

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ECWA WORK IN EGBE

KOGI STATE (1908-2008)

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## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

ECWA Hospital Egbe is the first of its kind established by SIM / ECWA the goal of the hospital as stated by the management is to be recognized as a self-sustaining Christian hospital know throughout Nigeria for integrity, medical excellence, quality medical training and compassionate patient care provided by exceptional staff to serve the health care needs of persons of all faiths and culture. It is therefore recommended that since Egbe is the cradle of ECWA, much attention should be given to the heritage of the mission. ECWA in Nigeria should give necessary assistance instead of waiting for foreign one. ECWA Hospital Egbe is the first and the biggest of all ECWA hospitals in Nigeria. consequently, it is also recommended that the hospital should be upgraded as annex of Bingham University Teaching Hospital located at Jos. Bingham University was established by ECWA in 2005 at Karu and named after the first SIM/ ECWA director. The university is located at Karu along Abuja – Keffi Express way in Nasarawa State. ECWA Hospital Egbe is recommended because of its serene environment. Egbe is devoid of any religions riot. The Nigerian University Commission (NUC) has approved faculty of health sciences of the institution, in the consequence, ECWA Evangel Hospital, Jos is made her teaching hospital. There is incessant religion riot in Jos; hence, ECWA Hospital Egbe should be upgraded to Teaching Hospital of Bingham University. There are various department already in existence in the hospital such as administration, account, pharmacy, theatre unit, radiology, out-patient department, laboratory, various categories of wards, maternity, antenatal and family planning, eye centre, maintenance, chapel and HIV/AIDS counseling unit. All these departments are already revitalized and need little attention to the advantage of the university. The

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<sup>87</sup> Dada J. A. , Focus on Egbe: An Egbe Welfare Association Publication Egbe: Alaanukilan Press, 1993. P. 11

recent missionaries from America and Canada did a wonderful job of revitalization which includes water supply, provision of capable generators and solar power.

Again, it is also recommended that Baptist Mission through N B C should continue to penetrate this area to win more souls for Christ. If Baptist work must revive in this area and region her lost past position as the first mission to come to Yagbaland, it is recommended that the Baptist Mission needs to stage a powerful crusade to win more souls. The Baptist Mission work going on in Patigi which is 70 kilometers to Egbe is commendable, but more efforts is still needed, there is more ground to be covered. Baptist needs to register their existence and presence in some major town in Yagbaland. Baptists existence is seen only in Mopa and Egbe. There is a Baptist Girls High School at Mopa. Baptist must be involved in the ministry of paying attention to the needs of people. Baptist should also establish Primary Health Centers in some villages with committed staff.

Since the only ( Baptist Girls High School, Mopa) school has been taken over by the government the mission needs to establish new ones where there will be high standard of moral discipline and academic excellence. When Titcombe College was taken over by the government, ECWA established George Campion College. Besides, Muslims are the minority in most of the towns and villages in Yagbaland, the spirit of Operation Reach all is needed to reach out to these category of people. Congregational policy of Nigeria Baptist Convention will be an advantage for its embracement.

Furthermore, the local airstrip established by SIM/ ECWA in the town some 19 kilometers away need to be revitalized or upgraded to a standard airport by the government of Kogi state. The facility was established to provide the landing for the light aircraft which supplied the SIM/ECWA hospital with drugs from Canada during the time of missionaries. The airstrips that is located on hectares of land would become useful if it is taken over and upgraded to airport. The nearest one is Airport at Ilorin and another one at Abuja.

Again, the Kogi state Government should assist the hospital in efforts to train nurses, midwives, post graduate doctors and family medicine practitioners



## 5.4 CONCLUSION

There is no gain saying the fact that Egbe is what it is today as a result of its encounter with SIM Missionaries. This historical research has presented to us the historical background of Egbe as a town and as one of Yagba towns in Kogi State. The town is in North Central zone geographically but it is referred to as one of North-Eastern Yoruba towns, its heterogeneous status notwithstanding.

Again, this research work has beam its light on some erroneous beliefs and impressions of some authors especially among the missionaries and put effort into correcting these anomalies. Among such beliefs and impression created by these foreign authors was that Egbe people in the past were cannibals. Herbert J. Kane described the Yagba people which includes Egbe people as “a pagan tribe noted for cannibalism<sup>90</sup>”. However, Webster’s New Collegiate dictionary defines a pagan as a follower of a polytheistic religion or one who has delights in sensual pleasures and materials gods, and irreligious hedonistic person. From Latin language where the word etymology and morphology lie, it means a village dweller or a countryman<sup>91</sup>.

The word is also described as a sociological term used to distinguished between the civilized and the backward people. It is amazing to notice that such word is used by a writer to describe people’s religion. Egbe people were never pagans because the concept of God was known to them right from onset. This concepts was known as “Olodumare or Olorun or Eleda” It is good to emphasize the fact that God has never left Himself without witness anywhere in His world<sup>92</sup>. This emphasize is to buttress home the fact that the concept of God was already known by the Yorubas before the coming of the missionaries. The Yorubas held God in high esteem, they believed He was / is supreme and He could not be contacted directly because of His supremacy. In the consequence, they worshipped Him through the known divinities because they believed in what they could see. Therefore, this work of research has proved it beyond reasonable doubt that Herbert J. Kane was wrong in his assumption.

Again, I must say that Yoruba in general and Egbe people in particular were monotheists because of their concept of one great God who created the heaven(s) and

<sup>90</sup> Herbert J. Kane, A global View of Christian Missions: from Pentecost to the present, r.ed. Grand Rapids: Baker 1975, p. 334

<sup>91</sup> Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, 1980, p. 816

<sup>92</sup> Idowu Bolaji E, Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief. Lagos: Longman 1962 p. 30

