Nigeria // *Za Rubezhom* (Moscow). No. 24. 9–15 June 1967. P. 48.

²⁸³ Radio Biafra / quoted in Arthur J. Kinghoffer *The USSR and Nigeria: Why the Soviets chose sides* // *Africa Report*. 1968. Vol. 13. No. 2. P. 48.

students were reported to have rioted in Moscow²⁸⁴. As the war progressed, Biafran propaganda grew noticeably ‘cold warish’, playing on known Western fears of Communist infiltration. The scale of Soviet ascendancy in Nigeria was grotesquely exaggerated; Moscow’s ultimate goals claimed to be nothing short of total domination: Already, only Soviet cars are available in Nigeria. . . . Everyday there are Soviet-inspired political demonstrations in Nigeria against Britain and the United States. . . . USSR has achieved an eternal stranglehold on Nigeria. . . . The wide ramifications of Soviet Communism [are] now beginning to spread through Nigeria and into adjoining lands. . . . For London and Washington to continue to court Lagos, which is already in Moscow’s palm, and to alienate Biafra, where Communism hardly exists [sic] is not the way to retain Western influence in Africa²⁸⁵.

Once the Nigerian-Soviet alliance had been disclosed, the inexorable logic of the Cold War pushed the Biafrans, initially congenial to the Soviet Union, to embrace the panoply of anti-Soviet causes. Where the official Lagos displayed little sympathy for the ‘Prague Spring’ of 1968, the Biafrans were emphatically supportive, seeing in the Soviet invasion of the independent nation yet another example of Moscow’s neocolonial agenda (Biafran officials were fond of accusing the Soviets of ‘pseudo-anticolonialism’). The link between the Nigerian Civil War and the ‘Prague Spring’ is an interesting one. Political scientist Stanley Orobator has noted the intensity with which the champions of ‘democratic socialism’ in Czechoslovakia debated the conflict throughout the heady months of their doomed reform movement in 1968. Support for Biafra, in fact, emerged as a major rallying cause enabling the reformists in Prague to distance themselves from the Soviet big brother; it represented an attempt to fashion an independent foreign policy agenda and clearly served as a serious irritant in the relationship between the two nations on the eve of the Warsaw Pact invasion²⁸⁶.

²⁸⁴ Biafran students in Soviet demonstrate at Embassy // New York Times. 11 September 1967. P. 8.

²⁸⁵ The West fails to recognize Russian grip on Nigeria // Markpress. Press Comments on Biafra. GEN-611. 27 May 1969. P. 5.

²⁸⁶ Orobator, S.E. The Nigerian civil war and the invasion of Czechoslovakia // African Affairs. 1983. Vol. 82. No. 327. P. 211.

The Soviet Union also cooperated with public organizations that operated in Nigeria. The two military coups of 1966 elicited much hatred in Nigeria, leading to countless assassinations of leading politicians and military personnel, the Igbo massacre in the Northern and Western parts of the country, the Biafran secession as a result of these massacres, and the eventual civil war²⁸⁷. When the war progressed, the Biafran government utilized some diplomatic channels through the activities of intellectuals, trade unionists, and even writers, to tour European and African countries to propagate the Biafran cause. It was then that a radical group with the name SPB was formed with the aim of establishing contacts with the Communist states in Europe and Asia. By then, some Nigerian socialists had taken the diplomatic initiative by convincing the Soviet Union and her satellites on the consequences of according diplomatic recognition to Biafra²⁸⁸.

To sum up, the Soviet Union had no significant presence in the region prior to 1966 but progressively took greater interest in Nigerian affairs after the Aguiyi-Ironsi coup d'état and the emergence of Nigeria as an important oil exporter. The initial neutrality of the USSR's Western rivals, including Britain and the United States in particular provided an opening for the Soviets to send MiG fighters and technical assistance to the Nigerians, thereby including the region in the cold war theater. Together with military and technical support, the USSR began to interact with Nigeria in economic and humanitarian aspects, which indicated the strategic nature of the relations being built. The Soviet decision to support the federalist side in the Nigerian Civil War marked a decisive departure from Moscow's previous ideology driven commitments in the Third World and particularly in Africa. By throwing their weight behind a side whose leadership had exactly zero interest in 'socialist orientation', the Soviets effectively accepted the primacy of pragmatic geopolitics over ideology. The Biafran War was indeed a Cold War conflict but of a very peculiar kind, with alliances forged and maintained across the usual ideological divides: Moscow betting on the federalists' superior numbers and resources. From the Soviet point of view, this was a winning bet. Even though the wartime Western fears (stoked by

²⁸⁷ Balogun, O. *The Tragic Years: Nigeria in Crisis, 1966–1970*. Benin-City: Ethiope Publishing Corporation. 1973. P. 1–61.

²⁸⁸ Cronje, S. *The World and Nigeria: The Diplomatic History of the Biafran War, 1967–1970*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972. P. 258-267.

Biafran propaganda) of the Soviet Union's ascendancy in West Africa would prove to be largely unfounded, the Soviets did increase their visibility and influence in a region formerly closed to them. However, for a full assessment of the situation in the field of interference of third factors in the internal conflict, it is worth considering the activities of the states of the Western, capitalist bloc. The most notable were the actions of Great Britain.

3.2. Great Britain's involvement in the Nigerian Civil War

The British position on Biafra was, however, arguably driven less by Cold War concerns than it was on grounds of decolonization and resource acquisition and retention²⁸⁹. The most common argument is that British oil interests played a crucial role in the decision of the British government to insist on a One Nigeria policy, supporting the FMG's efforts to keep the country together and suppress Biafra's rebellion. The official position was that its main interest in the conflict was to prevent the breakup of the country along tribal lines; in other words, to confirm that the circumstances of British decolonization were appropriate and conducted successfully. Despite this, there is evidence to suggest that British oil interests played a vitally important role in shaping Britain's position. As most of Nigeria's foreign earnings derived from oil, and significant oilfields were to be found in the eastern part of the country – that is, in what became Biafra – Britain certainly had interests there. Indeed, Shell-BP, then partly owned by the British government, was Nigeria's largest oil producer. As a result, Britain had a critical interest in ensuring that its investment in Shell-BP was protected, the more so as the Six-Day War in the Middle East in June 1967 threatened the stability and continuity of oil supplies²⁹⁰.

