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Azikiwe

AND THE
AFRICAN REVOLUTION

A portrait of Nnamdi Azikiwe, the first president of Nigeria, wearing a red cap and a white shirt with a red sash. The portrait is framed by a decorative border of colorful, wavy lines in shades of blue, green, yellow, and pink.

Edited by
M. S. O. OLISA
O. M. IKEJIANI-CLARK



A z i k i w e

AND THE

African

Revolution

Edited by

Michael S.O. Olisa and Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark



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CONTENTS

Page

List of Contributors

Maps

1. Political Map of Africa
2. Nigeria — The Twenty-One States and Abuja (Insert — Nigeria: The Former Regions)

Foreword Dr. Okechukwu Ikejiani vi

Acknowledgement viii

Introduction Michael S. O. Olisa and Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark 1

Part I: THE FORMATIVE YEARS 7

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe: His Cultural and Historical Roots
Adiele Afigbo 9
2. Formal Education: The British and American Alternatives
Chukwuemeka Ebo 28
3. Azikiwe's Intellectual Origins
Ray Ofoegbu 53
4. Azikiwe's Political Ideas: The Dream of the African Revolution
Michael S. O. Olisa 72

Part II: PAN-AFRICANISM AND AFRICAN NATIONALISM 91

5. Zik and The Pan-Africanist Movement
P. Olisanwuche Esedebe 93
6. Rejection of Socialism
Lambert U. Ejiofor 115
7. The Second World War
C. Onyeka Nwanunobi 137
8. The West African Experience
Johnny I. Obiukwu 154
9. Azikiwe and Nkrumah
Johnny I. Obiukwu 166

Part III: NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA 187

10. Nigerian Nationalism: Crises of Ideas and Strategy
Ogban Ogban-Iyam 189

11. The NCNC and Nigerian Realities	213
<i>Ugochukwu B. Uba</i>	
12. Regional Premiership: A Test of Political Leadership	232
<i>Sam O. Mbakwe</i>	
13. Governor-Generalship and the Presidency	245
<i>Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark</i>	
14. Azikiwe and the Nigerian Civil War	265
<i>Lambert U. Ejiofor</i>	
Part IV: DYNAMICS OF THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION	289
15. African Political Economy Since Independence	291
<i>Okore E. Obinna</i>	
16. Neo-Colonialism in Theory and Practice	308
<i>Nduba Echezona</i>	
17. Military Rule and the African Revolution	326
<i>Ray Ofoegbu</i>	
18. Structural Adjustment and the African Reconstruction	338
<i>Anyaegbunam Obi</i>	
19. Impediments to the African Revolution	361
<i>Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark</i>	
20. Conclusion: Realities and Illusions of the African Revolution	387
<i>Michael S. O. Olisa</i>	
Bibliography	402
Index	409

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Foreword

Azikiwe and the African Revolution is a great contribution by scholars, who, apart from studying, also have in-depth knowledge of the subject matter. It should not be seen as a compendium on the life, activities and times of Honourable Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe per se, although it attempts to represent the historical milieu of Africa in the struggle for emancipation and independence.

No one can today write about the struggle for Nigerian independence without pointing to the Honourable Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe as the single most important patriot responsible for transforming Nigeria from a colony to an independent country. It is not necessary to catalogue here what he has done for the sensitization of the Black race. However, I cannot be accused of bias when I say that he is the greatest Nigerian, and among the greatest African personalities, living today. This is true because Nnamdi Azikiwe is not merely a name in the history of Black Africa but representative of an epoch in the overall struggle in the continent for freedom and the dignity of man.

In his youth, he saw the need to emancipate Africans. Such emancipation would aim at the four goals he described as economic, social, political and mental. He had reminded Africans that their continent must have a place in the sun. He had as a result fired the imagination of the African youth towards higher ideals and aspirations. He believed in the human richness inherent in their cultural and religious diversities. He had also maintained that by weaving the many-coloured cloth of heritage and peoples for a new garment of nationhood, new stronger, united and democratic states would be built in Africa. It was his hope that the new garment would be warm, and accommodate people of all ethnic backgrounds and religions. In particular, he had always maintained that the unity

of Nigeria and, by extension, the unity of Africa must not be one of suppression and bondage but of contribution.

Nnamdi Azikiwe's approach to mass education of the people for liberating action gave rise to his establishment of a chain of newspapers at a time when the colonial status quo de-limited education for the consumption of the select elite. These chain of newspapers educated the people to have confidence in themselves and work for the realization of what they could achieve for themselves. He thus awoke in the people the desire for higher education and achievement, and efforts in this direction had borne fruits which the University of Nigeria, amongst others, is an eloquent testimony.

It is logical that the answer to our present is embedded in our past which is necessary to understand for a proper appraisal of the future. Africa is today passing through a period of unmitigated disillusionment, in a period of a lack of faith, not only in the present but in the future, all brought about by various unpatriotic changes. The optimism and heady idealism of independence have given place to cynicism and disenchantment of the present, visible everywhere among the people.

I commend the intellectual contributions in this work which have attempted at enlivening the dreams, aspirations, and significance of Nnamdi Azikiwe.

Our foremost duty as Africans is to live up to the vision of ourselves, to fashion our state — a creative society that flourishes from the fruits of its own labour and a people of ideas and ideals striving to achieve their historic purpose. This purpose must include the revival of Africa as the homeland of man.

This book should be appreciated as a befitting tribute on the memorable occasion of his 85th birthday anniversary.

October 1989

Dr Okechukwu Ikejiani
Gloucester Bay, Canada

Acknowledgement

This book originated from the initiative of Dr. Okechukwu Ikejiani, medical practitioner in Glace-Bay, Nova-Scotia, Canada, a very close friend and compatriot of Nnamdi Azikiwe, who suggested that a book of this nature would be an appropriate testimony to Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's life-long dedication to the liberation and development of Africa, as well as appropriate commemoration of his 85th birthday. The initiative was given concrete support by a few prominent Nigerians who provided the financial resources for the production of the book under the co-ordination of Chief Samuel Mbakwe.

The Editors took up the challenge provided by these gentlemen in organizing the writing of this book and are pleased that this enterprise turned out into a reality. The Editors are grateful to all those prominent Nigerians and to all the scholars who enthusiastically contributed the chapters of the book, also to Prof. Ogbu Kalu for his valuable suggestions.

Our special thanks go to our spouses, Mrs. Catherine O. Olisa and Col. Henry U. Clark for their tireless support and encouragement throughout the hectic period of the arduous task of bringing out this book.

We wish to state that the opinions expressed in this book are those of individual authors of the chapters.

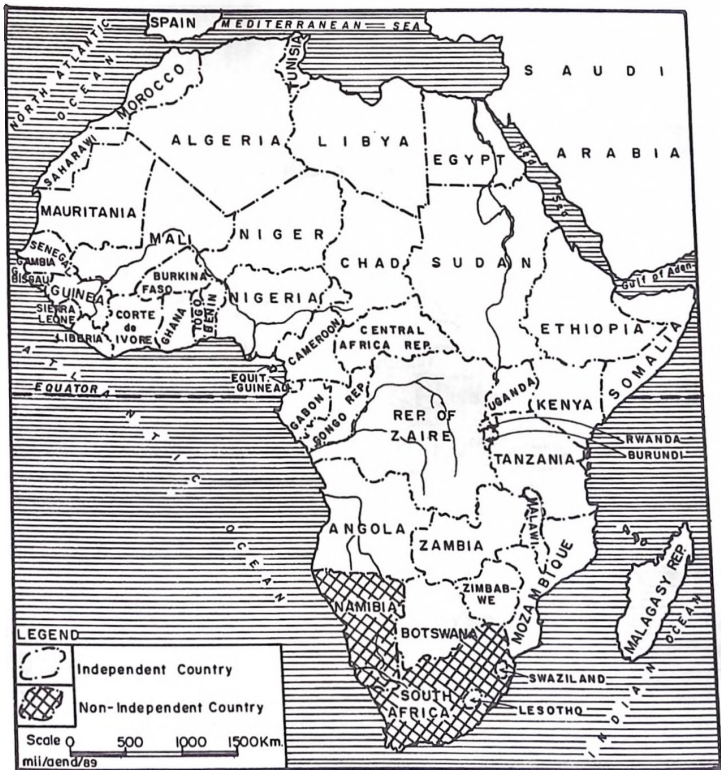


Fig. 1: POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA

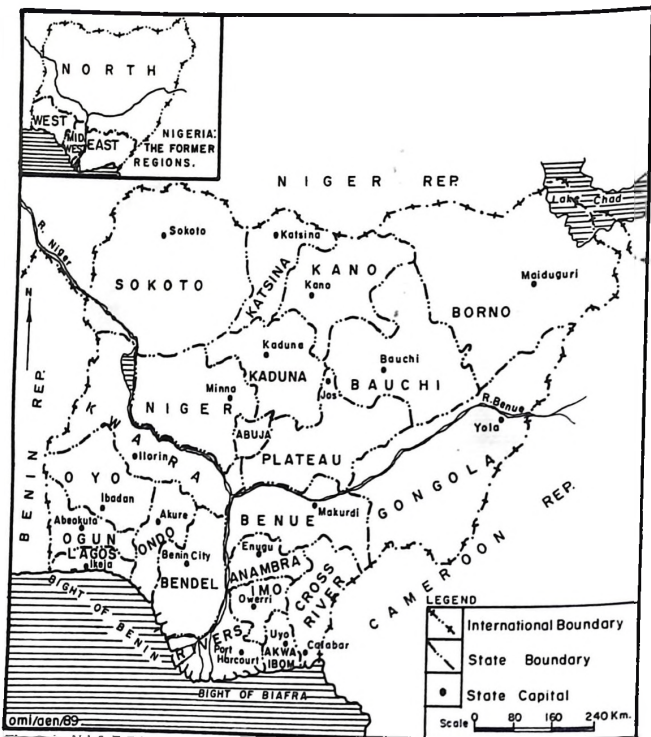


FIG. 2. NIGERIA— THE TWENTY ONE STATES AND ABUJA

Introduction

Azikiwe will be eighty-five years old on November 16, 1989. This book, therefore, is essentially a *Festschrift*, but with a difference. It is not a panegyric or a flute played to an achieved person though honour is given. Rather it is a scholarly effort to assess the fortunes of the prolific man's ideas through the vastly changing vistas of African socio-political and economic developments. To achieve this, an array of scholars from cognated disciplines and characterized by various social distances from the doyen, have been invited.

