

PERISCOPING DR. MICHAEL OKPARA'S PRAGMATIC SOCIALISM IN THE LIGHT OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT.

Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara was the third substantive Premier of Old Eastern region of Nigeria. He was elected Premier after Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Professor Eyo Ita. Before him was also Mr. U.I. Akpabio who had earlier served on acting capacity. Dr. Okpara led the Eastern region from 1959 to 1966. Pragmatic socialism was indigenized socialist concept propagated by Dr. Michael Okpara. He so much cherished this policy throughout his tenure as the Premier of Eastern region. As a cardinal trust of his Economic-Policy, government was not only a key player in project formulation but also its implementation. Throughout the life of this policy, the government was able to closely monitor the economic behavior of the region, and to promptly offer solution in advent of failure. The concept was anchored on short, medium and long term economic planning. No wonder several years after Dr. Okpara vacated office; all the states as constituted now in the Eastern region are still reaping the economic benefits of the pragmatic socialism. In pragmatic socialism, governance was brought closer to the grassroots. The ability to carry the masses along enabled the populace to offer fair understanding and assessment of the direction of the government policies. In view of the above analysis, the paper attempts to critically assess the concept of the pragmatic socialism in the light of the current economic situation in Nigeria. In that sense, the paper had succinctly analyzed Okpara's Economic Policy during his time, drawn comparative analysis with the contemporary leadership, and pointed out where we have gotten it wrong as a nation and what we need to do to excel.

KEYWORDS: Kitbuzz, Socialism, Onye ahala Nwanne ya, Industrialization Policy and Farm settlements.

INTRODUCTION.

In 1940s Okpara was a young student of Yaba higher College. It was at the time when Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was building a national party together with Dr. Hebert Macaulay in Lagos. The Political activities of these elites must have caught the attention of young Okpara who often time will sneak out to listen to political discussions. His desire to end the colonial rule did not go unnoticed when he joined the Zikist movement. When Okpara completed his higher education his desire to practice his profession saw him being posted to Maiduguri. As a vibrant young man who aspired to work and serve his people, he began the ambition to further his medical training abroad. This was however never to be when during one of his off days in his home town of Umuegwu Aforugiri Umuahia he received August visitor under the leadership of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. Dr. Okpara's incursion into political became a reality due to his membership of Bende Union, and again Dr. Azikiwe found him a worthy lieutenant and thus coveted him to join and contest for an elective position under the platform of the NCNC. Dr. Okpara's meeting with Nnamdi Azikiwe marked the beginning of a political journey that was to be truncated by the first military coup in Nigeria.

Before the election of Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara as the Premier of the Eastern Region in 1959, he had served as a Regional Minister under the leadership of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. His excellence Performances during his times as the Regional Minister was remarkable. The milestone achievements recorded during the time caught the attention of Azikiwe who was instrumental to Okpara's appointment as the leader of NCNC during Jos convention of 1959.

OKPARA FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION.

Chief Okpara Ajunwa Asonye hustling life exposed him to so many cities in Nigeria. In the course of his Menial jobs, he had the opportunity of offering his labour when the Port Harcourt Maiduguri Railway track was laid. From the account of Chris Offodile 'Okpara Ajunwa Asonye stretched his talents from farming to the making and selling of Masks and later became jack of all trades' ¹. Considering the merger income generated by doing menial job, Okpara Ajunwa Asonye engaged in job hunting that took him to other places like Onitsha, Calabar, Kalabari and Okrika. In one such journey to Calabar, he was opportune to come in contact with pupils enrolled to western education. He was not only fascinated but decided to reciprocate by sending son to school whenever he returned home. This was actualized when young Michael was enrolled at the Umuegwu Okpuala Methodist Primary School in 1927, just at the age of seven years. Okpara completed his first three years in the Methodist Primary School Umuegwu Okpuala In 1930, and moved to Central School Afugiri where he completed his Primary School Education in 1934. In 1934, during his final year at the Central School Aforugiri, Young Okpara had set for an Entrance Examination to Methodist College Uzuakoli. Going to Methodist College Uzuakoli without strong financial base was a high Academic hurdle which was expected to surmount. When Young Okpara passed the Entrance Examination, for two years, 'his father had to toil ceaselessly to afford his school fees. At a time Okpara could not afford the fees, and he was at the verge of dropping out before he got the Mission Scholarships AT Uzuakoli' ². This could only happen after his father had labored for two years to keep him in School.