Despite expectations, the oil blockade implemented by the FMG caused great concern for the British government. The loss of Nigerian oil, which accounted for 10% of British imports during the Arab boycott, had a significant negative impact on the

²⁸⁹ Uche, C. Oil, British Interests and the Nigerian Civil War // *Journal of African History* 49. 2008. № 1. P. 111–135.

²⁹⁰ Leapman, M. British interests, Nigerian tragedy // *Independent*. 4 January 1998. URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/british-interests-nigerian-tragedy-1136684.html> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

balance of payments. This loss was said to have contributed to the decision to devalue the pound in November²⁹¹, as noted in Wilson's memoirs and confirmed by scholars²⁹². Initially, the British were hesitant to provide military supplies to the Nigerians, especially since some of the requested items, such as Seaward Defence Boats, would be used to enforce the blockade. The British Defence Advisor in Nigeria strongly warned against providing arms due to the FMG's disregard for international law, which led to them firing upon and sinking ships. Despite these concerns, Britain eventually decided to supply Lagos with weapons and military supplies.

Various explanations have been given for Britain's decision, with some citing their traditional role as Nigeria's arms supplier or knowledge of Soviet supplies reaching Lagos. However, archives show that the decision was made a month earlier in July and was closely tied to the oil question. A note from the Commonwealth Office suggested that anti-aircraft guns could be provided if "Gowon is helpful on oil." The Commonwealth Office initially intended to use arms supplies as leverage to ease the oil blockade²⁹³.

Upon the initiation of the oil blockade, Britain dispatched the Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, George Thomas, to meet with Gowon in Lagos. During their encounter on 8 July 1967, Thomas argued vehemently that the oil blockade was illegal according to international law. He further contended that oil companies could not be held accountable if they decided to pay royalties to Biafra, as it was the governing body in effective control of the disputed territory. Thomas also cautioned that the blockade could prove counterproductive to the Federal Government's objectives. Not only would it fail to weaken the Biafran rebels, but it could also potentially harm Nigeria's future financial prospects. In addition, the blockade might sour the relationship between Nigeria and Britain, as the latter could be forced to ration its oil supplies. Despite his efforts, Thomas was unable to secure any concessions from Gowon, which exposed Britain's lack of leverage over its former colony. The realization that London was powerless to coerce a

²⁹¹ Wilson, H. *The Labour Government 1964-1970*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 1971. P. 400.

²⁹² Dockrill, S. *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice Between Europe and the World?* London: Palgrave. 2002. P. 199.

²⁹³ Roy, R. *The Battle for Bretton Woods: America, Britain, and the International Financial Crisis of October 1967-March 1968 // Cold War History*. 2002. Vol. 2. № 2. P. 47.

resumption of oil flow necessitated a shift in British policy. As a result, British policymakers had to consider the long-term implications of a prolonged conflict between the Federal Government and Biafra. They determined that it was crucial to demonstrate goodwill towards Nigeria, even amidst disagreements over oil. Consequently, the Commonwealth Office advocated the sale of anti-aircraft guns and the provision of Seaward Defence Boats, which had been previously denied. They also recommended the sale of "reasonable quantities of minor weapons and supplies"²⁹⁴ through Crown Agents. Wilson conveyed this new stance to Gowon in a letter dated 16 July.

The threat to British oil supplies was exacerbated by the blockade against Biafra imposed by the FMG, which stopped the flow of oil exports. The British economy depended on that oil, leading to efforts being made to have the blockade lifted. This could only happen in the event of a Nigerian victory; hence, the release of arms for Nigeria had to be stepped up in order to help the FMG defeat the secessionists. By November 1967, George Thomas, minister of state at the Commonwealth Office, wrote to Prime Minister Harold Wilson proposing that arms supplies should be hastened: «It seems to me», he wrote, «that British interests would now be served by a quick Federal victory». Thus, as journalist Michael Leapman wrote in 1998, when analyzing the recently released British Cabinet papers for 1967 which chronicled this episode, «the decision to continue arming Nigeria was not based on arguments for or against secession, or on the interests of its people, but on backing the likely winner». Indeed, he concluded, «The cabinet papers make clear that right and wrong were the last considerations on anyone's mind. Oil, trade, and the protection of British citizens dominated the decision-making process»²⁹⁵.

The authoritative Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe was able to extend this to a broader coalition of forces arrayed against Biafra, basing himself on an article from 2000 written by another journalist, Rick Fountain. Here, recently declassified British Cabinet papers showed how the Nigeria-Biafra War turned into a triangular Great Power contest between the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union— the latter in a Cold War

²⁹⁴ TNA, PREM 13/1361, Commonwealth Office to Lagos. 16 July 1967. P. 3-5.

²⁹⁵ Fountain, R. Secret papers reveal Biafra intrigue // BBC News. January 3, 2000. URL: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/589221.stm> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

scenario threatening Soviet penetration into the region. Achebe's position was that oil interests and the Cold War dimension in which the Powers competed against each other for influence in the region were shown to be of far greater importance than the «unified Nigeria» perspective would have had it²⁹⁶.

London's initial decision to provide weapons to the FMG was not based on the Soviet threat or Britain's traditional role as a supplier. Instead, it was driven by the desire to protect Shell-BP's future position in the Federation. As the FMG refused to lift the Eastern oil blockade, the British government changed its focus from short-term protection of oil supplies to long-term protection of fixed oil and other investments. The government even intervened to stop Shell-BP's nominal payment to Ojukwu. On July 14th, the Commonwealth Office informed Lagos that the Treasury had suspended the transfer of foreign exchange for "political reasons"²⁹⁷. Britain eventually abandoned its "wait and see" approach, but this shift did not yet constitute full material support for the "One Nigeria" policy, as we will see.

The British, as the ex-colonial power, were concerned to retain as much influence as possible, before and throughout the civil war. Initially, prior to the war and on Gowon's accession to power, its policy was to try to prevent secession by the Igbos; when this failed, their position, and that of the Americans, was one of neutrality. Its priority was to protect its substantial investments in the country, and one of its major commitments was to oil extraction. Shell had sizeable investments amounting to £200 million. At the outbreak of the war Shell had discovered that Nigerian oil production would exceed all planned expectations. In conjunction with the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) it was decided that none of these new discoveries would be divulged to Nigeria or Biafra: Mr Stanley Grey, the Managing Director of Shell/BP in Nigeria had frank talks with the High Commissioner and the Dutch Ambassador on 28 October 1966 Mr Grey made the following points:

²⁹⁶ Achebe, C. *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. New York: Penguin Press, 2012. P. 46.