An objective comprehensive and intellectual review of the life and times of Nnamdi Azikiwe is timely for a number of reasons. First, the fact that he is still alive, notwithstanding, the present economic, social and political conditions of almost all black African states fall heavily short of what Dr Azikiwe dreamt of some fifty years ago as the New Africa, a fulfilled Africa characterised by economic prosperity, political freedom, spiritual emancipation and cultural authenticity. The present debt burden, dependency, political instability and the deprivations of structural adjustment programmes have heavily diluted African political sovereignty and raised dark clouds over their future as strong sovereign modern states.

Second, a review of this nature at this critical period of African socio-economic political development will make it possible to examine why the patriotic zeals and involvements of such pioneer African leaders did not succeed to steer Africa away from the path that led it to its present predicament. The New Africa of Azikiwe's dream did in fact emerge with the independence of nearly all the former colonies, but the New Africa was deformed from birth and

now suffers even more handicaps, and is therefore not the type of Africa dreamt of by the pioneers.

There are, however, serious limitations and difficulties in the enterprise of writing a book on Azikiwe at this time, in spite of the urgency and importance of the enterprise. First, Azikiwe is still alive and could have ideas and interpretations different from those of the researchers, a situation that could then distort the authors' general views of the New Africa. Second, critics of the life and times of Nnamdi Azikiwe would write and publish with caution so as to be on the right side of laws which control the mass media.

Third, much more could be gathered from Azikiwe's personal archives and library which are still in his possession; furthermore, he may want to and still does use those collections from time to time. One of the numerous aspects of his life which emerged during the researches for this book is the colossal intellectual size of the man. The collections made by the University of Nigeria Library constitute an array of brilliant volumes which range from pamphlets to full-fledged books.

Fourth, Azikiwe is at eighty-five still physically strong and active and intellectually alert and could therefore still write more items which could throw more light on existing evidence or provide additional evidence that would be useful in future for a more complete assessment of his life and times. Moreover, he has not really produced his *memoirs* in the conventional sense. His existing major books so far are either the early presentation of his dreams (*Renascent Africa*) or his autobiography (*My Odyssey*) and are not, like regular memoirs of statesmen, explanations and discussions of key national and international events which he directly or indirectly dealt with. His memoirs will provide a valuable addition to this volume in the final assessment of his great intellectual and political stature and his roles in the political, economic, social, historical and cultural development of Africa and his own country.

The title of the present effort at this evaluation of the life and times of Azikiwe indicates at once that the work is not a conventional biography; if it were so, it would be an unnecessary repetition of what he himself and several of his disciples and theoreticians have capably and amply done several years ago. The logic behind this collection of review essays is that it is necessary, at this critical stage of Azikiwe's life, when he has retired or is presumed to have retired from active politics (he is included in the Nigerian Military Government's ban on former politicians,

especially those who held public office, from participating in politics in the 1992 return to civil rule), to conduct such a review on the basis of his already numerous published works all of which were written during the years of his active role in public affairs. The researches leading to the chapters of this book therefore deliberately excluded the methodology of oral interviews, especially of Azikiwe himself, in order to avoid the possibility of his wanting to re-state and re-justify his already written programmes and views in the light of the present conditions of the African continent, his own country and himself. Instead the authors based their research, first, on the vast range of published and unpublished writings of Azikiwe; second, on the vast range of items written on him by others.

Azikiwe dreamt of the African revolution several decades ago in his thirties when he was studying in the United States of America and later formulated and published the dreams in his *Renascent Africa*. Depressed by the general economic dependency, political domination and inferiority complex which marked the peoples of Africa throughout his studentship, Azikiwe plunged himself into putting on paper the various magnificent ideas which he formulated about the long-exploited, long-dominated continent.

One of his fundamental propositions was that colonialism and imperialism were bad and should not be allowed to continue indefinitely in the African continent. To reject and eliminate these twin evils there must be a change in the psyche of Africans and this change would imbue them with the attitudes and programmes which they needed for effective opposition to and elimination of imperialism and colonialism. Azikiwe thus drew a scenario of Old Africa (in which Africans were subject peoples) Renascent Africa (in which Africans were ready to battle colonialism) and New Africa (in which Africans were emancipated prosperous self-reliant peoples). Renascent Africa, the stage that would usher in the desired Africa was characterised, in his own words, by

Spiritual Balance
 Social Regeneration
 Economic Determinism
 Mental Emancipation
 Political Resurgence

He gave detailed explanation of these terms in his *Renascent Africa*, a book of his youth which, like Plato's *Republic*, presented his youthful ideals and dreams of a future promised land for Africans. He himself had no doubt that his schemes were visionary for he

made this clear in the last chapter of *Renascent Africa*. Later on in his life, after years of actual experience in politics and public affairs in general in which he struggled, singly and in groups, directly and indirectly, to get the dreams of his New Africa concretised, the limited success achieved naturally brought more maturity and resulted in a more realistic restatement of his political ideas and programmes. His *Political Blueprint For Nigeria* and numerous speeches delivered by him in numerous platforms in the late 1930's and the 1940's contain this more realistic version of his political philosophy. This more realistic, more workable versions of his original dreams, among other things, confirm that in practical terms what Azikiwe really dreamt of was a politically emancipated Africa where liberal democracy based on welfarism would be the general basis of government amongst African states.

This fact of Azikiwe's political philosophy provides an answer to the many puzzles which people find along the path of his long political career. It removes the doubts as to whether Azikiwe was or had been a revolutionary, a communist, a conservative, a militant nationalist, a pacifist politician or simply a capitalist. In the long and persistent attachment to liberal democracy and his long persistent struggles to actualise it in his own country he might have given many impressions that he wore one or the other of the tags listed above; but the various chapters of this book will show that he could not be correctly branded any of those categories except the political belief and programme to which he was consistently committed.

Just as what constituted Azikiwe's political philosophy present many with puzzles today a number of actions and positions which he took on many issues and situations during his years of active politics and public life present apparent contributions which many judges of him and his times would consider unexpected from such colossus of African history, politics and government. Most outstanding of such apparent contradictions are

- (i) his inciting speech to the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons rally of 1947 which amounted to a battle cry for militant action on the one hand and the visible fright which he showed during the Assassination story episode and, even more seriously his desertion of the Zikist Movement which was organized to concretise the message of his 1947 speech;
- (ii) his emphatic and consistent rejection and long campaign against imperialism and colonialism on the one hand, and

- his acceptance of figure-head position of Governor-General (later President) on Nigeria's independence, on the other;
- (iii) his fervent advocacy of Pan-African and Pan-Nigerian ideals on the one hand, and on the other hand, his display of tribalism and parochialism in the various speeches which gave the impression that he was an Igbo patriot and leader; also his later advocacy of tribalism as an instrument of national unity;
 - (iv) his strong advocacy of non-corrupt political leadership ("no longer shall wealth be concentrated in a few hands" in *Renasant Africa*) on the other hand, and the grave charges — later found not true in the main — levied against him at the Bank (African Continental Bank) Tribunal when he led the government of former Eastern Region;
 - (v) his initial support for the Igbos in their bid to secede as Biafra and what many judged as his later desertion of the Igbos when military realities seemed to make the bid unattainable.

It is safe to state, in respect of all the above, that one basic explanation is that Azikiwe was not substantially understood by many — friends, foes, associates, political opponents, and admirers. This point becomes clearer and clearer as one ploughs through the vast collection of his writings. His deep sensitivity and attachment to matters of intellect make his faith in liberal democracy based on economic *laissez faire* and welfarism so ingrained in him that it ran like undercurrent throughout his political life. Like a stream he meandered to different directions and wherever it met blocks of sand or rock, it had to move towards the ultimate estuary. This phenomenon has been probably what critics and admirers considered capitulation or contradictions; his ultimate destination was the New Africa, even if it became eventually defective and perverted, he never failed to see it ahead of him.

This book is divided into four parts; Part I deals with Azikiwe's formative years; his upbringing, his cultural and historical roots as well as the political and social influences that eventually moulded his life and thoughts.

Part II is entitled Pan Africanism and African Nationalism. The chapters in this part review Zik's early involvement with Pan-Africanist ideas and Movement through his early socialist

orientation, his reaction to the Second World War, his working experience in West Africa and his impact on other nationalists like Nkrumah.

Part III deals with the theme of Nation-Building in Nigeria. This section examines his ideas and practices as a nationalist leader, a leader of a political party, as a leader of a Regional Government, as a Nigerian Head of State and as a participant/observer of the Nigerian civil war all of which constituted a test of his performance as a politician, statesman and nation-builder.