During Michael Okpara's years at Uzuakoli, he had made the rare opportunity to receiving training through reputable scholars cum missionaries. Such people like A.S. Femby, John Wood, H.L.O. Williams, Rev. Laddley etc contributed immensely in molding Okpara Academically. Equally remarkable during Michael Okpara's days at Uzuakoli were his mates. Such people like Henry Ofonri, Bob Ogbuagu, Enyinnaya Nnochiri, O.K. Ogan, S.C.

Onyeagocha, M.C.K. Ajuluchukwu and so many others, cultivated and inculcated Academic habit the contributed toward arousing Okpara's passion for studies.

Among the teachers that taught young Okpara at the Ozuakoli, whose Academic impact left indelible impact on his Academic pursuit were Mr. J.C. Achara and Mr. William Okezie. The duo came from the Yaba Higher College. According to Okpara 'These two new masters were so much more impressive than their other Nigerian Colleagues that young Michael Okpara resolved to struggle hard to obtain their kind of Education' ³. Michael Okpara would face the lithium's test when in 1940 he was set to write Class 6 Examination. The Examination was not only tough, but was meant to select just forty students who would be given the opportunity to study in Yaba Higher College. Out of over one thousand applicants Okpara was among just forty students that were offered admission.

Michael Okpara's admission to Yaba Higher College to study Medicine opened a new chapter in his life. His movement to Lagos opened a new opportunity that elevated him to the class of the elites. It also saw to his leaving his community, parents and culture which he has been used to over the years. He left to begin a journey that will later shape his career.

Okpara's higher education in Yaba Higher College lasted for 5 and half years, during which he passed his pre-medical and pre-veterinary Examinations. In effect, Okpara developed political consciousness while in Yaba Higher College. In fact, 'he attended as a student the first meeting that led to the formation of the NCNC, the Ojokoro farm meeting'⁴.

OKPARA'S ADVENTURE IN NIGERIAN POLITICS.

Okpara's interest in Politics started in Lagos while attending Yaba Higher College. Two things could have informed or aroused his interest in Politics. Firstly, in Lagos Michael Okpara was able to rob minds with the elites who were mostly experienced and residence in Lagos. Secondly, Okpara encountered colonial repression and thus became disenchanted, and thus involved in the battle against Colonialism.

Initially Okpara never had the intention of joining Politics but to remain a Medical Doctor. However, his admiration of the great Zik's Political sagacity attracted him to NCNC. In fact, 'when Herbert Macauley died in 1947, Dr. Okpara was one of the young men in Lagos who dressed up in shorts, and old shirts and insisted on carrying the coffin for at least a hundred yards' ⁵. This show of solidarity was followed by rare exhibition of high sense of nationalism, when two years later in 1949 the striking miners in Enugu were shot dead by the Colonial Police. The shooting, which resulted to the death of 29 miners, elicited spontaneous protest across the major cities in the Eastern Region. At that time, Dr. Okpara rose to the occasion as he openly condemned the action of the Resident office in Enugu, on whose instance the Acting Resident officer for Umuahia, Mr. Garrard got Okpara arrested and detained for four days.

This incidence also marked the turning point in Dr.Okpara's Political commitment as he became more actively involved in Politics. In fulfillment of his political aspiration, he joined Bende Divisional Union. Through his membership with the Union, he was able to lay his political foundation. Subsequently, together with Chief Jaja Wachuku they formed a Political Party the New Africa Party. At that time, one needed to join NCNC through a Platform. Apart from forming a Party Dr. Okpara was also admitted member of Bende Divisional Organization. The modest sense of Nationalism in Dr. Okpara did not go unnoticed as he continued to work toward building his political foundation.

In 1949 there was coal miners' protest. Because of the outcome of the miners Protest, the NCNC had in 1951 reorganized some Party's Policies. For instance, provision was made to admit members individually unlike before. With this arrangement Dr. Okpara was glad to not only join as an individual but to join with his friend Jaja Wachuku. However, a little clash of interest led Dr. Okpara to join alone. This led to the end of their New Party, the New Africa Party. At this point Okpara was satisfied of having secured his political footing and as such had wanted to go abroad for his Post-Graduate Certificate before taking full swing into Politics.

His Post-Graduate Study ambition was however scuttled, when in the same 1951, Dr. Azikiwe chose to embark on Political tour to Umuahia. This visit was to offer Dr. Okpara the opportunity to meet with Zik one on one. After the meeting, Okpara was endorsed to contest election under the platform of NCNC in Bende Division. This marked the beginning of Okpara's in the murky water of Nigerian Politics.