²⁹⁷ TNA, FCO 38/111, fo. 153, Commonwealth Office to Lagos, 14 July 1967. P. 7.

1. He confirmed what he had told us a month ago, that the scale of the Nigerian oilfield had been revealed in the last three months to be vastly greater than had previously been estimated. Shell/BP output was running far in excess of expectation. The revenue due to the Nigerian Government by 1970 was now practically double the figure estimated in the summer and previously.

2. In reply to the High Commissioner's enquiry, he said that he had not yet informed any Nigerian authority of this spectacular change. He felt that it was better at this juncture that both the Military Government and the Eastern Government should not realise that the oilfield was so much more valuable than had been reckoned. The High Commissioner said that he entirely agreed.

3. He confirmed that Shell/BP were investing an additional £40 million this year

4. He felt that the oil companies could adjust their relations to any set of political changes

5. He had had a friendly and satisfactory meeting with the Military Governor of the Mid-West (Ejoor), who had started by jocularly describing himself as a future employee of Shell/BP

6. He remained satisfied with his relationship with both the Military Government and the Eastern Government. Colonel Ojukwu was both capable and hard-headed, and showed a statesmanlike attitude towards the oil companies. Ojukwu said he would not wish to alter the arrangements for payment of oil revenue for 2–3 years. No embarrassing pressures had been brought to bear by the Eastern Government on Shell/BP. Some time ago a secret approach had been made by Ibos to see if Shell/BP would finance a coup to overturn the Abubakar government. Mr Gray made it absolutely clear that in no circumstances was Shell prepared to play politics.

7. Shell/BP were subscribing £1,000 to the Eastern Relief fund through the Red Cross. He realised they would not get away with as small a contribution as this.

8. He had a satisfactory first meeting with Colonel Gowon. He found that Colonel Gowon had only the most elementary knowledge of the subject of oil operations etc. He seemed to be very uncertain about the attitude that the oil companies were likely to take as the political situation developed. Mr Gray had said that Shell/BP would maintain their

payments to the Military Government, and Colonel Gowon seemed to be agreeably surprised by this clear-cut assurance. He had also shown some signs of suspicion that Shell/BP might be supporting the Eastern Government financially, and Mr Gray had made clear that the company did not make political contributions²⁹⁸.

Initially, Britain's policy of neutrality ensured that, whichever side won, Shell's investment in oil exploration would not be compromised²⁹⁹. However, Britain was already Nigeria's main arms and armaments provider, and therefore it found itself in a very difficult position from the start. Its immediate decision was to continue supplying Nigeria arms as it had been, but restricting the supplies to small arms. Britain's official policy was at this stage: 'For the moment, therefore, the only policy for us is to wait, husbanding our limited influence with the Federal Government without antagonizing the Igbos any more that is strictly unavoidable'³⁰⁰. The decision did not suit the Federal Authorities who, like the Biafrans, went exploring other potential suppliers. In an FCO document dated 20 November 1967: «We know from secret sources that Ojukwu is still getting large supplies of arms from Africa, through Portugal and with the obvious connivance of the Portuguese authorities. His emissaries have also been in touch with French officials, and there are indications that he is trying to raise a force of mercenaries»³⁰¹.

The weapon embargo imposed by most western governments, including the British, was enforced in a curious manner. So much so, that it was an open secret that a clandestine supply of arms to Nigeria had begun to be flown in from Europe and the Middle East. One such series of flights was flown during the autumn of 1967 by the Britain International Air Services.

²⁹⁸ FCO 221/45, National Archives. Letter and memorandum to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs from the British High Commissioner. October 1967. P. 56.

²⁹⁹ FCO 38/267, National Archives. Letter and memorandum to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs from the British High Commissioner. October 1967. P. 71.

³⁰⁰ FCO 38/267, National Archives. Letter and memorandum to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs from the British High Commissioner. October 1967. P. 72.

³⁰¹ *Op. cit.* The Nigerian High Commissioner, Brigadier Ogundipe, bought 10,000 rifles from Spain and 15,000 rifles from Germany as well as a large quantity of ammunition. Aircraft carrying these supplies to Nigeria were subject to clearance by the British authorities and his supply was contrary to the British Government.

Britain supplied Lagos with military aid throughout the Civil War. In fact, the British policy, which had been outlined at a Downing Street Cabinet Meeting on 7 September 1967, was «to supply the Federal Government with reasonable quantities of arms similar to those supplied in the past (eg rifles) but to refuse sophisticated weapons (eg aircraft, rockets etc). It had been decided not to stop arms supplies to the Federal Government since they were the legitimate government and there were some 17,000 British lives at stake in Federal-controlled territory³⁰²» There was, some observers believed, another reason for Britain's stand. The Nigerian Civil War had begun just one month after the Six-Day War (which cut off the Suez Canal); Britain could become dependent on Nigeria for up to a quarter of its imported oil.

The situation was reassessed several months afterward when at another Downing Street meeting, on 23 November 1967, the Cabinet was told that «the Federal Military Government was winning the war and that, negotiations having so far failed to lead to a settlement, British interest would best be served by a quick Nigerian victory». The assessment continued with a decision taken by the Defence & Overseas Policy Committee which «agreed that British policy on arms should be relaxed so that we could now supply such items as mortars and Stirling sub-machine guns -' The Cabinet learnt also that supplies of British ammunition to Nigeria would increase³⁰³.

By mid-December 1967 the Ministry of Defence had agreed to release from British Army stocks some 5 million rounds of 7.62mm ammunition and 2 million rounds each of 0.30 Browning and ammunition. 76 mm, 81 mm and 105mm ammunition was also released at the same time and all supplied to Nigeria on a «strictly cash» basis. Much of this was flown to Lagos and Kano by a number of charter flights out of the UK by several British independent operators. Exactly how many arms flights were made from Britain difficult to determine but as somebody suggested, «one doesn't go to Lagos for the benefit

³⁰² Cronan, J., Mitchell, K. Foreign Office records 1782 to 1986: A guide to country series L: List & Index Society. 2017. P. 741.