Finally, Part IV entitled Dynamics of the African Revolution reviews African political economy and the impediments to the African Revolution, neo-colonialism in theory and practice, military rule and the African Revolution, and Structural Adjustment and the African reconstruction. This section ends with an assessment of the extent to which his dreams of the African Revolution turned out in the end to be illusions or realities.

Viewed in its totality today, the African revolution dreamt of by Azikiwe in his youthful projections for the continent throughout his active years could not be summed up as all illusion although the key elements or components have eluded African States in general. African States have achieved political sovereignty and acquired all the outward trappings of sovereign states in all world forums (U.N.O. System, other regional organizations, diplomatic nuances and protocols); but other harder realities have eluded them and made the sovereignty what critics have called "flag independence".

Michael S. O. Olisa

Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark

PART ONE

The Formative Years



Nnamdi Azikiwe: His Cultural And Historical Roots

Adiele E. Afigbo

In the opening to his doctoral dissertation on "The Foundations of Zikism", Dr Chukwuemeka Ebo had the following to say:

Objective analysis of the development of a school of modern political thought in Nigeria in recent times requires a historical and social setting. This need arises from the fact that ideas and ideals do not develop in isolation, but invariably have their roots in contemporary historical and social conditions.¹

Now, the most striking thing about Azikiwe, or Zik as he is more widely known, is perhaps the range and breadth of his mind and ideas, that is to say the pan-Nigerian, Pan-African, pan-Negro and even universalistic breadth of his political and social thought. It is this fact that has led to his being described at times as the 'Dreamer of the African Revolution', a man of ideas rather than of action, an orator, spell-binder and motivator of action rather than an administrator and practical politician capable of coping with the nitty-gritty of everyday life and being. To understand this all-embracing cosmopolitanism of Zik's nationalism, a start must be made with understanding his cultural and historical roots. It is this necessary 'start' that this chapter seeks to make.

A study of the cultural and historical background to Azikiwe and his cosmopolitan ideas is by definition a study of two cultural and historical realities — that is of Igbo culture and history, and of the culture and history of early colonial society in what was British West Africa, the two worlds which nurtured him before he made his

debut in the world of African education with its dichotomous politics of White versus Black. A careful study of Azikiwe's writings and addresses reveals clearly what impact these two historico-cultural worlds had in the moulding of his life and outlook. It reveals also fairly clearly the degree or extent to which he was conscious of the formative impact of these two culture-systems, although it would appear that the awareness and consciousness were more vivid in respect of the influences of the early colonial society of the West Coast.

First, the background of Igbo culture and history. It would have been considered a monstrous anachronism and contradiction by the anthropologists and culture-historians of colonial Africa to bring Igbo culture and history into an explanation of the origins of the cosmopolitanism of Azikiwe or of any other politician of the age. To these scholars, Igbo society could have inculcated only the narrowest of visions and the robustest of local particularisms and clannishness. To Alan Burns, Margery Perham and Margaret M. Green, for instance, the vegetation of Igboland and the scale of the socio-political organisation of the people were such that one village or village-group was hardly aware of the existence of its neighbours. "There is", writes Margaret Green,

the isolating effect of the bush upon the people who live in it, which can hardly have failed to contribute to the separatist tendency that is so marked among the people. The mere fact that every village is as invisible from the next as though it were twenty miles away cannot but affect one's mental outlook. To a considerable extent the hidden neighbours seem like strangers. And the bush breeds a constant fear of ambush that is at times too well founded.²

Summarising these and other similar views, the late Professor J.C. Anene wrote as follows:

As already explained, the physical environment is one dominated to a large extent by thick forest. On the one hand, the heavy vegetation was excellent defence against large-scale invasion from outside. On the other hand, its inaccessibility did not aid movement and easy intercourse among the people who were primarily agriculturists.³

However, more penetrating studies undertaken from the later 1950s on have demonstrated beyond all doubt that the "jungles" of Igboland and their "isolating effect" on the people, their vision, their ideas and their interaction are nothing but figments of the imagination and the result of theorising heedlessly on the basis of too little research. These studies have shown that Igbo society of the last few centuries before 1900 or even earlier was nurtured in an environment characterised, for the most part, by vegetation made up

of parkland and derived savannah. The result was that the small scale societies which flourished in this environment built up a culture which was outward-looking not only in terms of relations among the Igbo themselves, but also in respect of contact between the Igbo and their neighbours. Indeed, on logical grounds, the smallness of scale on which the socio-political formations existed excluded exclusiveness of the kind portrayed in the colonial records as it ruled out meaningful self-sufficiency. In the event Igbo society had not only institutions which would appear to have been designed to promote long range contacts and wide-ranging vision and outlook. It also had states, occupational and social groups that depended on long range social, political and economic contacts for their livelihood.

The result was that in this region of mini-states, or fragmented political organisations and allegiances, there evolved a socio-economic culture that made a fetish of contacts, associations and alignments across ethnic frontiers. So much is clear from the works of Professor Simon Ottenberg on Igbo oracles, of David Northrup on trade and trading in Eastern Nigeria, of the present writer on relations between the Igbo and their neighbours, of Nancy Neaher on the life and work of Awka smiths and carvers, of Professor Onwuejeogwu on Nri ritual specialists, of Nwachukwu Ogedengbe on Aboh traders and so on. The horizon of the leaders of some of these small scale states at times passes belief. There is, for instance, a tradition about an Ezza general and political leader of the 16th century who mapped out a plan of territorial expansion that should take the Ezza to the banks of the Benue, the Cross River and the Niger, as well as to the shores of the Atlantic. The archaeological work of Professor Thurstan Shaw at Igbo Ukwu suggests very strongly that this culture of wide-ranging social and economic contacts was already well established in Igboland by about the ninth century A.D.⁴ In short, by 1904 when Nnamdi Azikiwe was born at Zungeru in what was then Northern Nigeria, the diaspora tradition with its cosmopolitan outlook and related tendencies was already an intrinsic part of Igbo culture. That tradition by itself helps to explain the fact that by that early date, when the British colonial authority was still engaged in the hydraheaded struggle to subdue the Igbo militarily and politically, elements of them, like Zik's father, were already hopping into the bandwagon of the fledgling colonial administrative system to travel farther afield than perhaps their most intrepid forebears had ever attempted on their own.

It was not only at the Pan-Igbo level that indigenous culture and history provided the background that could predispose Nnamdi Azikiwe to patronise ideas and outlook that would embrace large vistas of territory and many peoples. Equally important and relevant, or perhaps even more so, was the cosmopolitan background of Onitsha culture and history. In the first place Onitsha myths of origin, migration and development make Onitsha history and culture an amalgam of persons and traits drawn from the ancient Benin empire, from the Igala kingdom, from Igbo mini-states and so on. In the second place, the geographical location of that city-state made it, for centuries after it came into being, the cross-roads of cultures and armies drawn freely from the four points of the compass. Discussing this aspect of Onitsha history and culture, the anthropologist R. N. Henderson had the following to say;

In terms of political and cultural history, the region of Onitsha may be regarded as the cross-roads of four major spheres of influence. With the River Niger as a vertical geographical axis, at the northern pole lies the kingdom of Idah, and at the southern pole lies the Ibo kingdom of Aboh. With the uplands as a horizontal axis, the Benin empire lies at the western pole and the Nri kingdom at the eastern pole.⁵

To such an extent were the Onitsha aware of the fact that they drew their populations and culture traits from so many diverse societies and regions that they at times came close to considering themselves as not being Igbo.

The relevance and importance of these points lie in the fact that no politician of the new era who had his tap roots in the soil of Onitsha culture and history, and his secondary roots in the wider soil of Igbo culture and history could afford to be narrow in the range of his sentiments and human sympathies. In other words, outward-lookingness or openness to influences and ideas from a wider world than that which comprised Igbo society was one of the key elements in the historico-cultural tool-kit with which Azikiwe sought to grapple with and master the brave new world that challenged him as he stepped on the threshold of manhood.

If Azikiwe was not acutely conscious of the germs of cosmopolitanism which he carried from the wider context of Igbo history and culture, his orientation towards the predisposing influences of Onitsha culture and history was quite acute. One of his earliest excursions into academic disquisition was the "Fragments of Onitsha History" which he published in 1930 in the *Journal of Negro History*. In that work, he laid great emphasis on the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural origins and composition of Onitsha people

and their society, emphasizing in particular their mythical links with Benin and Igala, and even with the Yoruba. "The Onitsha language", he wrote "may be a confusion of Benin-Yoruba languages, since it is a phonetic language and immigration must have had an influence in the confusion of colloquialisms".⁶ He also described Onitsha as lying "in the centre of Nigeria"⁷ as a result of which, he said, Onitsha was well-connected by transport with many Nigerian peoples and regions. "Trade", he wrote,

is facilitated on all its boundaries. The neighbouring tribes, such as the Ijaws, Jekris, Yorubas, Sobos, Efiks, Hausas, Igaras, Nupes, Igbos, Kwa-Ibos, and many others negotiate at the (Onitsha) New Market. Motor transport serves the North-eastern boundary, the Eastern Railway serves the east, Nigerian marine launches and steam boats serve the south, and the Nigerian Western Railway serves the west. Hence her position so far as trade is concerned is favourable.⁸

Convinced that the metropolitan character of indigenous Onitsha culture and history cannot be over-emphasized, he went on to assert that "of all West African tribes, Onitsha holds a very high place for her philosophy and religion."⁹ He then proceeded to quote with approval James Stuart-Young, "a British poet, novelist and trader", to the effect that:

To the native of this particular district (Onitsha) the phenomena of life present themselves unsoftened by any atmosphere of sentiment. They are patriotic — but they are not parochially patriotic. *Their great hymn of loyalty is to Mother Africa.*¹⁰

Later, in his *My Odyssey*, he was to pursue further this idea of Onitsha as a cosmopolitan culture and society. There he wrote:

the royal lineage of my maternal ancestry depicts a cosmopolitan mixture of tribes and clans. For example: the mother of Obi Odogwu hailed from Akiri; the mother of Obi Ijeleke came from Ibuzo; the mother of Obi Chimedie was from Oze; and the mother of Obi Aroli was an Igala woman from Idah.¹¹

In other words, and this is the point one is making here, from his wider Igbo cultural and historical environment, as well as from his narrower Onitsha background, a broad cosmopolitan tradition formed one of the important constituent elements of his cultural heritage. And he would appear to have been fairly aware of it early in his life. What follows later in this chapter will show that the same observation was even more demonstrably so in respect of the early colonial heritage in which he was born and nurtured to manhood before he left for America in search, to use his own words, of "the Golden Fleece."