The event that will shape Dr. Okpara's Political trajectory started in the Western Region. In 1951 there was first Western Regional House of Assembly Election with the major Parties in the South NCNC and AG staged to slough it out. At the end Dr. Azikiwe the leader of NCNC has won a seat from Lagos. In over all the NCNC had won, the stage was thus set to sworn Dr. Azikiwe as the leader of Government in the Western Region. In effect, the die hard 'Egbe Omo Oduduwa' in Action Group (AG) could not have such. Within a twinkle of an eye, majority of the NCNC members have cross carpeted to give AG majority in the House. With this development, Chief Obafemi Awolowo the leader of AG and not Dr. Azikiwe was called upon to form the Government. Dr. Azikiwe was obsessed at the tribal Politics being instigated against him by Chief Awolowo (A Yoruba). This could have ended Zik's Political career save the appeal made by Dr. Okpara, Dr. O. Ikejiani and host of his other Political associates from his Eastern home Region's.

For clarity's sake, it should be recalled that in 1951, there was Eastern Regional Election, Zik did not put himself up for Election in the Region but Chose to contest in the West (Lagos) where he resides in 1952. When tribal Politics denied him the opportunity to Head the Government in the west, he could not bring himself to face his colleagues who ditched him to join the AG. He could not bear the agony being the leader of opposition considering the fact that majority of the house members were once in his Party. It thus became imperative for him to return to east to lead the NCNC Government.

In the Eastern Region, Prof. Eyo Ita the leader of the government in the East refused to concede his seat for another Election, having just been Elected barely one ago. This created a moment of crisis between those loyal to Prof. Eyo and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. Dr. Michael Okpara's loyalty to the Peace of the Eastern Region was put to test when he together with other ministers from the Region put in their resignation letter, in order to facilitate for the Election process aimed to bring Dr. Azikiwe to Power as the Premier to replace Prof. Eyo Ita. Although others later withdrew their resignation letter, but Dr. Okpara stood his ground. His steadfastness was rewarded when Dr. Azikiwe was elected in 1953 to appoint him Minister of Health. This singular act Dr. Okpara also drew him closer to the corridor of for eleven years. Dr. Okpara's Political leadership as the Premier of Eastern Region came to an end following the first Military coup of January 15, 1966.

OKPARA'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND ITS IMPACT ON EASTERN REGION OF NIGERIA.

In 1957 an allegation of breach of trust was leveled against Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. This allegation bordered on Azikiwe's investment of Government money in African Continental Bank where he was a shareholder, this allegation which was brought against Dr. Azikiwe by the former Chief Whip of NCNC Mr. Eyo led to the constitution of Foster-Sutton tribunal. Dr. Okpara's political philosophy of getting Africa rid of Vestiges of Colonialism was swung into action. He mobilized people to raise fund to prosecute the matter. His motive being that since ACB was the only indigenous bank founded by Azikiwe to raise loan to support local business people, he found nothing wrong in Azikiwe's act.

Dr. Okpara also believed in rewarding committed and sincere party members. In fact, when Zik relieved those who stood by his side during cabinet reshuffle, Dr. Okpara expressed his misgiving. In his thinking, those members ought to have been rewarded for standing solidly behind him, but reverse was the case. Offordile aptly captured the consequences of that action in his work, when he stated, thus, 'it was Zik's refusal to yield ground on this issues that led to the Zik must go movement' ⁶.

Okpara in his submission, opined, thus, 'Ministers who had been dropped...would not have been dropped at that time' ⁷. This attitude ought to have defined Okpara's Political Philosophy of not only engaging on only capable hands in his government, but experienced ones over a long period of time. In fact, Sally Dyson aptly captured practical experience of that in Okpara's Government when he stated thus, 'If Okpara erred at all in his strategy during election, it was only because of loyalty to old colleagues. For eleven years he had worked with the present members of his cabinet...' ⁸. Okpara's political philosophy endeared him not only to his political associates but to the generality of the people of Eastern Region who enjoyed massive Political stability.