³⁰³ Warren, R. Weapons : the international game of arms, money and diplomacy. N.Y. : Doubleday. 1980. P. 45.

of one's health!»³⁰⁴. Conversely, not all of these flights may have carried arms, some definitely did.

Without seeking to intervene directly in the civil war in Nigeria, the Wilson Labor government tried to provide diplomatic support to resolve the conflict. Harold Wilson's government needed more substantial indications of federal goodwill in order to quell growing criticism in Parliament. The policy of allowing British arms manufacturers to sell weapons to Nigeria was at issue, and appeals for an embargo against further sales intensified as a full-scale federal invasion of the Ibo heartland began to appear inevitable. Responding in part to diplomatic pressure from London, General Gowon announced on June 5, 1968, that federal troops would not advance into the Ibo heartland «unless all appeals for a settlement failed»³⁰⁵.

The statement was issued barely a week before the British Parliament was due to debate the government's policy toward Nigeria. Predictably, British Foreign Minister Michael Stewart quoted Gowon's words as indicative of the federal government's goodwill, and also the latter's willingness to listen to the good advice offered by Her Majesty's government. If Britain stopped selling arms to Nigeria, the foreign minister implied, London could no longer serve as a countervailing influence against any hawks in Lagos who might press Gowon for a full-scale invasion. Inside Biafra, one of Ojukwu's aides drafted a memorandum that interpreted Gowon's apparent hesitation to invade as indicating that Lagos had returned to a policy of «encirclement», and that the decision had been precipitated by pressure from Britain and other unnamed powers³⁰⁶.

During the weeks preceding the Algiers summit, members of Gowon's Federal Executive Council traveled widely throughout Africa to give assurances of a quick end to the rebellion. Meanwhile, Nigeria's military commanders made plain their intention to press on with the fight. The most outspoken, Col. Benjamin Adekunle of the Third Marine Division, bluntly informed visiting journalists that he would soon present Gowon with a

³⁰⁴ Stremmlau, J.J. *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015. P. 280.

³⁰⁵ Achebe, C. *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. New York: Penguin Press, 2012. P. 61.

³⁰⁶ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Debates*. June 12, 1968. Vol. 766. P. 297- 299.

special «OAU victory»: the successful occupation of Biafra's three remaining towns, Owerri, Aba, and Umuahia. Then, on August 24, 1968, Gowon was asked during an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation whether reports of a «final» military push were true; he replied, «That's correct . . . all fronts from the north southwards, southwards northward, northwestern pushing southeastern». When pressed for a prediction of the victory date, he said «within the next four weeks»³⁰⁷.

The timing of Gowon's remark, which appears to have been a spontaneous reply to an unsolicited question, proved to be of considerable embarrassment to Harold Wilson's government in Britain. The BBC aired its interview with General Gowon proclaiming the invasion of the heartland on August 26, 1968, the night before Parliament convened for a special one-day debate on Nigeria. The federal government's readiness to compensate London for this latest and rather unnecessary strain in Anglo/Nigerian relations provides an interesting counterpoint to the more militant tenor of their intra-African diplomacy prior to the OAU summit.

Parliament adjourned without a vote, much to the consternation of the fifty MPs from both parties who had tabled a motion calling on the government to halt the sale of all further arms³⁰⁸. Afterward, Biafra's supporters convened a massive demonstration in Trafalgar Square, and later that evening marched to the prime minister's residence at No. Downing Street, where several of the demonstrators very nearly succeeded in battering their way through the front door. The next morning Wilson's minister of state in the Commonwealth Office, Lord Shepherd, was scheduled to see Chief Enahoro to counteract Biafra's successful penetration of British politics. Shepherd recalls preparing for the meeting, in light of recent «nasty incidents», and was determined to «get the heat off». The result was a suggestion that the federal government invite a team of international observers to serve as «umpires», overseeing the conduct of battle for the purpose of discrediting the Biafran lobby in Britain.

³⁰⁷ Gowon Announces the 'Final Push' // partial transcript of BBC interview. August 24, 1968 / reprinted in Kirk-Greene, *Crisis and Conflict*. Vol. II. P. 316-317.

³⁰⁸ Stremlau, J.J. *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967–1970*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1977. P. 321.

The proposal for international observers was not new, but in the past it had been associated with policing a cease-fire. When Shepherd met Enahoro later in the morning, August 28, 1968, he claims to have told him bluntly: «Look, your propaganda machine is bloody awful. You know what we're up against. What do you think of inviting observers, military men who would report publicly on the situation»? Enahoro agreed to pass along the proposal, and within forty-eight hours Gowon sent his approval. On August 30, 1968, the federal government publicly invited representatives of the United Nations, the OAU, Britain, Poland, Canada, and Sweden to accompany Nigerian troops fighting in Biafra and thereby verify their behavior and conduct in Ibo areas³⁰⁹.

Allowing a predominantly European group of military officers to pass judgment over whether Africans could wage a «civilized war» may have smacked of paternalism to some Nigerians. But the gesture illustrates Gowon's confidence and his readiness to make concessions of form, if not substance. Inviting the foreigners to bear witness promised to reduce the threat of interference as the level of military activity increased, but it did not imply any slowdown of the offensive. The day after the federal government alerted the British of their readiness to welcome observers, Gowon informed the nation in a major broadcast that the Supreme Military Council had decided to press on urgently with the invasion to «end the rebellion with the least delay». In a more militant vein, Radio Nigeria proclaimed, «Let the Federal Army march into rebel held areas. Let them crush what remains of the rebellion and liberate the suffering masses. This is what the nation demands. . . . Certain misguided foreign governments and humanitarian and religious organizations of dubious integrity will try to bring pressure to bear on the federal government. But it is up to our leaders to stand firm in the face of these pressures. Only the government of Nigeria can decide what is good for the country»³¹⁰.

³⁰⁹ On September 6, 1968, the federal government formally invited the observers from the four countries and two international organizations to visit Nigeria, initially for a period of two months. The representatives of the UN and the OAU issued separate reports, while the delegations from the four countries became known as the Observer Team and issued their reports jointly. For the first period, from September 24 to November 23, 1968, see: *No Genocide, Report of Observer Team to Nigeria*. Lagos: Nigerian National Press. 1968. P. 56.