There was still another aspect of Azikiwe's Onitsha and Igbo heritage, perhaps a "negative" one at that, which made him seek for

a larger and more viable platform of action than the city state of Onitsha or the Igbo ethnic nationality could ever hope to provide him. This was what at the time was the trumpeted lack, by the Igbo as a people, of a heroic culture rooted politically in a large kingdom or empire. However proud Azikiwe was of Onitsha, "the land of Chima", he was aware of the fact that it was a tiny state. What he thought at the time of the larger Igbo society, he left no clear record of. But he was clearly not unaware of the contempt in which the anthropological authorities of the time held Igbo cultural achievement. "The people", wrote Miss Perham, "struck the Europeans from the first as being not only unorganised, but particularly barbarous and intractable."¹² "Among these people", wrote Alan Burns who was then considered an authority on Nigeria, "there was no highly organised form of government and little tribal cohesion; particularly every village was independent, and so great was the isolation of each small community that the inhabitants of neighbouring villages often spoke in entirely different dialects."¹³

Neither Onitsha nor Igbo land as a whole thus provided a viable basis for erecting an alternative polity to the world-wide empire of the British, or the French which at the time ruled supreme in Africa. Such a viable alternative polity called for a larger territory and a wider agglomeration of peoples, as well as for a more respectable past. Hence, Azikiwe emphasized over and over again Onitsha's connections with the Benin and Idah state-systems, and through Benin with the Yoruba kingdoms since contemporary conventional wisdom thought Benin to be a mere derivative of the Oduduwa system of states. Cheerfully unconcerned with strict historical consistency, he described Onitsha, in his "fragments of Onitsha History", both as "a subordinate district of the empire of Benin" and as an "ally to Benin city, whose monarch was Oba." At another point he referred to Onitsha (Ado N'Idus) as a kingdom which had "very close" relations with the Benin kingdom.¹⁴

Azikiwe's conviction about the importance of a heroic past is amply demonstrated in the early parts of his "My Odyssey" where he took pains to trace his genealogy both on his father's and on his mother's side directly to Chima whom myth identified as the king of the Ado N'Idu who led the exodus from the domains of the Oba of Benin, the spearhead of which migration founded the city-state of Onitsha. "From information gleaned from my parents, relatives and other relevant sources", he writes, "my genealogy derives from a direct descent from Eze Chima, the first king of Onitsha, whose

direct descendants are generally known as Umu Eze Chima."¹⁵ Not satisfied to leave the matter at this general level he went on to demonstrate this claim in respect both of his paternal and maternal lines in more or less the same words. In respect of his paternal lineage he wrote:

Thus in respect of my paternal lineage, I could say both parents of my father are direct descendants of Eze Chima. As for me I can trace my paternal ancestry in this wise: I am the first son of Chukwuemeka, who was the third child and first son of Azikiwe who was the second son of Molokwu, who was the third son of Ozomaocha, who was the second son of Inosi Ora, who was the first son of Dei, the second son of Ezechima the founder of Onitsha.¹⁶

In respect of his maternal line he also wrote:

So in tracing my maternal lineage, I would say that my mother's parents were also direct descendants of Eze Chima. I can trace my maternal ancestry thus: I am the first son of Nwanonaku Rachael Chinwe Ogbenyealu (Aghadiuno) Azikiwe, who was the third daughter of Aghadiuno Ajie, the fifth son of Onowu Agbani, first daughter of Obi Odokwu, the son who descended from five kings of Onitsha. Five of these rulers of Onitsha were direct lineal descendants of Eze Chima who led his warrior adventurers when they left Benin to establish the Onitsha city state in 1748 A.D.¹⁷

Two pages later he linked this maternal lineage with "the mother of Obi Aroli who was an Igala woman."¹⁸

Apart from seeing himself as a legitimate heir to the splendour that was ancient Benin or even that was the Igala monarchy, he saw himself enjoying a special relationship with the "God of Ethiopia" the keeper of secrets of Africa's past, present and future, and who at one point "cleared my vistas as I see a noble race of Renascent Africans. And the history of this great race was unfurled to me."¹⁹ Partly from what he 'saw' during this privileged access to the past, the present and the future, and partly from his historical researches, he issued the following orders in *Renascent Africa*:

Educate the Renascent African to be a man. Tell him that he has made definite contributions to history. Educate him to appreciate the fact that iron was discovered by Africans; that the conception of one God was initiated by Africans; that Africans ruled the world from 763 to 713 B.C.; that while Europe slumbered during the dark ages, a great civilization flourished on the banks of the Niger, extending from the salt mines of Taghaza in Morocco, to Lake Chad right to the Atlantic. Narrate to him the lore of Ethiopia, Ghana, Melle, Mellestine and Songhay.

Let him realise with the rest of the world that while Oxford and Cambridge were in their inchoate stages, the University of Sankore in Timbuctoo welcomed 'scholars and learned men from all over the moslem world as Sir Percy puts it.²⁰

The point is that the only way that a twentieth century politician from Onitsha or any other part of Igboland could, retrospectively

and rather belatedly, join in the resplendent cultural and historical procession sketched above was to be pan-African and pan-Negro. In this way what armour (in this case psychological armour) one was believed to lack at home (at Onitsha and in Igboland) could be richly supplied from Benin, Idah, Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Kanem-Bornu, Mwenemutapa and even from the Egypt of the Pharaohs. This fact explains the apparent paradox that this great democrat of modern Africa was an admirer of historic kingdoms and empires, and of royal descent and connections. However, it must be emphasized that there are other explanations of Azikiwe's cosmopolitanism and Pan-Africanism. Some of these have been supplied already while many more are still to follow.

And now we come to the culture and history of the early colonial society in which Azikiwe was born and nurtured. "Whatever it was that brought about colonial rule", Professor Wallerstein has written,

it is certain that once a colonial administration was established something very important had happened. For now all things that men and groups did in Africa, they did within the context of the colonial situation.²¹

The colonial situation determined Nnamdi Azikiwe's life — where he was born, how he was named, where he was educated, how he was educated, whom he met, whom he befriended, what languages he spoke and so on. As luck would have it, the main trends and tendencies of the colonial situation helped to reinforce those same trends and tendencies in Onitsha and Igbo society and culture which predisposed Azikiwe to embrace cosmopolitanism as a philosophy and practical guide to action in his political career.

Had Azikiwe been born and nurtured early in the 19th century, he would have led a basically rural (that is non-urban) existence, since east of the Niger, urbanisation was basically a colonial phenomenon. But because he was a child of the colonial situation, he was born and brought up in urban culture — in Zungeru, Lagos, Kaduna, Onitsha and Calabar. Each of these places was important as cultural cross-roads. The case of Onitsha, we have already discussed. Yet it remains to be mentioned that by the early years of this century its position as an important cultural cross-road had become greatly enhanced. It lay on the Niger, the most important waterway to Northern Nigeria or the Central Sudan which had a great attraction for imperialists of all hues and descriptions. It had become an important centre for European commerce and Christian missionary work. It had also become an important administrative centre — a district headquarters as well as a provincial headquarters

— and thus the gateway not only to that portion of Igboland grouped under Onitsha Province, but also to the West Niger Igbo area grouped under the Bini Province.

Zungeru on its part was by 1904 the capital of Northern Nigeria and thus a bustling political, administrative and military centre. In addition it was important as a centre from which many strategic centres to the north and south of it could be reached. On this, Azikiwe has written:

Zungeru, in the Wushishi District in Niger Province, was then the capital of Northern Nigeria ... Due to its strategic location, Zungeru was a gateway to the Gwari country, via Minna; at the same time it was the route leading southwards to the heart of the Nupe country for one could easily travel to Jebba, Bida, Pategi, Badege, Baro, Muregi and Lokoja from the Baro railway junction at Minna.²²

Soon, however, Zungeru was to lose to Kaduna its position as the political administrative, military and communications nerve centre of Northern Nigeria.

Calabar, on its part, had been a centre of European commerce since about the 16th century. Situated in the estuary of the Cross River, it was the gateway to the territories of the Ibibio and Ogoja peoples of the interior, a fact which, in the nineteenth century, soon attracted missionary and official British presence. Until 1906 it was the headquarters of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. After that date it became the headquarters of the Eastern Division (1906-1911) and in 1912 the headquarters of Calabar Division and Calabar Province. It had one of Nigeria's most celebrated educational institutions of the age — the Hope Waddel Training Institute, of which Azikiwe was at one time a pupil.

