



2 - JAN 10
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

AN INAUGURAL ADDRESS

RESPECT

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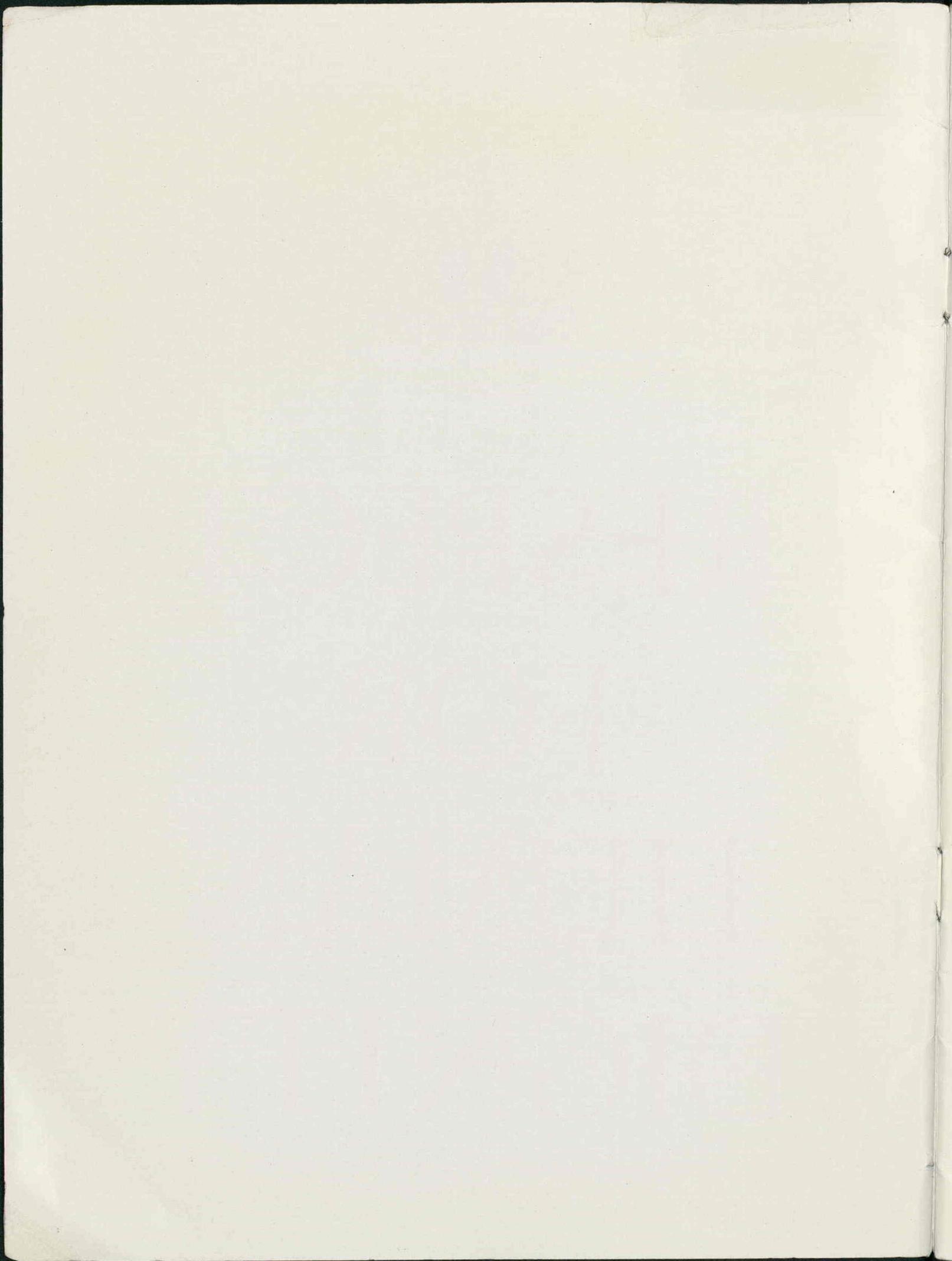
HIS EXCELLENCY DR NNAMDI AZIKIWE

Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief

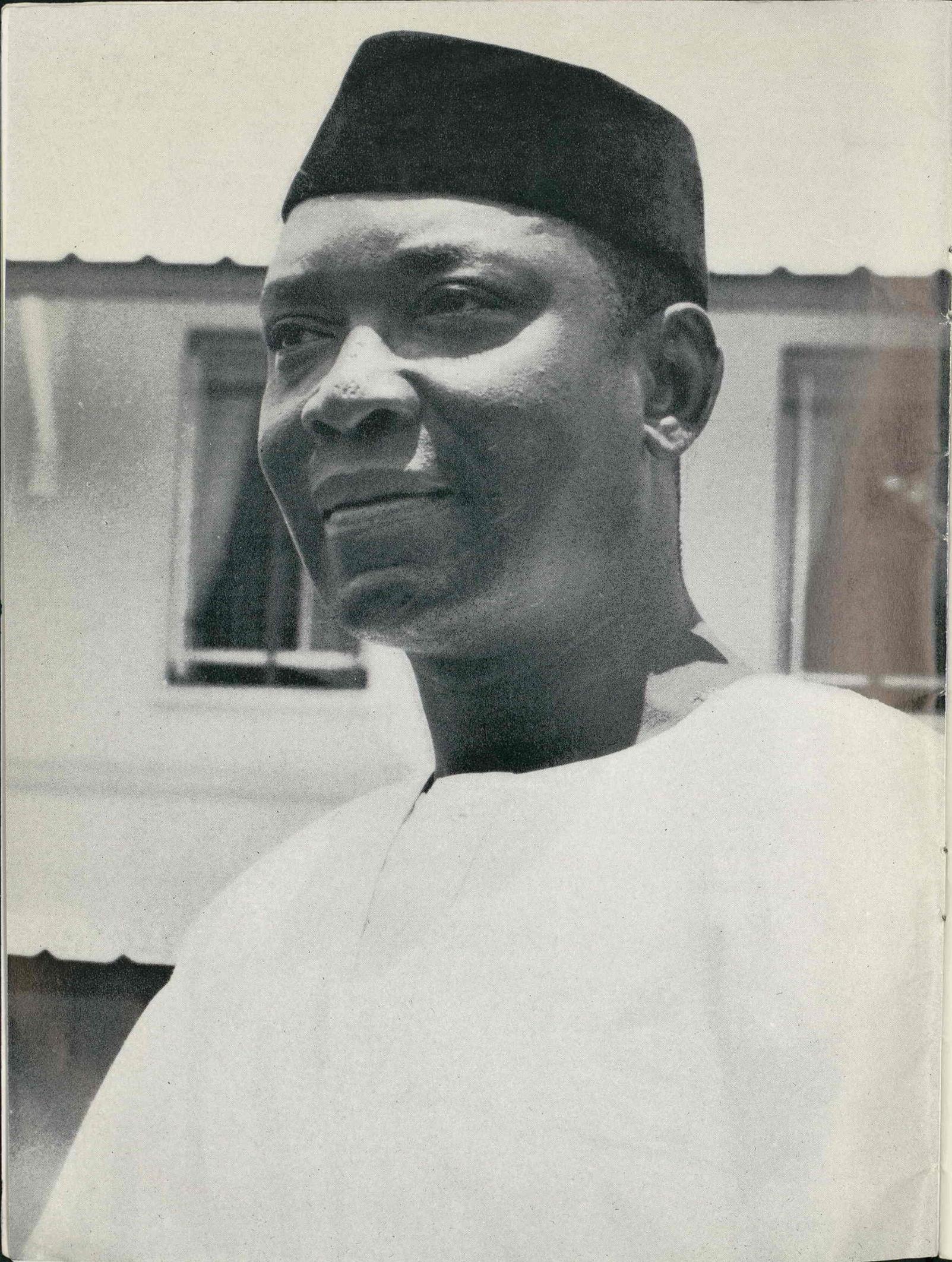
FEDERATION OF NIGERIA

16 NOVEMBER 1960

DIGNITY



**RESPECT FOR
HUMAN DIGNITY**



RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

IT IS WITH humility mingled with joy that I thank this grand concourse of patriots and friends of Nigeria for congregating here, today, on the occasion of my inauguration as the first African Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Federation of Nigeria. I was appointed to this post of high honour by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on the advice of the Prime Minister of Nigeria, to succeed my predecessor in office, that accomplished colonial administrator, Sir James Robertson, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

This mighty audience comprises of eminent men and women drawn from all the Regions of Nigeria and different parts of Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. We have in this august assemblage representatives of heads of states and governments, paramount rulers and chieftains, statesmen and politicians, nationalists and freedom fighters, university administrators and professors, trades union leaders and ex-servicemen, local government heads and civil servants, moulders of public opinion in addition to professional men and women in different walks of life, including a select group of invitees who represent various organisations which are interested in Africa and in the orderly progress of our country towards national autonomy.

I am indeed happy that I can count on such an array of well-wishers at home and abroad because the attainment of political independence by our country involved complications which are both national and international, and these require sympathetic and experienced friends to guide us in our honest efforts to build a united nation which would be worthy of the respect and collaboration of the comity of nations.

Perhaps it would not be irrelevant for me to call your attention to the fact that in the political history of contemporary Africa, this is the second time that a person of African descent has been inducted into the office of Governor-General. The first occasion was in November, 1940, when General Charles de Gaulle appointed Felix Eboue, a native of Cayenne, French Guiana, in the Caribbean, to be Governor-General of former French Equatorial Africa, which has now evolved into the Republics of Chad, Gabon, Brazzaville Congo and the Central African Republic.

In the chequered history of our nation, this is the second time that a person of African descent has had the distinction to assume a gubernatorial post. On 8th July, 1960, Sir Adesoji Aderemi, the Oni of Ife, was sworn in as Governor of Western Nigeria. Today, I have had the privilege and the honour of being sworn in as the first indigenous Governor-General of the sovereign state of Nigeria. It is a distinction to assume such a high office, because during the colonial era, governorship was an instrument of absolute authority; but now it has become an instrument of constitutional authority.

Before the enactment of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, which granted independence to certain countries, which now constitute the Commonwealth of Nations, the Governor-General was an embodiment of power, in that he was both a representative of the Crown and of the Government of the United Kingdom. He played an active role in the government of his territory by exercising initiative on a number of issues of an executive and administrative nature, and he was vested with reserved powers to veto certain acts of the local government.

The Statute introduced a new element of constitutional importance when the Governor-General ceased to represent the Government of the United Kingdom but continued to represent the Crown, who is Head of the Commonwealth. In this context, the Governor-General, as Head of State, now holds the same relation to the Government of Nigeria as the Queen does to the Government of the United Kingdom. As a constitutional ruler, the Governor-General exercises power formally and constitutionally in order to reflect the wishes of a democratically constituted authority.

There were substantial reasons for this shifting of emphasis in the exercise of power of Governor-General from an active to a passive role within the framework of the Constitution. Colonial territories not being international persons could not exercise sovereign powers. Their suzerains acted on their behalf but reserved the right to concede to them sovereignty of a restricted nature. This relationship

was based on the legal concept that colonial territories were political inferiors; ergo, they were in political servitude until the situation changed.

After a series of Imperial Conferences from 1907 to 1926, it became necessary not only to make a distinction between colonial territories which did not exercise internal and external sovereignty from those which did. Those territories which exercised "responsible government" internally and externally, either partially or wholly or both were regarded as Dominions. The others were Dependencies. Later, the Statute specifically defined "Dominion" to mean Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Irish Free State and Newfoundland. It is significant that at the material time these territories, with the exception of South Africa, were inhabited by a great majority of people of European descent. In the case of South Africa, a small European minority had complete control of the government.

In 1926, the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee of the Imperial Conference, under the chairmanship of Lord Balfour, recorded the opinion that the tendency of the Dominions to seek equality of status with Britain was both right and inevitable. Hence, the Dominions were defined as "Autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

After the end of the World War II, India, Pakistan and Ceylon became independent closely followed, a decade later, by Ghana, Malaya and Nigeria. The adoption of a republican form of government by three of the above-named States did not affect Commonwealth status materially, but it must be admitted that a fundamental change occurred in its structure: the Commonwealth has evolved from an association of colonial territories settled mainly by persons of European descent to a multi-racial and multi-national community, which has "no ties, no commitments, no obligations, no trace of imperial control or subordinate colonial status."

These great social changes in the structure and outlook of the Commonwealth are basic, hence they have altered the office of Governor-General to become Head of State and representative of the Crown, as distinct from Head of Government. Since colonial rule is authoritarian, the evolution to independence has transformed the situation so that the Governor-General of a Commonwealth country has now become a constitutional ruler. The Imperial Conference of 1926 defined the position in these terms: "That it was an essential consequence

of the equality of status existing among the members of the British Commonwealth that the Governor-General of a Dominion is the representative of the Crown, holding in all respects the same position in relation to the administration of public affairs in the Dominion as is held by His Majesty the King in Great Britain, and that he is not the representative or agent of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain."

The fact that British political institutions have influenced the course of our national history, made us in Nigeria to adopt the parliamentary system of government. In effect, it means a recognition of the existence of ministerial responsibility with an active Head of Government, who remains in office, so long as he retains the confidence of the majority of the representatives of the electorate. Hence there is a bifurcation in the exercise of power between the Governor-General, as the erstwhile Head of Government in a colonial regime, and the Prime Minister.

The changes have had an impact also on the nationality of the persons who assume this high office. The Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1930 agreed that in view of the changes envisaged, the appointment of a Governor-General should be a matter lying solely between the Crown and the particular Commonwealth country concerned. In this connection, the principle was established that it is for each State in the Commonwealth to decide whether or not to appoint distinguished citizens from the United Kingdom or from within its territorial limits or from elsewhere.

In practice many Commonwealth countries have opted to appoint their own nationals as Governors-General. Since 5th April, 1937, the Crown, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister of South Africa, has always appointed a South African national as Governor-General. In January 1947, the Crown approved the appointment of Sir William John Mckell, G.C.M.G., Premier of Western Australia, as Governor-General of Australia. On 15th August, 1947, the Crown approved the appointment of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League, as the first Governor-General of Pakistan. After the departure of Lord Mountbatten, the first native Governor-General of India was Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, former General Secretary of the Indian National Congress. When India became a Republic, the office of President was made analogous to that of Governor-General and Dr Rajendra Prasad, former Minister of Food and President of the Indian Constituent Assembly, was elected. The

present Governor-General of Ceylon, since 1954, is Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, who is a former Leader of the Senate and Minister of Finance. It will be noted that all the individuals mentioned above as native Governors-General were active politicians before they assumed their high office.