³¹⁰ Adichie, C.N. *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Lagos: Parafina. 2006. P. 71.

«British interference» at this stage in the crisis would have meant a discontinuation of arms sales. This would have been a severe political blow to Nigeria's international image, but it would not have been critical to the military campaign or the eventual outcome of the war. Although the small arms that equipped the federal infantry were largely British and vital to the war effort, Nigeria's foreign exchange position was improving with a return to full oil production, and a plethora of private arms dealers were ready to take up the slack. More importantly, Dr. Arikpo had paid a visit to Moscow in July 1968, and reportedly found the Soviets prepared to supply Nigeria with whatever was necessary. There was a strong disinclination in Lagos to lean too heavily on Soviet support but, as the British knew perfectly well, the federal government was prepared to purchase this essential infantry equipment. Continued arms sales, one could argue, were more vital to Britain's long-term interests than to Nigeria's. Under no circumstances did the Wilson government wish to see Soviet presence in Nigeria grow any larger, particularly when the federal army seemed close to a final victory³¹¹.

The intensity of public hostility to official policies toward Nigeria on the European continent never approached the levels that confronted the Wilson government in Britain, where the former colonial power eschewed any pretense of neutrality and permitted the open sale of vast quantities of arms and ammunition to the Gowon regime. For a brief period during the fall of 1968 it seemed that the loose coalition of antiwar activists, religious and nonsectarian humanitarian bodies, and the millions of contributors to the Biafran relief effort were fading politically. Following the fresh reports of imminent mass starvation toward the end of the year, however, opposition to the government's position began to coalesce again.

In early December, 130 members of the House of Commons called on the government to halt all further arms sales to Lagos and devote itself to fostering a cease-fire³¹². During the next three months, the prime minister was the object of demonstrations, petitions, and vociferous lectures from the pulpit. For a brief period in January, trade with

³¹¹ Rimlinger, G., Stremlau, C. Economic Survey 1960-1970 // Report prepared for the Lagos Office of the Ford Foundation. September 1, 1970. P. 12-20.

³¹² Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates. December 4, 1968. Vol. 774. Col. 65.

Nigeria was even threatened by bands of irate British dockers who refused to handle any cargo bound for Lagos. Exacerbating Mr. Wilson's difficulties were a series of shocking reports from Biafra that appeared in *The Times*, among other newspapers, detailing the civilian suffering caused by federal jet aircraft. And, if the reports themselves were not a sufficient embarrassment to the government, federal authorities in Lagos abruptly suspended privileges in January 1969 for the BBC, on the grounds that its reporting had been biased.

The pressures facing Mr. Wilson were not all domestic. Britain's international prestige, to a greater extent than for any other external power, had become tied to the outcome of the civil war. By early 1969 Wilson was again being urged by Washington and several European powers to take a more decisive lead in promoting a negotiated settlement. During February he held separate meetings with President Nixon and Chancellor Brandt. Both leaders supported the British commitment to sell Lagos military equipment as an alternative to a Soviet monopoly, but they too faced constituents who were deeply agitated by events in Nigeria. When Mr. Wilson visited Bonny he was met by crowds of pro-Biafran, anti-British demonstrators, and in one dramatic moment two protestors burst through police cordons to throw buckets of blood at him. Meanwhile, in Switzerland the Biafran lobby was busy organizing a national boycott of all British imports as an expression of opposition to London's alleged complicity in the Nigerian war effort.

Wilson's options for engineering a peaceful settlement were rather limited. With Nigeria in control of nearly 90 percent of the territory of the former Eastern Region and preparing for another military offensive, halting the sale of arms was out of the question. The Nigerian economy was in surprisingly good shape, with sufficient funds to buy arms elsewhere if the government wished; the Soviets, particularly, were presumed ready to make up any shortage created by Britain's withdrawal³¹³. A further cause for not endangering relations with Lagos was the announcement on December 4, 1968, that

³¹³ Wilson H. *The Labour Government 1964-70: A Personal Record*. L.: Penguin Books. 1974. P. 391.

Shell-BP had resumed operations and Nigerian oil production was expected quickly to surpass the prewar levels.

From late 1968 until March 1969, Prime Minister Wilson campaigned publicly for a resumption of peace talks. The Labour government knew that the prospects for a resumption of formal talks and a negotiated settlement were extremely bleak. But press speculation in Britain about an imminent meeting between Nigerian and Biafran representatives was surprisingly optimistic, apparently sparked by a New Year's Eve broadcast in which Ojukwu stressed his readiness to begin unconditional negotiations. A major story, extrapolated from this and based on a rather unrealistic understanding of the dynamics of the conflict, was compiled by *The Times* in early January with the headline «Biafra Peace Talks Nearer». The article asserted that Biafra was prepared to consider a confederal status in return for control of its own police and defense forces. The Nigerians, for their part, were believed to be flexible on the subject of boundaries for the new states, and *The Times* anticipated a «One Nigeria» solution that would incorporate «virtually all Ibo territory in a single state, including large areas of the former Midwest Region». The new arrangement was expected to provide for shared communications, a customs union, and a limited pooling of revenue expenditure, including oil royalties. Both sides, the article concluded, had realized finally that neither could «go it alone,» and that a cease-fire and reconciliation was now possible³¹⁴.

The focus for such optimism was a forthcoming meeting of the Commonwealth prime ministers, the first since 1966, which would convene in London during the second week of January. It was assumed, at least by Fleet Street editors and journalists, that the Commonwealth organization would be acceptable to both sides and, unlike the OAU, Commonwealth countries possessed the means to enforce a cease-fire and adequately police any settlement³¹⁵. The May 1968 peace talks in Kampala had been promoted only

³¹⁴ Leapman, M. British interests, Nigerian tragedy // Independent. 4 January 1998. URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/british-interests-nigerian-tragedy-1136684.html> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

³¹⁵ Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference / Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Information. 1969. URL: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1969/jan/21/commonwealth-prime-ministers-meeting-1> (accessed: 12.08.2022).

by the Commonwealth Secretariat and not by the prime ministers, who were expected to be much more effective. Among those who would be present in London were Presidents Nyerere of Tanzania and Kaunda of Zambia, who presumably could represent Biafra's interests at the highest levels of discussion.