Lagos, a supposedly former Benin outpost, shot into importance in the 19th century as the headquarters of the Lagos colony. It later became the headquarters of the Lagos colony and Protectorate, i.e. of Yorubaland west of Owo and south of Ilorin. It was at the time and has remained Nigeria's premier port. Because of its commercial and administrative importance, it attracted missionaries, repatriated ex-slaves and the rising western educated elite of West Africa from such places as Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and even West Indians and Afro-Brazilians. Thus, these four towns in which Azikiwe was prepared for his travel to America "in quest of the Golden Fleece", were all, in the classical sense, cosmopolitan centres in which Africans, Europeans, repatriates and Americans had many opportunities to collide with and influence one another.

In *My Odyssey*, Azikiwe harped again and again on the impact on his early life of the cosmopolitan culture and tendencies of these five early colonial urban centres. "One important feature of my early boyhood days", he has written,

which has had a decisive influence on my later attitude towards human beings, was the cosmopolitan nature of my neighbourhood and school atmosphere. The company that attracted me mainly consisted of youngsters of my age-group and students whose parents had been repatriated from Brazil or Nova Scotia, or who came from various West African territories such as Liberia, Gold Coast, Togo-land, or from other parts of Nigeria like Calabar, Warri, and Benin ... the contacts made me to be more cosmopolitan and fraternal in my human relations.²³

At another point he wrote on the same issue as follows:

The fact that my father's colleagues in Zungeru were Nigerians and other West Africans, and that these Nigerians represented various tribes in the northern and southern sectors of the country, taught me a lasting lesson. Although they represented many linguistic groups, yet they worked together and enhanced efficiency in the administrative machinery of government. This was proof that unity could be achieved from diversity, and that tribalism could be contained by sanctions of authority.²⁴

The fact is that these early colonial towns provided centres in which it was more or less impossible for anyone who wanted to participate actively in their affairs to have done other than build bridges of understanding across ethnic or even colonial frontiers. The members of the new elite (or the western-educated elite) who were to act as the leaven of the African section of colonial society were, at first, relatively few in number. They thus formed a closely-knit group whose members enjoyed fairly intimate relations with one another. So also did their children who, as Azikiwe mentioned, met themselves in schools and colleges as well as in the fields of athletics and games. As in the classical city states of Greece, these men knew one another and thus influenced one another with their ideas, hopes and fears. Furthermore as many of the leading members of the elite were "alien to the countries in which they resided — for instance the creoles in Freetown, the Americo-Liberians in Monrovia, the Sierra Leoneans and Brazilians in Lagos this meant that "the development of national consciousness was fostered by the very fact that these men had no specific ties to local groups."²⁵ Since it was after this "rootless" group that people like Azikiwe modelled themselves, it is easy to understand that their perceptions and ideas were broadly national, Pan-African and, indeed, universalistic.

There is still another aspect of this point that should be borne in mind. These early colonial towns were the points of entry for the

ideas of certain Afro-Americans who were agitating for radical improvements in the life and conditions of the Blackman in the New World in particular and of the Negro generally. Stimulus to African thinking, writes Professor Peter Lloyd,

came from certain West Indian and American intellectuals, who sought to arouse in West Africans a movement for Negro emancipation, implying complete rejection of colonial rule and the institution of African self-government.²⁶

According to Azikiwe's own testimony, it was in Calabar that he first came to hear of Liberia as a country ruled through and through by black men. With that, started his romance with Liberia which issued later in his book *Liberia in World Politics*. "It was during my stay at Hope Waddel", he has written,

that I first heard of a country whose executive and administrative officers were black men. It was unbelievable. A fellow student, who was a Kru, was fond of telling us that in his country the President and the governors were black men; so were all the judges, the law officers and the heads of department in the civil service.²⁷

Continuing, he said:

This revelation drew us closer, and I became very much interested in Liberia. Unfortunately very few books written in simple language were available to a young boy like me; so I had to wait until I became more mature to appreciate the rich literature available on Liberian history and culture.²⁸

Anyone familiar with the mottos of some of the outfits which Azikiwe helped to bring into existence will begin to appreciate the extent to which he was, in his youth, influenced and moulded in his thought and linguistic style by the airy-eclectic rococo verbalisation of abstract and universalistic principles which characterised Garvey and his like. Thus the mission of the University of Nigeria is "To Restore the Dignity of Man" while that of the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* was "That universal brotherhood shall become a reality."³⁰

When he left Calabar for Lagos, the consequences for him in terms of the formation of his character and ideals were equally dramatic and historic. First, he came face to face with the great Dr Kwegir Aggrey of Achimota. Says Dr Azikiwe:

Then Dr Aggrey delivered an inspiring sermon. Soft and melodious, his voice struck my soul with the force of a supernatural wand. Symbolic and suave, his message found my heart a ready soil for the dreams of a new social order ... from that day I became a new man.³¹

There, also, he came across the book *From the Log Cabin to the White House* by W. M. Thayer which he devoured in a matter of

two days and which revealed to him "the possibilities of will power in the face of abject poverty, and the rewards of the frontier spirit."³² Reflecting on all these experiences later, Dr Azikiwe wrote:

The dialogues at Calabar gave a new dimension to my outlook on life. They also opened a new vista to me, haunting me like a spectre, to discover the mission of Marcus Garvey and transplant it to Africa. Then came the new revelation by Dr Aggrey. His life was an indication of the opportunities open to Africans if they would have faith and be daring enough.³³

This role which colonial urban areas played in nurturing African nationalism and nationalists, especially in determining the range of ideas embodied in that movement and the manner in which they were verbalised is one which subsequent research has more than adequately confirmed.³⁴

There were, however, other factors associated with early colonial Africa which made members of the new elite, like Azikiwe, cosmopolitan, pan-African and universalistic in their approach to the problem which faced them. In the first place, the problem itself was Pan-African, indeed universal. All Africa, or most of it (with the questionable exceptions of Liberia and Ethiopia) were under white domination politically, economically, socially and ideologically. It was thus impossible to isolate the problems of one colony from another, because as long as any part of Africa was under white domination that fact would derogate from and subvert the autonomy and independence of all the other parts. Giving expression to this idea in 1937 Azikiwe argued "the West African colonies have a common foe ... so long as we think in terms of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia, and not of one United West Africa we must be content with Colonial Dictatorship instead of ... Democracy."³⁵ This basic recognition has continued to inform the approach of African statesmen to the problem of Africa's place and role in the world community. It informed Nkrumah's declaration that Ghana's independence in 1957 (the first colonial African territory to gain independence) was meaningless as long as any piece of Africa was a European colony. The result was that the young nation took up, under Nkrumah, a role greater than her resources in men and materials. The same recognition is what informs Nigeria's current foreign policy declaration which makes Africa the centre piece of her relations with other powers.

It was not only that the problem was pan-African, but that the new elite who faced it were, relatively speaking, few in number and weak in resources *vis-a-vis* the Western middle class who

imposed the colonial system, benefited from it and had an interest in its continuation or survival. From the point of view of tactics and strategy, therefore, it was advisable that these new elite came together and co-operated across the artificial colonial frontiers which the West created in Africa as part of the policy of *divide et impera*. It was only in so doing that the members of the new elite had any chance of making their voices heard. By and large, there were two major imperial systems — the British and the French — which imposed two languages of discourse on the continent — English and French. This determined, for long, the degree of practical co-operation across frontiers which was possible. In West Africa we had such practical co-operation in the British territories in the form of the National Congress of British West Africa (founded in 1921) which was led by the Gold Coast lawyer, J. E. Casely-Hayford.

The problem which faced these men was also universal because it was not only in Africa that the Blackman was in chains in the hands of the white race. In America, in particular, the Blacks were still to outlive the ugly consequences for them of the age of slavery and the slave trade which witnessed their forced migration from Africa to America. In a sense, therefore, the rehabilitation of the lot of the Blackman in Africa would be meaningless unless his lot in the New World was also rehabilitated, and *vice versa*. It was here that men like Azikiwe found themselves confronting the same dragon with men like Marcus Aurelius Garvey, and so became fellow-travellers.

Stating this problem in its African dimension in 1949 Dr Azikiwe had the following to say in a lecture he delivered in Washington D.C.:

Throughout Black Africa, a struggle for national freedom is in the offing, because factors of imperialism have stultified the normal growth of Africans in the community of nations. Consequently, our indigenous people present a sorry spectacle of degraded humanity. Politically, they are dominated by alien races and denied the basic human rights. Socially, the African has been made to witness discrimination of different kinds against him in his own native land. Economically, the African has been subjected to exploitation of the most heinous type whilst he vegetates below the minimum subsistence level of existence.³⁶

In other words, because the problem was pan-African and pan-Negro, the verbalisation of it, the analysis of it, the prescription for its solution, had to be pan-African, pan-Negro and indeed universalistic, and thus to some extent abstract. As time went on, however, it became clear that neither pan-Negroism nor pan-Africanism nor even pan-West Africanism was a realistic basis for

the allocation and exercise of political power which alone promised the solution to the problem of the African, or of the Blackman in Africa, and even in the New World. The example of men like Garvey was a stunning warning. Even "pan-Nigerianism" of an undiluted type (i.e. unitary government, as opposed to federalism) could be a deadly basis for the exercise of political power as our traumatic experience since 1966 would testify to. This wisdom did not dawn on members of the new elite until close to the dying years of colonialism in Africa. The result was that while not ceasing to verbalise the old 'pan'-ideas, Azikiwe began giving more and more of his time to the practical problems of domesticating democracy in Nigeria and developing Eastern Nigeria economically and socially.