I have gone to the length of giving this historical background because of the nature of the oaths I have taken today and because of my honest belief that the existence of a stable and constitutional government in Nigeria can become a motive power for the revival of the stature of man in Africa and an impelling force for the restoration of the dignity of man in the world. Before the Honourable Chief Justice of the Federation of Nigeria, I have subscribed to two oaths according to law: the Oath of Allegiance and the Oath of Office.

In making the Oath of Allegiance, I swore that I would be "faithful and bear true allegiance" to the Crown. This oath is consistent with our Commonwealth relationship in view of the implications of Dominion Status. As a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, we are an autonomous community and we are freely associated as such although united by a common allegiance to the Crown. Since Her Majesty is Head of the Commonwealth and the Governor-General is representative of the Queen, it is appropriate that on assuming this honourable office, the appointee should subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance as a visible sign of belief in this association. The Commonwealth is an historic coalition of nations who stand for certain common values and ideals which are generally described as liberal democracy. In this free association of countries, Britain stands supreme as the source of certain spiritual values, such as individual freedom, respect for law and religious toleration. In course of their development from colonial status to independence, the members have been nourished with these concepts of British democratic heritage.

When I subscribed to the Oath of Office, I swore that I would "well and truly serve" in the office of Governor-General. In view of the historical forces at work since the publication of the Durham Report in 1840, and the enactment of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, it is obvious that the evolution of Commonwealth countries have gravitated from authoritarian to constitutional government. In Nigeria this means to me government of the *inhabitants* of Nigeria, with consent of the *citizens* of Nigeria, through the *accredited representatives* of the *voters* of Nigeria, who are periodically elected by secret ballot and by adult suffrage, by a *responsible cabinet* selected from such accredited representatives which

remains in office as long as such a cabinet retains the confidence of the majority members of such an elected legislature.

This definition of representative democracy, as it has been adapted to Nigeria, is based on the concepts of the rule of law and respect for individual freedom which have been bequeathed to us during our political association with Britain. These notions are the foundations upon which have been built the pillars of our parliamentary government. Without respect for the rule of law permeating our political fabric, Nigeria would degenerate into a dictatorship with its twin relatives of tyranny and despotism. I hold that the arbitrary exercise of power without the restraining influence of the rule of law must be condemned as a fundamental departure from constitutional government. Any justification of such untrammelled exercise of political power is, to me, an outrage on human conscience and a gross violation of basic human rights.

With this concept of the rule of law, we have inherited the idea of individual freedom, which is the sheet-anchor of democratic institutions. The sanctity of the person, the right of a person to fair and public trial, the assumption of the innocence of an accused person until he is proved guilty: these are examples of the basic human rights which feature our Constitution and which I have sworn today to uphold. But there are other ancillaries to these elements of liberal democracy. I have in mind religious freedom—freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of worship, the independence of a responsible judiciary, which is conscious of its responsibilities in a democratic society, and the existence of an untarnishable public service whose members are appointed or promoted strictly on the merit of their qualifications and good character and not on any other extraneous criteria.

What I have analysed, in so far as the kernel of the two oaths taken by me today relate, can be summed up in four words: respect for human dignity. I submit that respect for human dignity is the challenge which Africa offers to the world. The lack of respect for human dignity has led to the political bondage of man by man in Africa. This act of commission has also accentuated race relations in Africa. Until the conscience of the world has been energetically aroused to solve this problem frankly with absolute honesty, it is safe to predict that the political resurgence which is now sweeping all over Africa, is capable of leading to a *revanche* movement which would be disastrous to the peace of the world.

Representative democracy has been tried in Nigeria and it has worked successfully. Parliamentary government has been attempted in Nigeria and we have proved more than equal to the task. Ministerial responsibility is no longer a bugbear to us; it is now part and parcel of our politics. Indeed, the Westminster model of parliamentary government and democracy has been proved by us not only to be capable of being exported to Africa, but practicable in this part of Africa. But these are veneers of a political pattern which is interwoven on a complex social system in a world of which Nigeria is a part. Whilst Nigeria can definitely give assurance of its capacity for self-government and to maintain law and order, as a fully fledged member of the Commonwealth, Nigerians are bound to criticise the scandalous inconsistencies of the world which expose the cloven hoof of certain nations in their attitude towards the darker races.

Whilst it is a fact that the Commonwealth is a voluntary association which is loose, flexible and adaptable, and its members value it "for its very variety and multiplicity of outlook, its member governments sometimes acting in unison, sometimes separately, but always freely exchanging views and information, and always adding something to a common pool of mutual understanding," nevertheless, Nigerians cannot be expected to be supine when such a basic human right as respect for human dignity is violated with impunity in any part of the Commonwealth or in any country in the world.

The challenge of Nigeria as a free State in twentieth century Africa is the need to revive the stature of man in Africa and restore the dignity of man in the world. Nigerians believe passionately in the fundamental human rights. We regard all races of the human family as equal. Under no circumstance shall we accept the idea that the black race is inferior to any other race. No matter where this spurious doctrine may prevail, it may be in Lodwar or Sharpville or Decatur, we shall never admit that we are an inferior race, because if we accept the Christian or Muslim doctrine that God is perfect and that man was made in the image of God, then it would be sacrilegious, if not heretical, to believe that we are an inferior race.

We cannot concede that it is in our national interest to fraternise with such nations which practise race prejudice and we must not acquiesce in such an outrageous insult on the black race. In fact, we must regard it as a mark of disrespect and an unfriendly act if any country with whom we have friendly relations indulges in race prejudice in any shape or form, no matter how it may be legally cloaked.

Within the Commonwealth, Nigerians cannot appreciate the equity in denying a national of any part of this free association of multi-racial states and territories his freedom of movement without due process of law? We cannot see the justice in restricting the movement of any Commonwealth national arbitrarily, without due process of law, more so after one had served a long term of imprisonment as penalty for infraction of the law. We cannot approve extra-legal acts of this nature because they violate fundamental human rights and negate the very idea of a rule of law. We cannot refrain from questioning the expediency of these acts of tyranny and certainly we must denounce them as an unjustified invasion on the sacred rights of the individual.

Within the rank and file of the United Nations, there are many States who deny their citizens equality of opportunity and deprive them of fundamental human rights, for the simple reason that the colour of their skin is black or that they are natives of Africa. We in Nigeria cannot reconcile with good government the imprisonment of an African who refuses to wear a badge of racial inferiority which is disguised as an identification card. We cannot see the logic of a minority group, which controls power, to subvert the ends of government by punishing representatives of a majority group who refuse to be discriminated or segregated against, merely on the basis of race and not necessarily on any infraction of a law which is not repugnant to human conscience. Our people find it extremely puzzling to believe that intelligent people can be so wicked and inhuman and yet be accepted as civilised nations by the international community.

