



1ST ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE of OLOROGUN (DR.) MICHAEL C. O. IBRU, OFR

The Otota of Agbarha Kingdoms

The Big Fisherman (A Businessman for All Seasons)

Chief Michael Ibru was my best friend.
What a man, what a man!

I met him in Kenya in 1979, we were both visiting East Africa for the first time. He was the keynote speaker at an industrial conference. As this was my first time meeting an African chief, I observed him closely. I told him, "You are a real chief!". He looked at me and smiled. We became friends that very day.

Chief Ibru was a devout christian who loved his God, his family, his country and his fellowman. I spent many nights at his homes in London and in Nigeria. Dinner was always formal with jackets and neckties. I am an American but I was always made to feel like part of the family.

Some of My Fondest Memories

- *While being driven through the Kenyan National Park, a large rhino came out from behind a bush and stood right in front of our car. We had to sit and wait there for 10 minutes!*
- *We attended church at Westminster Abbey in London and we sang in the choir.*
- *We had great times in San Francisco and Oakland celebrating his sons', Oboden's and Mamemo's, graduations from the University of San Francisco and UC Berkeley respectively. Mayor Wilson presented the Chief with the key to the City of Oakland at the Lakeview Businessman's Club on the 28th floor of the Kaiser Building overlooking the beautiful Lake Merritt.*
- *How can I forget driving to church on the freeway in Lagos during rush hour traffic. All the other motorists moved off to the side to allow Chief's convoy of cars, with their flashing red lights, speed through. I was holding on for dear life!*

We will miss the Chief. He was a great man, a loving husband and father, a great businessman and he was my best friend.

The poet Longfellow spoke of great men:

*"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time"*

My friend, Chief Ibru, has left his footprints on the sands of time.
Farewell to the Chief. I promise to meet you in Paradise, "so let it be".

***The Colonel
Milton L. Sanders
Berkeley, California***