One more point remains to be made in explanation of Azikiwe's breadth of ideas and vision. This has to do with the kind of education which early colonial society offered him. It was an education that was both relevant and irrelevant. It was relevant to the colonial society — a society that had no value by itself except in so far as it fitted into the wider framework of the worldwide empire of Great Britain on which, it was boasted, the sun never set. The values of that colonial society were thus oriented outwards, being derived, as they were, from classical Greece and Rome, from the European Middle Ages and from Industrial Revolution Europe. The languages of learned discourse for this colonial society — English and Latin — were outward looking and carried materials, ideas and examples appropriate to the needs of the larger imperial socio-economic framework. It was in this context that the ideas of men like Azikiwe originated, and not surprisingly they bore a close resemblance to their parents.

In this regard, the views of two perceptive scholars of this period of recent African history will help to further our understanding. "As in all colonial and semi-colonial societies since the American War of Independence", wrote the late Thomas Hodgkin:

the theoretical weapons with which African nationalists make their revolutions have been largely borrowed from the armouries of the metropolitan countries. Much of the political thinking of contemporary African leaders is bound to be derivative. They are themselves the product of European schools and universities. They are asserting claims that have already been asserted by Europeans, around which a European sacred literature has been built up. And they have to state their case in a language that will be intelligible to their European rulers.³⁷

With this Professor Emmanuel Wallerstein agrees, attributing it to the logical impact of "the colonial situation." "By the term *colonial situation*", he writes:

we simply mean that someone imposes in a given area a new institution, the colonial administration, governed by outsiders who establish new rules which they enforce with a reasonable degree of success. It means that all those who act in the colony take some account of these rules, and that indeed an increasing amount of each individual's action is oriented to this set of rules rather than to any other set, for example the tribal set, to which he formerly paid full heed.³⁸

Consequently, people like Azikiwe, thanks to the kind of education they received in this situation, discussed the fate of the Blackman in the context of the world empires of the day which were the creations of Western nations. And in doing so they had to base their arguments on the Christian ideas of human brotherhood, on ideas of democracy whose roots go back to the Greek city states, on universalistic socialist ideals which abhor economic exploitation, poverty and unemployment. These were some of the basic items in the ideological kit of the West. When the elite discussed political power and institutions they had to do so in the context of the divisions, provinces and colonies set up by these powers, and then in the context of the British Empire and Commonwealth. Nothing outside these contexts would make meaning or be tolerated. When the Igbo sought, between 1967 and 1970 January, to ignore this rule set by imperial Britain for the discussion of politics and political rights, they were taught how sacrosanct some of these set contexts could be.

This "relevant" education was as already mentioned, also "irrelevant." It was irrelevant in that it touched on indigenous African society only tangentially, if at all. The books available for school work were not on or about Africa. So also were the values which they carried not derived from Africa. Had this been otherwise there would have been lack of uniformity and consistency in the kind of literature which the members of the rising elite would have been put through in their different localities and colonies. Had the language of education been appropriate to local conditions this would have increased the barrier in communication among various elite groups. It would have made co-operation across colonial borders more difficult. The elite would have lacked the philosophical and ideological basis for the expression of truly nationalistic, pan-African and pan-Negro ideas. This "irrelevance" of early colonial education, when judged by the needs of various

indigenous societies and groups, was paradoxically supportive of the other tendencies at the time which made for the growth of cosmopolitan views and movements. Indeed, the increasing indigenisation of curriculum which came with the attainment of political independence, and thus the increasing "relevance" of education to local needs, has helped to undermine somewhat the survival of that cosmopolitan culture and outlook on which the survival and stability of the new nations actually depends. In other words, our education has continued to be both "relevant" and "irrelevant."

Apart from his cosmopolitan views and 'pan'-ideas, one more feature of Azikiwe's life and work remains to be accounted for. This feature has at times been described as "sensationalism," "fieriness" or even "combativeness." Azikiwe's style as a journalist was free, easy, clear and lively, if also, says Coleman, occasionally "shockingly direct."³⁹ But there is no doubt that the overall impression presented by his works, from his books to his formal speeches and newspaper articles, is that of a man in a permanent state of mobilisation for active combat in a world that demanded eternal vigilance and whose basic guiding principle is "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth". In his *Renascent Africa* he made no secret of the fact that he accepted the principle of conflict and combat as vital elements in human nature. James Coleman was of the view that this feature of Azikiwe's career as a politician, statesman and journalist can be explained in terms of the impact of what he described as "the sensationalism and pugnacity of American yellow journalism, and particularly the obsessive race-consciousness of American Negro newspapers."⁴⁰

However, it would appear that there were trends and tendencies in the two cultural and historical realities which we have been analysing — the Igbo cultural historical reality, and the early colonial society — which may have contributed to the making of a combative character. The Umu Eze Chima, of which Azikiwe was proud to be a descendant, left the territories of the Oba of Benin as a result of conflict. Then the Onitsha group of them, the spear-head of the flight, fought their way to Onitsha, and lived in a state of war with their neighbours — the Oze, the Awkuzu, the Ogidi, the Obosi etc — until the dawn of colonial rule. Azikiwe himself chronicled some of these wars with a measure of relish and glee in his "Fragments of Onitsha History". Then early in his life, when he was still at the plastic stage of his development, he found himself,

according to *My Odyssey*, in a situation of family conflict when his father marginalised his beloved mother by taking another wife. At school, in Calabar and Lagos, he often had to fight his way through school, against bullies who did not hesitate to pull his ear in order to demonstrate to him "How We Train Idiots".

To cap it all, the colonial situation was one which bristled through and through with contradictions and conflict. The juxtaposition in early colonial society of White against Black, of African quarters against European reserved areas, of unemployed against employed, of towns against rural areas, of the new elite against the traditional elite of chiefs and others, of 'haves' against 'have-nots' was one that constantly made for contradiction, angry comparisons and even conflict. Indeed, the nationalist movement in which Azikiwe spent his life arose out of the conflict and contradiction between Black and White, the ruled and their rulers, the privileged and the underprivileged. Azikiwe also grew up a sportsman. In swimming, athletics and the like competition is subdued combat. But in boxing, and Azikiwe was also a boxer, the case is totally different. There, competition is open combat which, theoretically, is devoid of hard feelings. A close reading of the correspondence and the account of the preparations which preceded his departure for America suggest quite clearly that he probably landed on American soil with clenched fists, that is on the ready for action in a wild and turbulent world. His description of his trip to America as the quest for the Golden Fleece is psychologically revealing. A voracious reader, he already knew that Jason seized the Golden Fleece and brought it home through sustained combat, indeed sustained mortal combat. Thus Azikiwe grew up as a combat-soldier in politics. But he was listed under the universalist banners of the brotherhood of man, of democracy, of welfarism and of freedom of speech.

To conclude, it must be re-emphasized that to understand the cultural and historical foundations on which Azikiwe's career as a politician, statesman, journalist and humanist rests, one must, amongst other things, take into account four circumstances that dominated his birth and up-bringing. These are:

- (i) the outward-looking character of traditional Igbo society;
- (ii) the cosmopolitan character of Onitsha society;
- (iii) the cosmopolitan character of the early colonial towns of Zungeru, Kaduna, Calabar and Lagos.
- (iv) the strengths and failings of the educational system of the times.

Till date Azikiwe continues to epitomise in his person the two cultural realities of Igbo society and of British imperial socio-political formation. As Owelle of Onitsha, he is anchored in the first, while as a member of the Privy Council, the highest court of the Empire and Commonwealth, he is also anchored in the second. This, he would be the first to admit, is in keeping with his philosophical eclecticism and his political pragmatism. "Since I attained manhood", he wrote in *My Odyssey*:

I have had to fend for myself in a world where idealism and materialism are usually opposed to each other. In the course of my life's odyssey I have been convinced that I must be idealistic to justify my existence as a human being, but I must also be materialistic to adapt myself to the concatenations of a materialistic world. To steer between the two, it became necessary for me to be eclectic and pragmatic: to draw the best from each philosophy and make it work to my advantage in the light of reason and experience.⁴¹

An overwhelmed reader of a copy of *Renascent Africa* in the Africana section of the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka scrawled on the title page "Owelle, you are a genius". An appreciation of the extent to which Azikiwe drew some of the best from the two cultural realities in which he was nurtured would make many an analyst agree with this ecstatic assessment of this African political colossus.

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26. *Ibid*, pp. 216-7.
27. Azikiwe, N., *My Odyssey* pp. 31-2.
28. *Ibid*, p. 32.
29. *Ibid*, p. 35.
30. *Ibid*, p. 374. Others include *Nigerian Spokesman* — "That man shall not be a wolf to man", *Southern Nigeria Defender* — "That man's inhumanity to man shall cease" etc. etc.
31. *Ibid*, p. 37.
32. *Ibid*, p. 42.
33. *Ibid*, p. 52.
34. Coleman, J. S., *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (University of California Press, 1957) part II; Hodgkin, T., *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (N.Y. University Press, 1967) p. 63 ff.
35. Quoted in Coleman, J. S., *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* p. 222.
36. Azikiwe, N., *Zik* (Cambridge, 1961) p. 6.
37. Hodgkin, T., *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* p. 170.
38. Wallerstein, I., *Africa: The Politics of Independence* p. 31.
39. Coleman, J. S., *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. On p. 223 he talks of the often "shocking directness" of Azikiwe's journalism.
40. *Ibid*, pp. 222-223.
41. Azikiwe, N., *My Odyssey* p. XI.