We in Nigeria are non-plussed and we cannot understand why many member-States in the United Nations looked with disfavour at the idea of promulgating an international convention on human rights. Why are the leading nations of the world interested in merely *declaring* their adherence to the ideals of basic human rights, but are not prepared to sign a binding international convention much more to ratify it in their Parliaments? Could it be that such nations believe that talks of a rule of law and respect for human dignity are outside the periphery of world politics? Or could it be that such nations merely claim to be protagonists of democracy but do not believe in this ideology as a practicable proposition and way of life?

We have come a long way in achieving our independence. It was a toughening school and the experience we gained has armed us with a spiritual weapon which now enables us to put to the test the authenticity of the claims of those who profess to be democratic and civilized. As such, we ask why is it

that after extracting all its teeth, only Britain and a few members of the Western European Union dared to sign the European Convention on Human Rights, whilst the many African Colonial Powers, including France, Spain and Portugal, refused to endorse in principle, this innocuous but face-saving convention?

If respect for the rule of law and individual freedom must be used as a yardstick to gauge the progress of civilisation among nations, then the world should be in position to appreciate why we, in Nigeria, have refused to inherit the prejudices of older European nations by making the basis of our foreign policy, the principle of non-alignment with any power bloc.

As members of a mal-treated race, it would be the height of folly for us to hobnob with those who regard the members of our race as inferior. As firm believers in the principle of the brotherhood of man, we would be foolish to pretend that we are happy when the rights of our fellow human beings are wantonly trampled upon by irresponsible rulers and government agencies of undemocratic countries. Having passed through the crucible of political bondage in the furnace of colonial tutelage, how can any reasonable world statesman expect Nigerians to associate in an alliance of mutual security with countries which still regard Africa as a colonial pasture fit for safaris and cattle-grazing and not for the enjoyment of basic human rights.

Our domestic policy is intertwined with our foreign policy. Those who have the responsibility to enunciate these have done so in precise terms. We are more concerned in reviving the stature of man in Africa. We have developed into a stage where we now lead the rest of Africa in the number of elementary and secondary schools and their population. We now have five institutions of higher learning of university standard. About 10,000 of our sons and daughters are attending the leading universities of Europe and America. Our hospitals and health centres outnumber those of any other country in Africa. The total mileage of our tarred and untarred roads measures up with the best in Africa. Our economy is expanding in the agricultural and industrial sectors, and we are busily engaged in stimulating investments so as to increase earning opportunities for our people and thereby increase their purchasing power and raise their living standards. Our population is the highest in Africa, fourth in the Commonwealth and thirteenth in the world.

Since the days of slavery, this continent had been depopulated and exploited. By 1939, that is, on the eve of the World War II, there were only two independent States in Africa: they were the Republic of Liberia, and the Union of South

Africa. A decade later, this number was increased to four, as a result of the restitution of the Kingdom of Ethiopia and the abandonment of the capitularies which chained the Kingdom of Egypt in political servitude for decades. By the end of 1959, the number of independent African States had reached ten: Liberia, South Africa, Ethiopia, United Arab Republic, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Ghana and Guinea; that is six republics, three kingdoms and one military dictatorship.

As I speak today, it is with pride that I remind you that this is Africa's year, because sixteen States have already become independent and another will become so later this month, to make it seventeen. The attainment of political freedom by Cameroun, Togo, Senegal, Mali, Malagasy, Somalia, Leopoldville Congo, Brazzaville Congo, Dahomey, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Gabon, Central African Republic and Nigeria, this year, is as dramatic and as spectacular as the events in the African continent since the days of the Pharaohs. Mauretania will become an independent Republic before the end of this month, to give sovereign and independent African States a scoreboard total of twenty-seven.

As we proceed to the task of nation-building, we cannot avoid taking stock of the hostility against our race by certain sections of humanity, some of whom are now permanently settled on this continent as minorities with great political power. We are bound to take cognisance of a situation where a minority, on account of its superior organisation and influence, can usurp power and proceed to bully its majority population to the point of seeking to subdue them by sheer brute force and refined savagery.

If the outside world would be disposed to wink at this extreme form of civilised barbarism, then it is only a matter of time, when the independent African States will come into their own and plan to rescue their kith and kin from this social degradation. It is not yet too late for the European suzerains and associates of these territories to give due warning to their wards and friends in Africa to retrace their steps if they would escape from the wrath that would be inevitable, in case they continued to be petulant and incorrigible. The resignation of the Chief Justice of the Central African Federation is very refreshing, for it shows that even among minority groups in Africa there are God-fearing leaders with conviction who have faith in the peaceful co-existence of Africans and non-Africans in Africa. This heroic act is a straw which indicates that the wind of change is bound to sweep away the cobwebs of a venal past.

As Nigeria enjoys its freedom in the world community, its leaders must energetically begin to take an increasing part in matters affecting the destiny of the

continent of Africa and the rest of the world. This has become necessary because of the inter-dependence of mankind and because we must unite with progressive forces all over the world so as to fertilize the soil of human relations for the healthy growth and development of democracy. We have been too busy with our self-appointed task of national self-realisation that most of our rank and file have lost all sense of inquiry into the ethics of the prevalent ideologies of the conflicting power blocs.

Only last week, a young student asked me this question: "Can you recommend to me any informative book on Communism?" Out of curiosity, I asked her what she wanted to do with such a book, and she replied in all innocence: "Since those who broadcast over the wireless are so afraid of it, I would like to know why they are afraid!" This is typical of the spirit of inquiry which is now surging in our youth and is creating an intellectual ferment among them. I do not advocate the suppression of information nor do I suggest misinformation; but I do hope that our friends in Europe and America will appreciate the incalculable harm they can do to the cause of world peace by crying "Wolf" when no wolf is in sight, and no Nigerian wants to know whether a wolf is a dog or a cat or a cross between a dog and a cat!

Our primary duty with our emergence as an African Power is, in the words of one of our learned jurists, "to assert the evolution of a single nation—and to project the personality of that nation... A constitution is not just a legal document to be interpreted as conferring or withdrawing individual rights. A constitution is a way of life and the sacred duty of the courts and the peoples is to interpret it as such and justify its existence by their lives." These thoughts of Mr Justice Coker deserve serious attention because they contain gems of wisdom that can be used to cement our country in a bond of unity and faith and thereby direct the thoughts of our youth to constructive ends.

In the view of certain observers, here and abroad, my decision to accept and assume the office of Governor-General has been surprising. They thought that since I was leader of a political party which contested the last federal elections, I should continue to fight in order to displace the present Head of our Government, instead of supporting the conclusion of a political truce and agreeing to become what one of them euphemistically described as "a prisoner in a gilded cage." Whilst I appreciate the good intentions of these critics, I should make it clear that one important reason why human society is unstable and full of conflicting emotions is because of the tendency to intensify rivalry beyond their

normal course. After all, our leaders fought the good fight with all their might because they believed in the righteousness of their cause; and history has proved them right. But they also knew that in a team of many players all cannot be elected captains since it is generally accepted that more than one captain cannot run a ship efficiently. That was what Douglas Malloch must have had in mind when he composed these immortal lines:

If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill
 Be a scrub in the valley—but be
 The best little scrub by the side of the rill;
 Be a bush if you can't be a tree.

If you can't be a bush be a bit of the grass,
 And some highway some happier make;
 If you can't be a muskie then just be a bass—
 But the liveliest bass in the lake !

We can't all be captains, we've got to be crew,
 There's something for all of us here.
 There's big work to do and there's lesser to do,
 And the task we must do is the near.