Moreover, in 1962, the NCNC changed from National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon to National Council of Nigerian Citizens. Okpara still retained his leadership position of the party. Okpara's Political Philosophy was to play Politics without bitterness. In 1964, Dr. Michael Okpara in fulfillment of his Philosophy in building bridge of Unity across his region embarked on meet-the-people tour of Western Nigeria. In the six days of the tour, Dr. Okpara motored over 1,100 miles, shook more than 20,000 hands, received gifts that ranged from live sheep to a chieftaincy Cap' ⁹.

From the home front Dr. Okpara's Political Philosophy of pragmatic socialism became a symbol and beacon of Economic and Political revival. His philosophy projected Government leadership in providing and arousing private participation in Economic Development.

OKPARA'S CONCEPT OF PRAGMATIC SOCIALISM.

Pragmatic Socialism formed Dr. Michael Okpara's Political thrust throughout his tenure as the Premier of Nigerian Eastern Region. This ideology was carefully structured to impact every aspect of the life of the people. It has the strong imprint of the culture of people who believed in the concept of 'everyone being his brother's keeper...Onye ahala Nwanne ya' ¹⁰. It should be recalled that during the colonial regime in Nigeria, the British government has enforced the ideology of anti-communism in Nigeria colony. According Offordile, Sir John Macpherson, once sent a circular to the secretariat and all heads of government departments ordering them to ensure that no Nigeria who studied in Russia or Eastern Europe or who was

suspected to be a Marxist or communist was given employment in the service of government or any statutory body supported by government funds’¹¹.

Nigerians were prevented from travelling to Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. The idea behind the strict embargo on migration to Russia was to prevent the circulation of the Communist ideology. Some Nigerians nevertheless, who managed to slip to Russia were aided by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and the colonists were aware of that. Those who managed to return back to the Continent were treated like lepers

During the time of Dr. Okpara, there was one Mr. Meke Anagbogu. Mr. Anagbogu was then the Deputy Editor of the Nigerian Outlook and a Socialist. He was critical of Dr. Okpara’s government. This might have drawn Okpara’s which would have resulted to cordial relationship thereafter. Dr. Okpara might have cultivated relationship with other Socialist in the Region. When pragmatic Socialism came, it came with a social concept with deep rooted African Political and Economic expression.

In Educational sector remarkable breakthrough was recorded. In fact, Babs Fafunwa had this to say, ‘The foundation of expansion having been solidly laid in the two preceding decades, the 1950s witnessed the most Phenomenal expansion in the History of Nigeria Education’¹². This became obvious when investigation in two out of the three Regions proved that, ‘the Western and Eastern Regional government headed by the Action Group and the NCNC respectively placed highest priority on Education’¹³. When free junior Primary Education was approved to commence in 1957, there was a corresponding increment in the number of teachers recruited. The free Primary Education led to increased number of teachers from 1,300 to 2,500. The consequence was the construction of more secondary schools.

Dr. Okpara’s concept of ‘Onye Ahala Nwenne ya’ (Everyone being his brother’s keeper) took its fundamental base in 1953 when the then Eastern Regional Minister of Mr. R.I. Uzoma has adopted the concept to Promote free Education. According to Babs Fafunwa, ‘Mr. R.I. Uzoma outlined his government’s Policy on free Primary Education ... the local government bodies in the region were expected to pay 45 per cent of the cost of a free junior Primary Education’¹⁴. It was not only the local government, but community union, wealthy individuals also opted to sponsor some brilliant pupils to acquire western Education. Onye Ahala Nwanne ya were thus a driving force for the restoration of the dignity of man through collective intervention. The Religious and Government collaboration in funding of Education and Health was formidable. Sincerely, students’ enrolment increased across various level of Education in the Eastern Region. In fact, between 1947 to 1957 children enrolment in Primary schools rose from 320,000 to 1,209,167.

Dr. Okpara’s investment in Education was not only restricted to Education, he diversified to include Vocational and Technical Education. For instance, from 1956 there were 99 of such schools in the Eastern Region, but by 1960, it has increased to 241. The increased number of enrolments recorded could have its bearing through traced to the community and individual participation in the promotion of Western Education through sponsorship intervention. Pragmatic Social could only strive in such scenario. In fact, Onwuka Njoku has laid credence to the community intervention in building Education East of Nigeria when he started, thus, ‘In general by the 1930, the value of Western Education had dawned on Ohafia people. Thence each Village Community started to pursue this Education with remarkable avidity’¹⁵. Apart from the Community individual from the Community like Nna Kalu Eke, Kalu Udu, Uche Ukume etc were individual who exhibited the ‘Onye Ahala Nwanne ya’ spirit. Okpara recorded huge success in the development because his people saw the need. He therefore

galvanizes the tradition 'be your brother's keeper to sustain the developmental strives in the Eastern Region.