2

Formal Education: British and American Alternatives

Chukwuemeka Ebo

The Nigerian Phase

The major influence which shaped the form and the content of education in Nigeria from the outset of British contact up to some such time as the fourth decade of the twentieth century was unquestionably the agents of Christian evangelism. As one perceptive observer sees the matter:

To all intents and purposes the school is the Church. Right away in the bush or in the forest the two are one, and the village teacher is also the village evangelist. Appreciation of all this is cardinal in all considerations of African education.¹

Education in Nigeria was under the complete control of missionary organisations up to 1898. In 1942, 99 per cent of all the schools were under their management and accounted for more than 97 per cent of the total school population. "By 1945 there were comparatively few literate Nigerians who had not received all or part of their education in mission schools."²

Because they dominated the pioneering phases of the educational enterprise in Nigeria, they were instrumental in defining its content in a way that served the missionary motive. "With few notable exceptions, education in Nigeria was based on learning to read, write and calculate in the English language."³ Later subjects added were history of the British Empire and European geography. Some

practical subjects such as gardening, sanitation and personal hygiene were also introduced into the curriculum. But, in the main, the missionary bodies were eager to build schools "with a simple curriculum of four R's (religion, reading, writing and arithmetic) with the object of training evangelists, teachers, and clerks."⁴ Such an overwhelmingly literary education suited the major purpose of the missionary groups which was to convert Africans through evangelisation. As far as the colonial government in Nigeria was concerned, the situation was tailor-made for their imperial aims. A literary curriculum provided government offices with English-speaking clerks and assistants.

Moreover, contemporaneously with the manifestation of these tendencies on the part of the evangelizers and the colonizers, the Nigerians themselves appeared to have allowed a clerkship "cult" to grow and develop among them. One knowledgeable source has depicted the phenomenon in this bold and lucid parlance:

Moreover, there was at the time little evidence of a strong and articulate demand from the great mass of Africans for a change in the clerk-producing system. Clerical work was recognized as the proper field of employment. The clerk had achieved an exalted position in the new urban social structure. He was literally and figuratively closest to the European; he was able to approximate the European's manner of living, speech, dress, and behaviour; he was most highly paid in the new medium of exchange; and he was the most educated. In short the clerk had become a superman: the keeper of the keys, the symbol of power, the object of emulation.⁵

It was in this educational atmosphere that Azikiwe began school. He learned the rudiments of the alphabet under Mr Ray, who was from Sierra Leone. Afterwards, he came under the care of T. J. Watson, then a junior officer in the medical department at Zungeru. In 1912 he was sent to Onitsha to continue his education at Holy Trinity School of the Roman Catholic Mission but later transferred to C.M.S. Central School at the request of his father. In 1915 he was promoted to Standard II. His father then sent him to Lagos where he entered the Wesleyan Boys' High School, which is the second oldest secondary school in Nigeria, having been founded in 1878. At the end of the 1916 year, he received a special prize for coming first in his class. The prize was presented to him by Lord Lugard on the school's prize giving day at the Glover Memorial Hall early in 1917.

A year later, in 1918, his father instructed him to return to Onitsha to continue his education. He re-enrolled at C.M.S. Central School and was placed in Standard VI, the same class in which he was when he left Wesleyan Boys' High School. The following year

1919, he was appointed a first year pupil teacher and sent to work at a school in Oraifite, which is a short distance from Onitsha. He was only fifteen years at the time and had successfully completed elementary school by passing the Standard VI examination at the end of 1918. Because of impressive performance as a result of dedication to duties and studies, he became a second year pupil teacher at the end of 1919, when he returned to his former school, C.M.S. Central School, Onitsha.

But this interlude in his scholastic career was short-lived. Early in 1920, he resigned his teaching appointment with the C.M.S. and left for Calabar to attend the Hope Waddel Training Institution which was then "under the able and scholarly principalship of the Rev. J. K. McGregor." At Hope Waddel he was provisionally placed in Standard VI which meant that he had to repeat the class he passed fifteen months earlier. This was because he was not interested in the Normal Department and the institution had no Secondary Department. This fact persuaded his father to send him back to Lagos, to Wesleyan Boys' High School, in the same year. His secondary education seemed to have stopped after completing Class IV in which he was placed at the high school because in October 17, 1921, he was employed by the Treasury Department having passed the Civil Service Entrance Examination which he took in July.⁶

It is reasonable to argue that formal education, that is the type of programmed instruction and knowledge imparted in designated centres according to conventional criteria, taken in isolation, can never encompass the significant range of forces that go to the shaping of the individual personality. A complex organism, the human individual is an amalgam of forces from diverse sources that incessantly impinge upon him and condition his feelings, memories, and perceptions. Formal education is a major source of these formative influences. Other equally significant sources are less structured. They consist of situations and events the individual experiences outside the classroom, in the outside world, which become deeply etched in the memory of the actor, and help to structure his attitudes and behaviour. Viewed in this light, any failure to identify some of the major experiences through which Zik passed both during and after his active scholastic career in Nigeria would be tantamount to allowing a yawning gap to mar the effort to marshal the full panoply of forces and influences that were

instrumental in building the foundations of the unique pattern of his future system of thought and action.

Zik was born in Zungeru in 1904 when the town was the capital of Northern Nigeria, and consequently was inhabited by people from all parts of Nigeria and British West Africa. For almost eight years he lived in Zungeru and mixed with people of many tribes and countries. He learned the Hausa language and became fluent in it. "To all intents and purposes, I was a Hausa boy then, for I was able to speak that language very fluently."⁷ When he returned to Onitsha in 1912, he also met a similar cosmopolitan atmosphere in which people from various parts of Nigeria, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone resided and associated together. In Lagos where he moved next, he met an even more sophisticated environment, in which he associated with friends representing many Nigerian and West African tribes, and people from the West Indies. Before he left Lagos in 1924 after his school and working days there, he became fluent in Yoruba language. Thus, from a very tender age, he began to acquire a valuable object lesson in inter-tribal co-existence, tolerance and togetherness. He testifies to the profound impression this circumstance had on the later evolution of his attitude on such matters:

One important feature of my early boyhood days, which has had a decisive influence on my later attitude toward human beings, was the cosmopolitan nature of my neighbourhood and school atmosphere. The company that attracted me mainly consisted of youngsters of my age-group and students whose parents or grandparents had been repatriated from Brazil or Nova Scotia or who came from various West African territories such as Liberia, Gold Coast, Togoland, or from other parts of Nigeria like Calabar, Warri and Benin ... The fact that my father's colleagues in Zungeru were Nigerians and other West Africans, and that these Nigerians represented various tribes in the northern and southern sectors of the country taught me a lesson. Although they represented many linguistic groups, yet they worked together and enhanced efficiency in the administrative machinery of government. This was proof that unity could be achieved from diversity and that tribalism could be contained by the sanctions of authority.⁸

The salience of this belief in shaping his distinctive system of ideas and action is shown by the fact it became a major ingredient of the tenet of Social Regeneration, one of the five pillars of his revolutionary ideology of New Africa.

His brief period of employment as a third class clerk in the Treasury in Lagos from 1921 to 1924, and his service as a clerk for Justice Graham Paul, all helped to open his eyes to the practical side of life and its tribulations. He experienced the pains of making a

living out of meagre resources. It was a veritable school of hard knocks, as evidenced by this passage attributed to him:

As a young clerk I was trapped in the vortex of economic insecurity which was the experience of most junior clerks in those days ...

The first step towards my escape from being a perennial wage-earner was to become mentally equipped. I thought that I was not sufficiently educated to know how to seek for food, shelter, clothing and other amenities of life without slaving and vegetating. I planned to go to the United States and be re-educated from my mis-education. As soon as I was re-educated, I would try to discover the secret which made successful people to be self-employed and be in position to better the conditions of mankind.⁷

This conception of the cardinal role of education as the highway to the goal of individual economic security and self-reliance was reinforced by his experience on the Gold Coast en route to the United States as a stow-away in 1924. He and his two colleagues had disembarked because of the indisposition of the one of them, and to survive in the alien environment they had to get some work to do to earn money. His two colleagues succeeded in finding remunerative jobs; only he remained unemployed. Disappointed and chagrined, he lamented "that if with my education I was not good enough to be employed as a labourer in the Takoradi Harbour works, then my education was a failure."¹⁰ This was the brutal truth, especially since of the three pilgrims he was the only one armed with secondary education and the only one who was still idle after two weeks of frantic job-hunting in Sekondi. This pragmatic view that education is less a matter of accumulation of certificates and stuffing the head with literary facts but more of endowing one with the skills and capabilities to cope successfully with the demands of social and economic self-reliance and security is another strand in the warp and woof of Zik's revolutionary ideology, which strand he called Economic Determinism.