If you can't be a highway then just be a trail,
 If you can't be the sun be a star;
 It isn't by size that you win or you fail—
 Be the best of whatever you are !

I am satisfied that the present arrangements made by those of us, who may be rightly described as the makers of contemporary Nigeria, have ushered freedom into our country and preserved our unity as a nation. I am happy that history has assigned to me an important part to play in order that this unity may have lasting effects and bring home to our people the need to maintain it religiously. I am all the more overjoyed that Nigeria is free and independent without necessarily going the way of certain States in Africa, Asia and Europe, whose instability has been of great concern to the United Nations and the rest of the world.

If I am asked whether I am happy—because Nigeria is free, and the Nigerian Government appears to be stable, and the people of Nigeria are apparently satisfied that the prize of freedom and the price our leaders paid for it were worth the sacrifice, I would answer in the affirmative. It is true that other compatriots

and I had to scale the craggy heights as we trekked the stony Golgotha of human life. It is true that during the struggle, whose climax was reached after a greater part of a quarter of a century, our lot was one of vicissitudes and disappointments; nevertheless I am grateful to God that I did not swerve from our objective, in spite of mutilation of facts, amorphous interpretation and deliberate perversion of my actual role. The contest was tough, the encounters were rough, and the foe was implacable; nevertheless we fought tenaciously according to the rules of the game, even when our opponent decided to sneak in a rabbit punch. And we have emerged triumphantly!

I must confess that during the dark and dreary days of our struggle for national freedom, one poem sustained me spiritually and raised my morale so much that I did not bother either to count the cost or to reckon the casualties sustained during our historic conflict for a place in the sun. It was one of Rudyard Kipling's poems and I shall now read it:

“If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting, too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim.
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,
 And so hold on when there is nothing in you
 Except the will which says to them: "Hold on !"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
 Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch,
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
 If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
 Yours is the earth and everything that's in it,
 And—which is more—you'll be a man, my son !

Independence has come and the world has rejoiced with us. We have proved to be worthy pioneers of human freedom in Nigeria. What remains for us to do now is to dedicate our lives anew to the fascinating task of nation-building. The past is gone with all its bitterness and rancour and recriminations. The future is before us and great events await the leadership of the wise and brave. We have an uphill task to perform and this is not the time for us to undertake a *post mortem* operation in order to allocate blames among our leaders and followers. The issue is not who is right and who is wrong; the main issue is what is right for the Federation of Nigeria and for humanity !

In assuming the office of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, I hereby call upon my compatriots to join Alhaji Abubakar and myself in this historic mission of reviving the stature of man in Africa. There is plenty of room at the top and there is plenty of work to be done. I call upon Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, to join us in this herculean task of national reconstruction. I exhort Chief Obafemi Awolowo to associate with us in this great adventure of restoring the dignity of man in the world. There are many leaders who can give active support and assistance to our nation at this its supreme hour of need: Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola and Chief Dennis Chukude Osadebay of Western Nigeria, Dr Michael Iheonukara Okpara and Samuel Grace Ikoku of Eastern Nigeria, Mallam Aminu Kano, Mallam Ibrahim Imam and J. S. Tarka of Northern Nigeria, and countless others.

I appeal to all our leaders, far and near, to forget the wounds which were inflicted in course of our internecine altercations. The love of our country

should out-weigh the love of our petty selves. The enjoyment of individual freedom under the law should mean more to us than our self-centred party programmes and manifestos. Common dangers and common enemies alert us on the need for common security. The British came here in 1851 and found us hopelessly divided in tribal compartments. When Britain transferred power to us on 1st October, 1960, we were no longer an expression of geography but a reality of history. During all our years of political vassalage we became socially and economically integrated. We have also developed an identity of interest and we have crystallised common nationality. The process of political integration reached its zenith at midnight of 30th September, 1960, when we lustily sang our National Anthem and our National Flag was hoisted aloft to signal the birth of a new nation.

Come and join Abubakar with me, Sardauna, Awolowo, Akintola, Osadebay, Okpara, Ikoju, Aminu Kano, Ibrahim Imam and Tarka. Let us bind the nation's wound and let us heal the breaches of the past so that in forging our nation there shall emerge on this continent a hate-free, fear-free and greed-free people, who shall be in the vanguard of a world task force, whose assignment is not only to revive the stature of man in Africa, but to restore the dignity of man in the world.

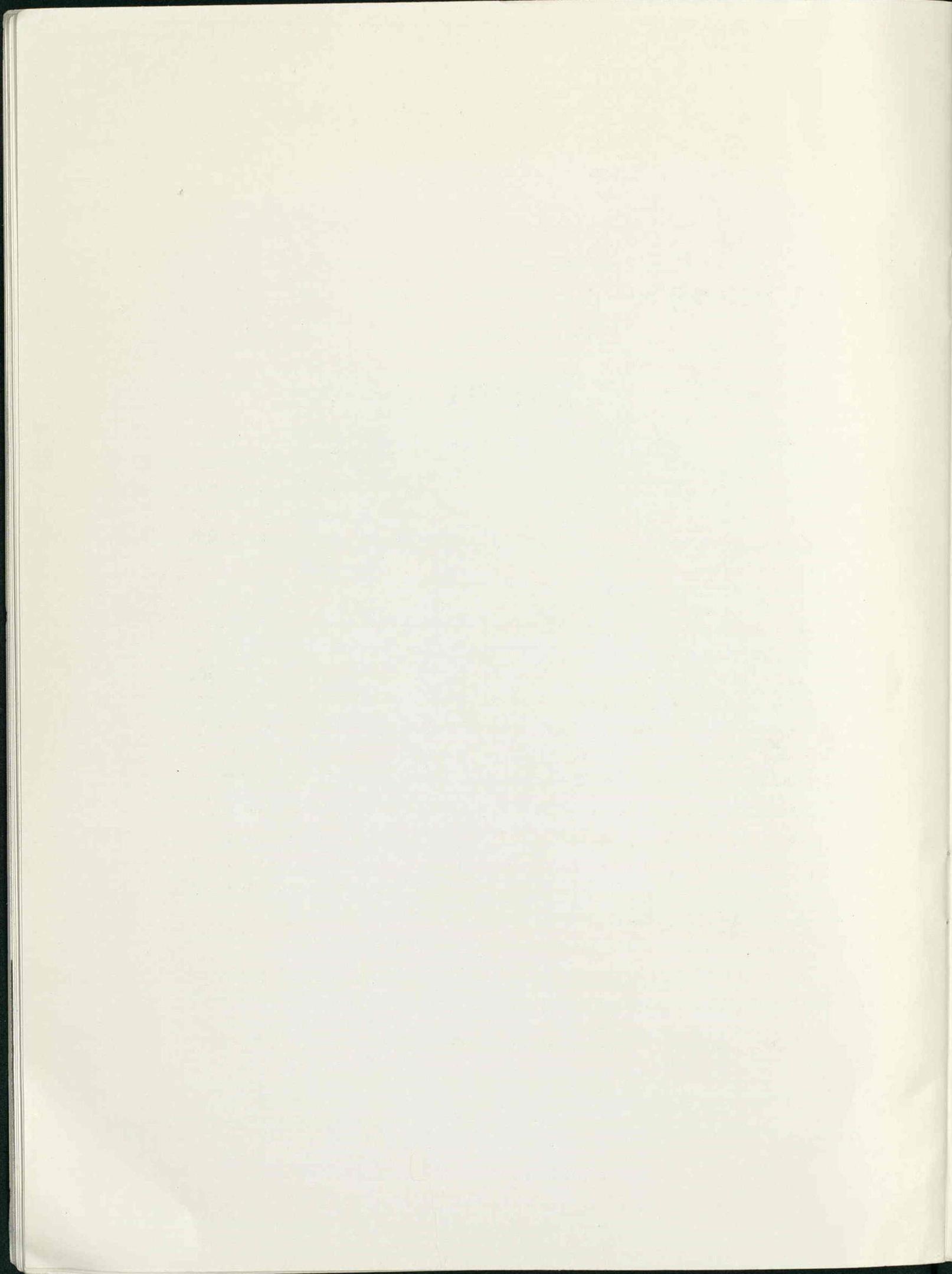
As for me, my stiffest earthly assignment is ended and my major life's work is done. My country is now free, and I have been honoured to be its first indigenous Head of State. What more could one desire in life? I thank God for sparing my life to witness the independence of my nativeland. I am grateful to God for the opportunity to serve and I hereby pledge solemnly to render faithful and loyal service to my country. As in the past, I shall not have consideration for personal comforts or safety or even life itself, if these are the price I must pay for leadership in order to preserve the freedom and unity of my country.

