



EGBÉ OMO YORÙBÁ

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF YORÙBÁ DESCENDANTS IN NORTH AMERICA
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Chief Adébáyò Àlào-Akálà
Governor of Òyó State,
Governor's Office
Agodi, Ìbàdàn
Òyó State, Nigeria

Your Excellency Governor Àlào-Akálà:

Re: Chief Obáfémi Awólówò's Cenotaph

Our attention has been drawn to the replacement of the cenotaph of the late sage and former premier of the Western Region Chief Obáfémi Jeremiah Awólówò with a statue of the "unknown soldier". At this point, we do not intend to rehash the historic and monumental achievements of this esteemed Yorùbá leader in the Yorùbá nation in particular and Nigeria in general. Our membership is extremely dismayed by any rationale that could have necessitated this judgment especially the clarification by your administration that it is reverting to its "master plan." This action clearly denigrates the memory of our great Yorùbá icon.

Your Excellency, as the Governor of Òyó State, Egbé Omo Yorùbá, National Association of Yorùbá Descendants in North America (The Egbé) clearly understand and respect your rights to honor anyone you chose to, including the "unknown soldier." However, as democrats who are aware of the ruins of military rule in Nigeria and what the "unknown soldier" connotes, it is shocking that a civilian administration would prefer to preserve the relic of such dark days as a nation at the expense of a worthy son whose contributions and accomplishments remain indelible. As a matter of fact having a statue in his honor is indeed the least of what any one could undertake to immortalize Chief Awólówò's name in the documented political capital of the Yorùbá nation.

"Bí abá ta ara ilé eni ní òpò, akíí ri rà ní òwón"

One, who works to ensure that one's people are disrespected, becomes fair game to outsiders.

In this day-and-age when the Yorùbá nation is working to regain respect in Nigeria, the message your action sends is counter productive to our collective goals. As such, the Egbé Omo Yorùbá, National Association of Yorùbá Descendants in North America, join the rest of the Yorùbá nation to strongly urge that a new cenotaph of Chief Obáfémi Awólówò be constructed to replace that of the "unknown soldier," that an unreserved apology be tendered by the Òyó State government to the Yorùbá people and that the statue of the unknown soldier be relocated to the military barracks or to another location more appropriate for those you intended it to honor.

We sincerely hope that government actions would be propelled by good public policies rather than politics.

Adéolá Òdúsànyà
National President