Awolowo did not see a copy of the letter from the Prime Minister of Great Britain until the prime minister handed him one at the end of their otherwise cordial meeting on the morning of January 14. In his formal reply circulated a few hours later, the Nigerian expressed surprise at the «unusual way» the matter had been handled and then unequivocally rejected the notion of another special committee. The reasons were obvious. Nigeria resented the implication of de facto parity with the rebel government, and even if «suitable terms of reference could be worked out»³¹⁶, the committee would only duplicate the work of the OAU Consultative Committee. Nothing more was heard of the Stevens proposal.

When the conference adjourned on January 15, 1969, after eight days of formal sessions, a 7,000-word communique was issued, but Nigeria was not mentioned. Shortly after the conference had ended, the British prime minister made a statement that sought to place blame for the absence of any dramatic breakthroughs toward a peaceful settlement: «The Head of the Nigerian delegation made plain to me and to others privately and to the gathering of twenty-seven of us at Lancaster House, his willingness unconditionally to attend a meeting with Ojukwu's representatives. I regret that there was no move in response from Colonel Ojukwu's representative. «In Lagos, General Gowon described the London Conference as «another vote of confidence in Nigeria»³¹⁷.

The outcome of the Commonwealth deliberations may have reassured the federal government, but it did little to mitigate Harold Wilson's domestic troubles. During a day-long Parliamentary debate on Nigeria in early March, the fifth since the crisis began, Wilson encountered the severest criticism to date³¹⁸. The vote on the question of continued arms sales was lopsided in favor of maintaining the existing policy (232-62),

³¹⁶ Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates. January 21, 1969. Vol. 776. Cols. 549-554.

³¹⁷ General Gowon Praises Commonwealth Delegation. Nigeria: Federal Ministry of Information. January 19, 1969. P. 85.

³¹⁸ Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates. Vol. 779. March 13, 1969. Cols. 1571-1696.

but more than half (330) of the members abstained and over a quarter of Mr. Wilson's Labour party failed to support him. The outcome might have been less secure but for an apparent sudden increase of Soviet influence in Nigeria and the dramatic announcement that the prime minister planned to visit Nigeria.

Less than a week before the debate, a Soviet naval squadron consisting of two missile destroyers, one submarine and one fleet oiler steamed into Lagos harbor on an unprecedented good-will visit. Nigeria's official press heralded the arrival as proof of the country's new-found status as a nonaligned power. While the ships were in port a Soviet sailor «fell» into Lagos lagoon and swam to the British merchant vessel Tweedbank, where he requested political asylum. Within an hour Nigerian police converged on the Tweedbank with the Soviet ambassador and the captain of the Soviet ship, and retrieved the sailor. Many Conservatives interpreted the incident as one more illustration of Nigeria's growing subservience to the Soviets. At the same time, rumors were abounded in London alleging Soviet intentions to open consulates throughout Nigeria. The latter reports were groundless.

Whether the specter of a greater Soviet presence in Nigeria would have been sufficient, or even necessary, to sustain a vote of confidence in Wilson's arms policy cannot be determined, because the prime minister injected a second, more dramatic, element into the debate when his foreign secretary announced that Wilson planned to fly to Lagos and personally explore the possibilities for a peaceful settlement. It was a bold move that had been cleared with the federal government only two days before. Gowon sought, and received in advance of the visit, assurances that the prime minister would not assume the pretensions of a mediator or undertake any other activity that suggested Britain was prepared to deal with the two sides on an equal basis. Wilson arrived in Lagos on March 27, 1969, for four days of fact finding.

The British prime minister sought Gowon's help on four issues that concerned the British people:

1. the resumption of direct talks with Biafran representatives, or at least new assurances of the federal government's willingness to talk so as to render more credible Wilson's allegations that Ojukwu was the real obstacle to a negotiated settlement;

2. guarantees for the safety of Ibos within a reunited Nigeria;
3. increased relief supplies to Biafra;
4. claims of indiscriminate bombing by the federal air force³¹⁹.

Fully half of Wilson's time in Nigeria was spent touring the three eastern states. This exercise, which included several enthusiastic impromptu speeches by the visitor, was immensely popular with federal leaders because it implied unqualified British support for the twelve states, including the legitimacy of Nigerian academic and civil servant Ukpabi Asika's rule in the liberated areas of the East Central State. While in Port Harcourt and Calabar, Wilson received much-publicized testimony from eastern minority leaders concerning the history of Ibo exploitation and the new realities of minority self-determination within the Nigerian federation. Radio Nigeria voiced official pleasure over the excursion, and expressed the hope that the prime minister would henceforth be in a better position to «clear the minds of the doubting Thomases in Britain . . . and tell those pro-rebel Parliamentarians in Commons what exactly the situation is in Nigeria»³²⁰.

By accepting Gowon's conditions pertaining to possible venues, Wilson destroyed the groundwork for his meeting with Ojukwu that had been quietly laid the previous week. On March 24, Britain's foreign secretary, Michael Stewart, had initiated a series of exchanges when, in response to a member's question on the floor of Commons, he remarked that the prime minister would not be opposed to visiting Biafra. Within forty-eight hours Ojukwu had sent word through his representative in London, Ignatius Kogbara, that Wilson would be received if he wished to come to Biafra³²¹. According to Ojukwu, Wilson dispatched Leonard Cheshire to Biafra to make detailed arrangements. Under the plan that Cheshire carried to Lagos and handed to Wilson shortly after his arrival, the prime minister was expected to fly into Uli from Lagos, meet Ojukwu, and together they would drive to Umuahia to survey the situation. This schedule was preempted by Wilson's March 30 cable to the Biafran representative in London, proposing

³¹⁹ Strelau, J.J. *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War. 1967-1970*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2015. P. 285.

³²⁰ Ojukwu, G. Biafra, Address to joint meeting of the Council of Chiefs and Elders and the Consultative Assembly. February 10 1969. Vol. I. P. 370-371.

³²¹ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Debates*. March 24, 1969. Vol. 780. Cols. 1019- 1023.

a meeting with Ojukwu on March 31 in any one of seven West African locations. Alternatively, he suggested a meeting in East Africa two or three days hence³²².