The Independence of Nigeria was doggedly fought and dearly won. During our protracted battles, some of our heroes and heroines fell by the way side; some went the way of all flesh; some paid with their lives; some were incarcerated; some lost their jobs; some sacrificed their fortunes; some were ostracised; whilst some were victimised and made to suffer indignity because they dared to demand freedom for Nigeria in our life time. Therefore, we must jealously guard our freedom with our lives, if need be. I have made up my mind to do all that lies in my power, so that our newly-won freedom shall endure.

All that remains to be done now is for our leaders and their followers to demonstrate that spiritual resilience which had enabled us to survive the onslaught of the past. With faith in the eventual success of our adventure in the comity of nations, we can look forward to the morrow with hope and charity for our fellow man, knowing that the task has been well done and that prospects of the future are bright. In the words of a distinguished American poet, Langston Hughes, let us youthfully march together to a greater tomorrow for Nigeria in unity with faith:

“We have tomorrow
Bright before us
Like a flame.
Yesterday, a night-gone thing,
A sun-down name.
And dawn today,
Broad arch above the road we came.
We march.”

Part II
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA



BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Names in full.—Nnamdi Azikiwe. My original Christian name was "Benjamin" but I rejected it in July 1934, after the British Empire Games Council refused to allow me to compete in the Half Mile and One Mile races at the British Empire Games of 1934, on technical grounds.

Father.—Obededom Chukwuemeka Azikiwe, born 2nd November, 1879; son of Azikiwe Chukwude, Ogbuefi Nwawularu, of the Houses of Molokwu and Mbidokwu, Ogbeabu Quarter, Onitsha; educated C.M.S. Central School, Onitsha, and C.M.S. Training College, Asaba, 1897; joined the Nigeria Brigade as Clerk in 1902 under Lord Lugard at Zungeru, capital of Northern Nigeria; retired on pension from the civil service in 1925 under Nigeria Regiment, Third Battalion, Calabar; died on 3rd March, 1958. His obituary has not been published in the *Nigeria Gazette*, as is customary in the case of other pensioners.

Mother.—Rachel Chinwe Azikiwe, born 1884 (?), daughter of Chief Aghadiuno Ajie, the Ozi of Onitsha (Ndichie Chief) and great-grand-daughter of Obi Udogwu, King of Onitsha whose son and immediate successor, Obi Akazua, signed a Treaty of Commerce with Great Britain in 1863; native of Ogboli Eke Quarter, Onitsha; illiterate; died on 26th January, 1958.

Both parents were baptised in the C.M.S. Church, Onitsha. My only sister is Cecilia Eziamaka Arinze of 12 Iboku Street, Onitsha.

Date of birth.—Wednesday, 16th November, 1904 (12 noon).

Place of birth.—Zungeru, Northern Nigeria.

Wife.—Flora Ogbenyeonu Ogoegbunam, born 7th August, 1917; daughter of Chief Ogoegbunam, the Adazia of Onitsha (Ndichie Chief), native of Ogboli Agbor Quarter, Onitsha; baptised at C.M.S. Church, Onitsha; educated C.M.S. Central School, Onitsha, and St. Monica's School, Ugwuogba; Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, U.S.A. and obtained the B.A. degree from Howard University, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. in June 1955.

Married on 4th April, 1936 in the Jamestown Methodist Church, Accra, Ghana, by Rev. J. J. Mettle.

Children.—(1) Chukwuma Bamidele, born 10th February, 1940; (2) Chukwuemeka Nwabufo Ayo, born 21st June, 1941; (3) Nwachukwu Abiodun, born 24th December, 1944; (4) Ngozichukwu Obiozo (female), born 30th September, 1946. Chukwuma is a Sophomore at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A.; Chukwuemeka is a fourth year secondary student at the Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha; Nwachukwu is a second year secondary student at the Government College, Umuahia; Ngozi is a second year secondary student at Queen's School, Enugu.

Elementary Education.—C.M.S. Central School, Onitsha (1911–1915); Methodist Boys' High School, Lagos (1915–1918); C.M.S. Central School, Onitsha (1918). Pupil Teacher at St. Jude's C.M.S. Central School, Oraifite (1919) and at C.M.S. Central School, Onitsha (January–March, 1920).

Secondary Education.—Hope Waddell Training Institute, Calabar (April–August 1920); Methodist Boys' High School, Lagos (September 1920–September 1921); Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, U.S.A. (1925–1926).

University Education.—Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia (1926–1927); Howard University, Washington, D.C. (1928–1929); Lincoln University, Chester County, Pennsylvania (1929–1931); University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1931–1933); Columbia University, New York (summer of 1930, 1931, 1932).

Academic Distinctions.—Certificate in Law, LaSalle Extension University, Chicago, 1927; B.A. (Hons. in Political Science), Lincoln University, 1930; Certificate in Journalism, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1930; Editor of *Columbia University Summer Session Times* (1930); M.A. (Hons. in Religion and Philosophy), Lincoln University, 1932; M.Sc. (Hons. in Anthropology), University of Pennsylvania, 1933; LL.D. (Hon.), Lincoln University, 1946; D.Litt.

(Hon.), Storer College, 1947; LL.D. (Hon.), Howard University, 1954; LL.D. (Hon.), Michigan State University, 1959.

Travels Abroad.—(a) Gold Coast, June 1924 (returned September 1924); (b) United Kingdom and United States of America, August 1925 (returned October 1934); (c) Gold Coast, November 1934 (returned July 1937); (d) United Kingdom, June 1943 (returned September 1943); (e) United States of America and United Kingdom, May 1947 (returned October 1947); (f) United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, United States and Canada, October 1949 (returned February 1950); (g) Finland (Olympic Games) 1952; (h) Holland, Western Germany, Austria, Sweden, Italy, United States, May 1954 (returned July 1954); (i) Western Germany and United States, August 1955 (returned November 1955); (j) France, June 1957; (k) Italy (Olympic Games), August–September 1960; (l) United Kingdom, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960.