In Agricultural sector Dr. Okpara's Pragmatic Socialism did wonders. Pragmatic Socialism integrated local content, improved on it and achieved the status of the fastest growing Economy in the World. He introduced high yielding palm trees, established the pioneer oil mills with improved innovated oil press method. In order to create conducive farm method, he established farm settlements well equipped with basic amenities. He established schools and dispensaries, housing for the seasonal farmers and recreational facilities. His farm settlement was structured to resemble the Israelis Kibbutz.

Apart from palm produce, Dr. Okpara ventured into Rice farm, Cashew plantation, Rubber Estate etc. The farm settlements were widely located. Years after his government the farm settlements are still providing the needed cash to their host states. Ulunna farm settlement in Abia State, Erei farm Settlement in Cross River State, Rison palm in Rivers State and Ohaji Palm Estate in Imo State. There were rubber Plantations in Cross River and Abia State, while Rice farm was located almost in the entire Region. Cashew Plantation were established in Oghé and Okigwe. 'M.I. pragmatic socialism...sought to take in our dislike of laziness and beggary, as well as our inherent suspicion' ¹⁶.

Dr. Okpara's pragmatic socialism opened the Eastern Region to the world. The establishment of Plantation agriculture, improved oil palm seedling, resulted to high Agro output, in addition to that, Eastern region recorded increased the per capita income during his tenure. Dr. Okpara's industrial Policy led to creation of the Enugu industrial hub. The Industrial hub established by Dr. Okpara, which was located at Zik's Avenue, created job opportunities for the masses. The Port Harcourt's Trans Amadi was another brain child of Dr. Okpara. He developed Trans Amadi to be industrial processing zone for the exportation of goods produced in the Region. From the industrial Estate the railway was connected through Trans Amadi to the Port. Nkalagu Cement was another contribution from Dr. Okpara. He opened up the factory, created yet other job opportunities and also reduced the cost of cement.

Dr. Okpara expanded the coal mining industry as number of mines was increased with improved condition of service for the miners. During his regime the following mines were operational, Ogbete, Iva Valley, The Heyes and Ekulu mine. In order to enhance the movement of coal from the Ekulu mine opened in 1959, coal is transported by aerial ropeway to the railway siding at Iva Valley' ¹⁷. Part of the coal was also shipped to power the Oji River power station. At the peak of the coal production, the annual output grew up to 900,000. As earlier mentioned, due to large deposit of lime stone, Okpara expanded Nkalagu cement Industry as production capacity grew to 200,000 tons of cement in a year.

In the Health sector, Dr. Okpara was at home considering his background as a Medical Doctor. In fact, when Zik was Elected Premier of Eastern Region in 1953, 'M.I. was appointed by Zik to his new cabinet, because he had been the one that wrote the NCNC manifesto on health, he was sent to the Ministry, to implement his own programme'¹⁸. So, when Dr. Okpara became Premier of Eastern Region in 1959 it was not difficult for him to leverage on a programme he had initiated, then as a Minister. He trained more personnel, established more health centers, up graded some and built new ones entirely. His initiative reduced infant mortality and improved life expectancy in the Region.

PRAGMATIC SOCIALISM IN THE LIGHT OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC POLICY IN NIGERIA.

The present government cannot clearly or evidently claim to be prosecuting any policy, and it difficult to interpret Contemporary Nigerian Economic Policy since there no evidence on ground. The discovery of crude oil, and subsequent flow of millions of Petro Dollar from sales of crude oil, has caused the nation to lose focus. Since the discovery of crude oil, it is reported that Nigeria has generated over thirty trillion Dollar. Crude oil sale still accounts for over 90% of National income. Although crude oil drilling for commercial purpose was at infancy during the time of Dr. Okpara, he focused his attention on agriculture to perform wonders.

Pragmatic Socialism created more job opportunities for the youths and focused on agricultural development. In the case Nigerian State has continued to deliver developmental blue print without anything to show for it. As far back as 'in 1962 the government introduced the first National Development plan (FNDP) designed to run until 1968. The plan was focused on investment in agriculture, industry and education' ¹⁹. Ordinarily, one would have been overwhelmed by the ambition of the plan and hope the country to have been lifted away from weak industrial base, but that was never to be. Rather, production of crude oil increased to the point where as in 1961 barrel of crude oil drilled pay a day was 46,000, in 1967, it has increased to 600,000 barrels.