Ojukwu immediately rejected the revised proposition, citing pressing military concerns that made it impossible for him to leave his command post. More to the point, the Biafran leader surmised that nothing could be gained from a meeting outside the enclave. Wilson was expected to try to persuade Ojukwu to surrender peacefully and accept a «One Nigeria» solution, regardless of the venue. But had Wilson gone to Biafra, this would have enhanced the secession's international prestige and opened the possibility for visits by other government officials, including representatives of the United States Department of State³²³.

Failing to reach an agreement with Ojukwu on a suitable venue, Wilson left Lagos March 31, 1969, and flew to Addis Ababa to report to Emperor Haile Selassie as chairman of the OAU's Consultative Committee on the meetings with General Gowon. After two days of talks, which included a ninety-minute session with OAU Secretary General Diallo Telli, the prime minister issued a communique stating he had «found the federal Nigerian government in full agreement with Britain's policy supporting the need for a negotiated settlement and the preservation of Nigeria's unity»³²⁴. He then rushed back to London on April 2, 1969, to brief the House of Commons.

Wilson had been stymied, although he made a valiant effort to portray the fact-finding aspect of his foray as a major success, since he had been «reassured» of the wisdom of his government's Nigeria policy³²⁵. From the outset, he had accepted the reality that neither side would accept him as a mediator, but even his scaled-down bid to serve as an intermediary between the protagonists and the OAU had fallen short of opening a dialogue with Ojukwu. The parameters for any future initiative from London, he now admitted, were quite narrow: «Anyone who knows anything about Nigeria or Africa [he

³²² Stremlau, J.J. *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967–1970*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1977. P. 301-303.

³²³ Adedayo A. *Nigeria-Biafra Civil War and Law of Armed Conflict //The Journals of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice*. 2014. Vol. 1. №. 3. P. 76.

³²⁴ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Debates*, 1969. Vol. 781. Col. 485-500.

³²⁵ Adedayo A. *Nigeria-Biafra Civil War and Law of Armed Conflict //The Journals of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice*. 2014. Vol. 1. №. 3. P. 79-80.

lectured Parliament] will know that any attempt to get a peace settlement is for the Nigerians and, if help is needed, it should come from the OAU and not from any country outside Africa»³²⁶.

To sum up, as the war progressed, Britain, under the premiership of Harold Wilson, did try to be more accommodating to the Federal Government's needs but never fulfilling their absolute demands. Wilson found himself following an increasingly uncomfortable path, supplying arms to the Federal Government whilst officially denying the amounts of these supplies³²⁷. A major reason for the British Government's decision to supply the Nigerian Government with armaments has been the fear that the Soviet Union would move in lock, stock and barrel as it had already taken the opportunity of doing in several countries of the Middle East since the Six-Day War. At the start of the war both sides looked to arms suppliers who could accommodate their needs, and they both achieved success and failures in their searches, but as the war progressed, humanitarian considerations came into play. Essentially, although Britain initially posed as neutral, its underlying sympathies lay with the Federal Government.

As is clear from the analysis above, there has been a web of interests linking Nigeria with the third-parties since independence in 1960. Although Nigeria is geographically remote from them, there are some powerful internal and external factors operating to maintain links with both Moscow and London. Likewise, the third-parties themselves had their own national interests to promote by maintaining direct and close contact with the most populous, and potentially the richest and most powerful, country in black Africa. The pattern of Nigeria's relations with the third-parties had undergone some changes, however, due to the coups in the country, the civil war, the differences in the political style of the third-parties themselves and the present economic strength of Nigeria.

³²⁶ Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates, 1969. Vol. 781. Col. 490.

³²⁷ Gould, M. *The Biafran War: The Struggle for Modern Nigeria*. L.: I.B. Taurus. 2012. P. 96.

CONCLUSION

In the conclusion section of the research, the findings of the work done are summarized, including the main conclusions and generalizations.

It has been established that a wide variety of involvement strategies is available for third parties to use in an attempt to manage internal conflict. Nonetheless, external actors do not always consider the full range of options. The above-mentioned involvement strategies can give interveners leverage and aid them in efforts to mediate and manage internal conflict. This leverage is frequently diplomatic in nature, not simply military, providing an advantageous basis for soft intervention in conflicts, especially when the extremes of withdrawal and military intervention are inappropriate and may even be counterproductive. The problem is that these non-coercive involvement may not raise the costs of noncompliance sufficiently. Hence, as the previous discussions of economic sanctions and military enforcement suggest, it is necessary at times to link diplomacy with the threat or use of force to produce breakthroughs in the negotiation process. So, third parties intervene according to external and internal factors, and this impacts a conflict outcome in a way which is not necessarily and not always successful or suitable.

Conflicts on a national scale are complex phenomena, and third parties can use various intervention strategies to resolve them. However, despite the existence of a wide range of such strategies, third parties do not always take into account all the possibilities. The use of such strategies allows third parties to put pressure on the conflicting parties and participate in their settlement. This pressure is most often of a diplomatic nature and is not so much a military as a soft way of intervening in a conflict, especially when extreme measures, such as retreat or military intervention, are undesirable or may prove counterproductive.

However, despite the possibilities of diplomatic pressure, it is not always effective enough to force the parties to the conflict to comply with the requirements of third parties. Because of this, it may be necessary to use tougher measures, including threats or the use

of force, in order to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiation process. Empirical studies show that the use of various strategies by third parties in conflicts depends on many external and internal factors, and these factors can influence the outcome of the conflict, although not always successful or appropriate.

This is confirmed by the example of the conflict in Nigeria associated with the separatist movement Biafra. The intervention of third parties, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Organization of African Unity, could not prevent the escalation of the conflict and lead to its settlement. This shows that even with a wide range of intervention strategies, third parties are not always able to successfully resolve conflicts.