Clubs, Societies.—Young Men's Literary Society, Lagos (1922–1924); Diamond Football Club, Lagos (1922–1924); Onitsha Friendly Society, Lagos (1923–1924); Onitsha Literary Society, Onitsha (1925); Legal Servants Association, Calabar (1925); Young Men's Christian Association, Storer College, Harpers Ferry, W. Va. (1925–27); International Club of Howard University (1928); Stylus Literary Society of Howard University (1928); Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity of Howard University (Alpha Chapter, 1929) and Lincoln University (Mu Chapter, 1930–1934); International Club of Columbia University, Riverside Drive, New York (1930–1932) Mercury Athletic Club of New York (1932–1934); Sodalitas Scientiae Civilis of Lincoln University (1934); Rodger Club of Accra (1935–1937); Gold Coast Lawn Tennis Club of Accra (1935–1937); Onitsha Improvement Union (since 1937); Patron, Zik's Athletic Club (since 1938); President, Nigerian Cricket Association (1940–1944); President, Nigerian Swimming Association (1938–1944); Life Member of the West African Students Union (since 1943); Patron, Uromi Improvement Union (1945–1946); Patron of Ijebu-Igbo Welfare and Patriotic Association (1945–1946); Island Club of Lagos (1944–1949); Member of Ekine Sekiapu Society of Buguma, Kalabari (since 1946); President, Ibo State Union (1949–1951); Vice-Chairman, Nigeria Boxing Board of Control (since 1949); President, Lagos District Amateur Football Association (1951–1954); President, Amateur Athletic Association of Nigeria (since 1952); President, Nigerian Table Tennis Association (since 1953); Vice-Patron and Committee Member, Nigerian Olympic Committee and British

Empire and Commonwealth Games Association (since 1951); Iwarefa, Reformed Ogboni Fraternity, Ikeja Iledi (1938); Third Degree Mason, St. John's Lodge of England, Onitsha (1946); Ogbuefi Nnanyelu-ugo member of the Agbalanze Ozo Society, Onitsha (since 1946).

Athletic Activities.—Reserve Goal-keeper and Forward, First Eleven, Methodist Boys' High School, Lagos (1921); High Jump Champion, M.B.H.S., and Empire Day Champion, (1921); Left Inside Forward for Diamond Football Club, Lagos Champions (1923); Welterweight Boxing Champion, Storer College (1925-1927); High Jump Champion and Gold Medallist, Howard University Inter-Scholastic Games, 1926; Gold Medallist in following events at Storer College Championships, 1926: Cross Country (four miles), One Mile Run, Quarter Mile Race, High Jump, and Silver Medallist in the Pentathlon of the same Championships; Captain, Storer College Cross Country Team (1927); Survivor Bronze Medallist in the Laurel-Baltimore Marathon (1927); first place winner in the One Mile Run and third place winner in the Half-Mile Race at the Howard University Intra-Mural Championships (spring 1929); Back-stroke Swimming Champion and No. 3 Swimmer in the Free-style Relay Team of Howard University (winter 1928); Co-captain, Lincoln University Soccer Team (1930); winner Two Miles Run in dual championship between Lincoln University and Cheyney State College (1930); Silver Medallist in the Two Miles Run at the Central Inter-Collegiate Athletic Association Championships held at Hampton Institute, Virginia (1931); point winner in the Baltimore Cross Country Marathon (1929; 1930); Bronze Medallist in the Richmond Cross Country Marathon (1931); point winner in the Middle Atlantic A.A.U. Cross Country Championships (1932); Gold Medallist in the 1,000 Yards Run at the Caledonian Games in Brooklyn, N.Y. (1932); Gold Medallist in the One Mile Run and Three Miles Run at the Y.M.C.A. Games in New York (1932); Silver Trophy winner in the Half-Mile Race and Silver Cup winner in the One Mile Run at the Democratic Field Day Championships held at New Haven, Connecticut (1933); entries to compete in the Half-Mile Race and One Mile Run at the British Empire Games to represent Nigeria rejected by the A.A.A. of Great Britain on technical grounds (1934); runners-up (with G. K. Dorgu) at the Lagos Tennis Men's Doubles Championships (Division B 1938); anchor man for the Z.A.C. team which won the 50 Yards Free Style Relay at the Lagos Swimming Championships (1939); won "letters" in athletics and cross country at Storer College, in Swimming at Howard University, and in Athletics, Cross Country and Soccer at

Lincoln University; Founder (with M. R. B. Ottun) of the Zik's Athletic Club to promote athletics, boxing, cricket, soccer, swimming and tennis (1938).

Political Activities.—Executive Committee Member of Mambii Party, Accra (1935–1937); Executive Committee Member of Nigerian Youth Movement, Lagos (1937–1941); Member of Government Advisory Committee to Students Proceeding to the United Kingdom (1939); Member of Government Advisory Committee on Libraries (1940); Member of the Lagos Rent Assessment Board (1941–1944); Member of the Lagos Broadcasting Committee (1940–1945); General Secretary of the West African Press Delegation to the United Kingdom (1943); Member of the Brooke Arbitration Tribunal to inquire into the dispute between the African Locomotive Drivers' Union and the Nigerian Railway (1944); General Secretary, National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (1944–1946); President of the N.C.N.C. (1946–1960); Vice-President of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (1947–1960); Member of the Foot Commission for the Nigerianisation of the Civil Service (1948); Member of the Cameron Arbitration Tribunal to inquire into the dispute between the Railway African Station Staff Workers' Union and the Nigerian Railway (1948); Member for Lagos in the Legislative Council of Nigeria (1947–1951); Member for Lagos and Leader of the Opposition in the Western House of Assembly (1952–1953); Member for Onitsha in the Eastern House of Assembly (1954–1959); Leader of Government Business in the Eastern House of Assembly, January to September 1954; Member of the House of Representatives (1954 and 1960); Minister of Local Government, Eastern Nigeria (January to September 1954); Minister of Internal Affairs, Eastern Nigeria (1954–1957); Leader of the Economic Mission to Europe and North America under the auspices of the Government of the Eastern Region (1954); Member of His Excellency's Privy Council, Eastern Nigeria (1954–1959); Leader of the Educational Missions to Europe and United States of America for the establishment of the University of Nigeria, under the auspices of the Government of the Eastern Region (1955 and 1959); Premier of Eastern Nigeria (1st September, 1954–12th December, 1959); President of the Senate of the Federation (January 1960–November 15th 1960); Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Nigeria (November 16th 1960–).

Professional Activities.—Third-class Clerk, Treasury Department, Lagos, October 1921–June 1924; Recruit, Gold Coast Police Force, July–September 1924; Solicitor's Clerk to the late Mr Justice Graham Paul at Calabar, January to

August 1925; Instructor in Political Science, Lincoln University, Penna. (1931-1934); University Correspondent for the Baltimore *Afro-American* (1928-1934); General and Sports Correspondent for the *Philadelphia Tribune* (1928-1934); Overseas Member of the Institute of Journalists, London (since 1933); Editor-in-Chief of the *African Morning Post*, Accra (1934-1937); Editor-in-Chief of the *West African Pilot* (November 1937 to July 1945); Correspondent for the Associated Negro Press (1944-1947); Correspondent for Reuter's (1944-1946); Managing Director of Zik's Press Limited, printers and publishers of the *West African Pilot* (Lagos), *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* (Port Harcourt), *Nigerian Spokesman* (Onitsha), *Southern Nigeria Defender* (Ibadan), *Daily Comet* (Kano), and *Eastern Sentinel* (Enugu), (1937-1952); Managing Director of Comet Press Limited (1945-1953); Chairman of West African Pilot Limited and the Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited and six other limited liability companies (1952-1953); Chairman of African Continental Bank Limited (1944-1953); Chairman, Nigerian Real Estate Corporation Limited (1952-1953).