However, corruption and unsubstantiated declaration of economic growth has continued to weigh down on Nigeria, and this had never helped the Nation. In fact, 'the military coup of January 1966 and subsequent political development brought unfortunately abrupt end to the first development planning effort' ²⁰. Agriculture which held the economic development of Eastern Region of Nigeria was neglected. Since the first development plan of Nigeria had envisaged the diversification of the Nation's economy, but when the rural populace abandoned the rural areas to the urban cities, they were disappointed to discover that there were no such opportunities.

In effect, although efforts were made to enhance education sector in Nigeria, 'once educated, these children were less likely to return home to work on the farms' ²¹. The consequence was that it, 'meant that at the same time that private investments in agriculture were declining so too was the agricultural labor force'²².

It is true that Nigeria suffered set-back and severely too, due to the civil war, but after the war in the 1970s, the economy experienced oil boom, but misplaced priority robbed her of the opportunity to grow her economy. For instance, when General Yakubu Gowon the then Head of State of Nigeria, 'Increased the size of the public service, granted huge wage' ²³, he indirectly hoisted economic waste considering the fact that most of those he employed had nothing doing. That singular act of neglect of agriculture, also contributed to continual decline. The danger which that portends, was that, Nigeria became more dependent on food import, 'even at a point beginning to import item such as palm oil and groundnuts which had been staple of the agricultural economy' ²⁴.

From the above account, it is obvious that Nigeria needs home groomed economic policies to excel, and that is where pragmatic socialism stood above all the failed developmental plans in Nigeria. Okpara had no oil boom nor Petro dollar to spread, but he superintended one of the fastest growing economies during his time in government. He triumphed through the implementation of his well thought out plan sincerely committed to the welfare of his people. The result was far better than what obtains in Nigeria of today.

CONCLUSION.

‘Onye Ahala Nwanne ya’ were a Political Philosophy developed by Dr. Okpara in his Pragmatic Socialism. It is a Socialist interpretation of the application of African solution to solving her Political, Economic and Social problems. When this ideology was introduced, it had no difficulty to adopt because people saw in it their cultural expression. ‘Onye Ahala Nwanne ya’ are humane and have the tendency of drawing strength in unity and for the well-being of all. It is a battle cry of self-confidences, and an invitation to imbibe the spirit of brotherhood. Dr. Okpara’s Pragmatic Socialism explored the inherent communal live of the people. Sally Dyson aptly captured this concept, thus, ‘up till 1959, the NCNC was precisely what every Nigerian had grown to imagine it to be- a Socialist party, a party of the masses and a party which, if confronted with the choice of foregoing its ideology in order to win to retain political power, would rather forgo political power in order to retain its ideology’²⁵.

Pragmatic Socialism was rooted on Igbo culture, so it was culturally suited for the people. It was collaborative and considered innovations that were accommodative to the culture of the people. For instance, it transformed the Igbo’s natural expression of farm settlement by adding modern touches to it. Kibuzt was Israelis ideology of farm settlement, Okpara integrated it in his pragmatic socialism, as farmers were settled in farm estate with all basic amenities provided for their comfort. Okpara worked toward making agriculture not only the major source of income to the Eastern Region, but attractive.

In Educational sector, he noticed that educated farmers would be more productive and aspired to improve the educational sector by establishing schools even in the settlements. More teachers were trained and deployed to teach even in the settlements. At the tertiary level, although the establishment of the University of Nigeria Nsukka was the brain child of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, it was during Dr. Okpara’s government that the dream was realized.

In the Health sector, Dr. Okpara was proactive, as he for saw the need to improve the health sector when he was appointed the Regional Minister of Health by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. He only leveraged on the foundation he laid when he was elected the Premier of Eastern Region. His greatest achievement in this area was not only building and up grading of some hospitals, more personnel were also trained and recruited to work in them. He also focuses his attention to moral areas where cottage industries were built.

In pragmatic socialism Dr. Okpara was proactive, as he understood the need of the people and concluded that the Economic salvation of Nigeria relies on agricultural development. Several years after his government, his agricultural policy is still imparting positively on the Economy of the Eastern Region. In the area of entertainment industry, the Obudu cattle ranch, hotel Presidential in Enugu and Port Harcourt have continued to serve as tourist destination and places of relaxation.

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