It has been proven that an internationalized conflict is a dynamic process that escalates and de-escalates over time, passing through distinct phases ranging from violent confrontation to nonviolent hostilities. Successful third-party intervention depends, to a great extent, on the correct recognition of the stages of a given conflict and implementing correct strategies in accord with that. In this respect, when violence breaks out, peacekeeping usually emerges as the most urgent strategy, since without separating antagonists and reducing psychological escalation it is impossible to handle and resolve the conflict, but as soon as it is possible to transfer the contradictions into a negotiated channel, peacemaking should enter the process. If extensive use of military force, in the form of peacekeeping, goes on despite de-escalation in violence, this would create new problems and re-escalate the conflict. Similarly, if peacekeeping is attempted, but nothing else later, the result would be continuation of the problem, since without proper peacemaking efforts, peacekeeping by itself can-not reverse the underlying causes of conflict. As a result, in successfully coping with international conflicts in the post-Cold War era, a need for a comprehensive strategy arises, combining peacekeeping and peacemaking in the overall resolution process. It should be kept in mind that since the problem is many-sided, there cannot be any single, magic form. The wisest thing to do, therefore, is to attack from many directions in accord with the requirements of situations.

It is shown that the internal conflict carried a number of features typical of African conflicts: the struggle between ethnopolitical groups for power and resources; the

importance of the ethnicity factor; the game of politicians on ethnic feelings, contributing to the polarization of ethnic relations; the presence of the mineral factor, which aggravated the course of the conflict; the inability of the authorities to resolve pressing social and ethnic contradictions; the destruction of traditional institutions, as well as the protracted nature of the confrontation. For example, military actions on the territory of the DRC (1998-2003) attracted the attention and efforts of neighboring states, as a result of which the conflict acquired a regional character. The DRC became the epicenter of the crisis development of Central Africa and the Great Lakes sub-region of Africa, and was on the verge of disintegration, as large armed associations with a clan basis fought for power on its territory. During the conflict, foreign participants, directly or through intermediaries, took control of most of the mineral deposits of DR Congo, such as gold and diamonds. These resources were in the hands of Angola, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Uganda, which cooperated with Western Powers in this area, and sometimes fully acted in their interests. This demonstrates the regularity of new forms of intervention, when the main beneficiary does not act directly, but through a regional intermediary. Unregulated ambitions of Western countries have led to an international war in the center of the African continent, which has become a real threat to international security and created a humanitarian catastrophe. These forms manifested themselves in the civil war in Biafra.

It is revealed that the intransigence and irreconcilable differences between Gowon, the de facto leader of the Federation, and Ojukwu, the Eastern Regional governor, appointed by Ironsi, the former leader, that determined an inexorable slide towards civil war. When he assumed power Gowon's position was extremely precarious. He was only acceptable to the North because he was a Northerner, albeit a Middle Belter, and to the South because he was Christian. One of his first moves on taking power was to rescind Ironsi's decree 34, thus immediately placating the North. However, his position remained tenuous, particularly in his relations with Awolowo and the West, although he did placate him by bringing him into his administration as his deputy. But it was his relationship with Ojukwu that proved intractable. For his part Ojukwu never accepted Gowon's position and refused to serve under him. He would only compromise by serving the Federation as

Gowon's equal, an impossible state of affairs for controlling and running such a large and diverse country as Nigeria.

According to the findings, the British government favored a unified and stable Nigeria instead of multiple radical nationalist states. This preference was established during the late colonial period and continued until the coup led by Gowon. When conflicts among Nigerian elites made the status quo unsustainable, the British government had to identify its primary interests in Nigeria and create strategies to protect them. Economic interests were considered paramount, especially oil interests, which were significant due to Shell-BP's investments and the flow of crude they produced. The British government was willing to consider recognizing an independent Eastern government if it proved viable. However, the policy changed when the Nigerian government imposed a blockade on Eastern oil, which forced the British government to prioritize the status of Shell-BP's oil installations. Despite Commonwealth obligations and the precedent of Katanga, the British government provided significant arms to Lagos before the USSR rivalry became a significant concern. The opinion of Commonwealth minister George Thomas fluctuated, and his proposal for a 'peace offensive' was the last significant attempt to accommodate Lagos and Enugu while protecting British economic interests.

Even though various groups urged action, the UN's top priority was to honor the FMG's sovereignty. The secretary-general made no real efforts to involve the organization in resolving the war, and his only involvement was to react to the FMG's appeals. The UN's stance demonstrated that not all humanitarian and human rights organizations supported the Biafran perspective.

It has been established that the Soviet Union had no significant presence in the region prior to 1966 but progressively took greater interest in Nigerian affairs after the Aguiyi-Ironsi coup d'état and the emergence of Nigeria as an important oil exporter. The initial neutrality of the USSR's Western rivals, including Britain and the United States in particular provided an opening for the Soviets to send MiG fighters and technical assistance to the Nigerians, thereby including the region in the cold war theater. Together with military and technical support, the USSR began to interact with Nigeria in economic and humanitarian aspects, which indicated the strategic nature of the relations being built.

The Soviet decision to support the federalist side in the Nigerian Civil War marked a decisive departure from Moscow's previous ideology driven commitments in the Third World and particularly in Africa. By throwing their weight behind a side whose leadership had exactly zero interest in 'socialist orientation', the Soviets effectively accepted the primacy of pragmatic geopolitics over ideology. The Biafran War was indeed a Cold War conflict but of a very peculiar kind, with alliances forged and maintained across the usual ideological divides: Moscow betting on the federalists' superior numbers and resources. From the Soviet point of view, this was a winning bet. Even though the wartime Western fears (stoked by Biafran propaganda) of the Soviet Union's ascendancy in West Africa would prove to be largely unfounded, the Soviets did increase their visibility and influence in a region formerly closed to them. However, for a full assessment of the situation in the field of interference of third factors in the internal conflict, it is worth considering the activities of the states of the Western, capitalist bloc.

It is shown that as the war progressed, Britain, under the premiership of Harold Wilson, did try to be more accommodating to the Federal Government's needs but never fulfilling their absolute demands. Wilson found himself following an increasingly uncomfortable path, supplying arms to the Federal Government whilst officially denying the amounts of these supplies. A major reason for the British Government's decision to supply the Nigerian Government with armaments has been the fear that the Soviet Union would move in lock, stock and barrel as she has already taken the opportunity of doing in several countries of the Middle East since the six-day war. At the start of the war both sides looked to arms suppliers who could accommodate their needs, and they both achieved success and failures in their searches, but as the war progressed, humanitarian considerations came into play. Essentially, although Britain initially posed as neutral, its underlying sympathies lay with the Federal Government.

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