Learned Societies.—Life Fellow of the Royal Economic Society (1934); Life Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (1933); Life Member of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (1947); Member of the American Society of International Law (1933-1934); Member of the American Anthropological Association (1932-1934); Member of the American Political Science Society (1933-1934); Member of the American Ethnological Society (1933-1934).

Literary Activities.—(a) Publications: (1) *Liberia in World Politics* (Stockwell, London, 1934); (2) *Renascent Africa* (Zik's Press, Lagos, 1937); (3) *Land Tenure in Northern Nigeria: A study of Treaty Rights of the Royal Niger Company* (African Book Company, Lagos, 1942); (4) *Taxation in Nigeria* (African Book Company, Onitsha, 1943); (5) *Political Blueprint of Nigeria* (African Book Company, Lagos, 1943); (6) *Economic Reconstruction of Nigeria* (African Book Company, Lagos, 1943); (7) *Suppression of the Press in Nigeria* (African Book Company, Onitsha, 1945); (8) (with L. P. Ojukwu) *Economic Rehabilitation of Eastern Nigeria* (Government Printer, Enugu).

(b) Typescripts: (1) *A Critique of Polygyny* (Lincoln University, 1932); (2) *The Practice of Forced Labour* (Lincoln University, 1931); (3) *Theories on the Origins of the State* (University of Pennsylvania Seminar, 1933); (4) *Mythology in*

Onitsha Society (University of Pennsylvania thesis, 1933); (5) *Anthropology and the Problem of Race* (Lincoln University, 1933); (6) *Syllabus for African History* (Lincoln University, 1933); (7) *Readings in Historiography* (Lincoln University, 1933). (8) *Meditations*: A collection of Poems; (9) *The African in History*: Ancient, Medieval, Modern and Contemporary; (10) *My Odyssey*; (11) *Grammar of Nigerian Politics*; (12) *Fragments of Onitsha History*; (13) *History of the General Strike: A Study of Labour Problems*; (14) *Ambassadors of Goodwill*; (15) *History of the Nigerian Constitution*; (16) *Nigerian Treaties*; (17) *Our Struggle for Freedom: A Collection of Speeches*; (18) *Anthology of Nigerian Poetry*; (19) *Treasury of West African Poetry*; (20) *African Sovereign States*; (21) *Nigerian Diplomacy*; (22) *Pan-Africanism*.

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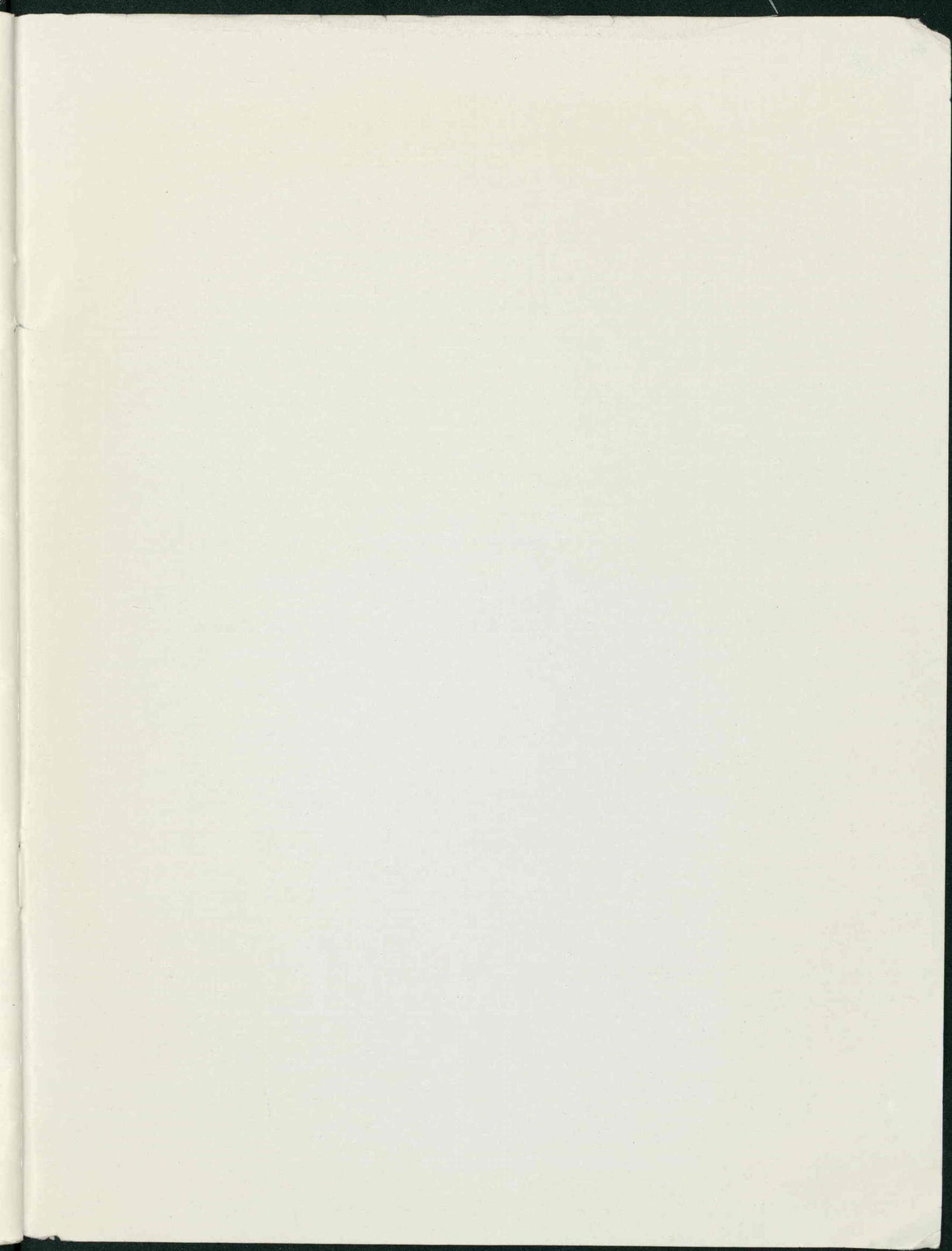
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NIGERIA

Respect For Human Dignity – Inaugural Address delivered by His Excellency Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, first indigenous Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, of the sovereign state of the Federation of Nigeria, November 16, 1960.

DR. NNAMDI AZIKIWE is known throughout Nigeria and beyond as the great “Zik of Africa”. Statesman, Intellectual and Titan of African politics, first President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He is the author of several books, the most important of which are *Liberia in World Politics* (1934), *Renascent Africa* (1937), *Political blueprint of Nigeria* (1943) and *Economic Reconstruction of Nigeria* (1943).

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