The United States Phase

In 1920, while a student of Wesleyan Boys' High School the young Azikiwe, then only 16 years old, heard Dr J. E. K. Aggrey preach a sermon at the Tinubu Methodist Church. The young lad was highly impressed and captivated by Aggrey's oratorical power and by the appeal of his message. Aggrey's dictum that "Nothing but the best is good enough for Africa" opened a vista of a glorious future in the young man's imagination. Aggrey's peroration: "If I, one of you, could go to the new world, and make a man of myself, then you can too" awakened in him a burning yearning to follow in Aggrey's footsteps. The following day, Aggrey visited his school

and gave him a book "Negro Education: a Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Coloured People in the United States." Till he sailed for the United States in 1925, this book was always within his reach. It was the information he gleaned from it that enabled him to make the necessary contact for his education in America. Later in the same year, he received a book for winning the boarders' prize at the Wesleyan Boys' High School. It was an autobiography of James A. Garfield, a former President of the United States of America. He read the book and it gave him moral and spiritual encouragement and hope. The "rags to riches" saga of James Garfield's life, coupled with Dr Aggrey's living evidence and the information about colleges and universities, meant exclusively for the educational needs of blacks in the United States impelled him to reach an irrevocable decision to proceed to America for higher education, "no matter the cost, no matter the price to be paid."¹¹

In 1925, he sailed for the United States of America and enrolled at the Storer College, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. One of the first things he did was to call on the President of the College at his house to report his arrival. He saw a middle-aged man vigorously working with a rake in the garden. The man was covered with sweat like a hired labourer. Taking him to be one of the college employees, he greeted him and requested to be directed to the President's house. When the 'hired labourer' wanted to know why he wanted to see the President, Zik replied that he was a student from Africa and that he was born and bred an Englishman and it was not proper for a gardener to pry into the nature of discussion between gentlemen, meaning himself and the President of the College. It was then that the gardener introduced himself as the President of Storer College and welcomed him to the United States of America. This was a rude awakening for Zik because "in Africa I and my colleagues thought it *infra dignitatem* even to wash the plates used for eating. It was the job of stewards!"¹²

This episode made an abiding impression on him because it made him resolve to take any type of work, no matter how lowly and menial, in order to support himself in college. It was indeed a milestone in the history of the revolution in Zik's outlook on the nature and role of education in the life of the individual and his society. A close student of Zik has testified that a far-reaching implication of this encounter with the President of Storer College was that it revealed to him one of the dynamics of American education.

He learnt at once and for all that manual labour like its complement the use of the mind is not a disgrace and that a man with education should be proud of it. Learning and appreciating the dignity of labour were one: rubbing it in by practice and experience was another, and more difficult and trying.¹⁵

Zik had thus begun this learning process almost immediately he set foot on the campus of Storer College, a process which one knowledgeable source once likened to a commitment "to re-educate the miseducated". Under the rubric of mental emancipation the fruit of this process became one of the building blocks of the edifice of Zik's revolutionary ideology of New Africa. He completed preparatory studies in the secondary department, something equivalent to university entrance or matriculation examination. He offered the following papers in the examination: Botany, Zoology, Advanced Algebra, Latin Language and Literature, French Language and Literature and American Literature. The following year, he entered the Junior College department as a Freshman or First Year student and took the following courses: Astronomy, Geology, Trigonometry, Latin Language and Literature, Philosophy (Ethics) and Sociology.

In June 1927, he left Storer College to complete his college education at Howard University. But he had to earn money for his expenses. Throughout the summer, he worked at odd jobs. At one time in Pittsburgh, he was penniless and depressed and lay down on train tracks to be smashed to death. Only the timely intervention of a Good Samaritan saved him from committing suicide. Moreover, the driver of the train had also spotted him sprawling across the tracks and braked the locomotive.

At Howard, which he entered in 1928, he majored in Political Science but took courses from the social sciences and from other disciplines. He studied Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology and Education. Such a broad spectrum of courses, which another product of American education and one of Zik's protégée, Nwafor Orizu, has given the felicitous title of "horizontal education," according to Zik, should not be misconstrued to mean that "Howard University crammed my head full with a lot of digestible and indigestible stuff. It simply means that I was exposed to those academic disciplines which challenged my mental faculties and facilitated the process of self-expression and thus developed my personality".

On this issue of the stimulation of mental faculties and the development of self-expression and personality through the instrumentality of education of the adequate and challenging type,

we have to take note of an event that occurred while Zik was still at Storer College because it provided him with an opportunity to propound his order of priorities in planning the crusade to usher in the New Africa bereft of the spiritual, mental and social weaknesses and encumbrances of the old. In 1927 he had received a letter from Malcom I. Nurse, later to be famous under the name of George Padmore, who was then a student at Fisk University. Malcom Nurse's letter solicited Zik's co-operation "in a movement that I am hoping to work out along with Mr Davies, a student from Monrovia, Liberia."¹⁶ He proceeded to inform Zik that he, Mr Nurse and Mr Davies, were making plans to found a political organisation among foreign black students in American colleges and universities. "The primary object will be to foster racial consciousness and a spirit of nationalism aiming at the protection of the sovereignty of Liberia",¹⁷ which was one of the only two sovereign black states in the continent of Africa. Zik's answer at that time revealed his incipient stance on the contention concerning the order of priority to be accorded development at the mental and political levels; that is to say, which approach will be more promising of beneficial and lasting results for Africa: the revolution of the mind or political revolution against imperialism.

The answer to this fateful question which he ventured at this time anticipated the position he was to take in the future in the course of formulating his doctrines of the New Africa. He agreed that the time had arrived for launching an intense propaganda campaign of African nationalism as a means of arousing racial consciousness"¹⁸ of the masses of Africa from the yoke of miseducation, ignorance and passivity. The ideas of Sun Yat-Sen of China, he confessed, he found to be such that he would be proud to call his own, and the victories of Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek in the effort to unify China he found exhilarating to read. Nevertheless, he felt "that an intellectual revolution was more potent as a foundation for the superstructure that must inevitably be built."¹⁹ But if he would become one of the apostles of the movement for the mental emancipation of Africans, then he should be able to construct a credible philosophy to guide the crystallization of such a momentous project. But, alas, he found that he knew little or nothing of systematic philosophy. That was the motive behind his decision to select courses in social philosophy calculated to improve his skill in constructive and systematic thinking.

Zik transferred from Howard to Lincoln University for financial reasons in 1929 and the following year was graduated with BA. The following summer session, he attended Columbia University to study journalism. The three courses for which he registered were international law, labour problems and principles of journalism. When he returned to Lincoln University at the end of the summer session, he was appointed a graduate assistant in the departments of Political Science and Sociology. He also registered at the University of Pennsylvania for post-graduate studies leading to M.Sc. with anthropology as his major and political science as minor. At the same time, he also enrolled for post-graduate work at Lincoln University for the M.A. degree, with religion as his major subject and philosophy as minor. In June 1932, he received M.A. degree from Lincoln University, and the following year, the University of Pennsylvania conferred upon him the M.Sc. degree. After these academic laurels, he was confirmed as a full-time instructor. He taught courses in his faculty and also stood in for professors on sabbatical leave, especially in history department. He introduced a course in African history, which "almost caused an uproar at Lincoln University, because some of the professors felt that the African had no history worthy of academic attention."²⁰

We have taken the trouble to catalogue in some detail the educational experiences and accomplishments of Zik in America not necessarily to parade his erudition but to underscore the importance he attached to the habit of exposing the mind to the widest range of fields of study as is humanly possible. This he believed would help to unlock the treasures of the accumulated wisdom of the ages for the exploration of the human intellect without let or hindrance. But as he never tired to remind himself at the time and as he would continue to do while constructing his ideology of African renaissance, the acid test of all these academic laurels is their power to give the individual the capacity to earn a decent livelihood.

At the climax of my academic adventure in America, I realized one truth; that with all the academic distinctions one might acquire, if one did not have a good job from which to earn a steady income, to have food, shelter, clothing, and the necessities of life, one's education could be regarded as a dismal failure.²¹

Thus the lesson from the incident at the house of the President of Storer College lingered long in his memory and coloured his evolving ideas and ideals of the New Africa of his dream.

It appears germane at this point to mention some of the African students who were his contemporaries in America. According to a

reliable source, "until 1938 only twenty Nigerians, including Eyo Ita and Nnamdi Azikiwe, had gone to the United States to study".²² It can be deduced from this information that the circle of African students who were Zik's contemporaries in the United States (1925-34) must, by today's standard, be extremely infinitesimal. One of the first African students he came to know and who maintained a long close friendship with him was Hogan Edem Ani Okokon, from Calabar. Okokon was a student at Storer College at the time Zik was making inquiries about getting admission to the college in 1925. Immediately on arrival in the United States of America, Okokon was one of the persons Zik wrote announcing the event. In his reply, Okokon, who had moved to Howard University, Washington, D.C., offered him some pieces of advice on how to survive in the strange environment:

Do not leave yourself to be drifted by anyone at Storer. Be a man of yourself. Many will cater about you as friends, yet with the intention to ridicule you. Be reserved; do not tell much about Africa. Wait till you find out what way the wind blows. What you do or what you say will be used against you later.²³

Both men met when Zik moved to Howard University in 1928. Not long after that, Okokon died, but not before he whispered these last words into Zik's ears:

Hold the fort, Zik, do not give up the struggle. Africa must be redeemed. I have done my part.²⁴

Another student who had a tremendous influence on his life was his old teacher, Frank Akintunde Brown, who at the material time, was pursuing his post-graduate studies at the University of Chicago. Zik (then still answering the name of Ben) wrote him, and, in his response he said, *inter alia*, that

You still remember my long name. Well, I cast it off years ago when I became "converted". I think many of our African parents made a great mistake when they adopted European names. You may have many things to be proud of, as a race, and it is up to us who will be leaders of our people in the future to inject into them this sense of pride and appreciation of our rich cultural heritage. So I began the reformation with myself.²⁵

He continued:

Dipeolu is our family name with rich traditions and I love my own Yoruba name, Akintunde. As for the 'Brown', I put it in the middle; sooner or later it will be discarded.²⁶

The sentiment of race pride which Dipeolu's letter expressed so persuasively made a profound impression on Zik, especially the fact that it could become such an emotional power that moved his former

teacher to change his European name for an African one. "There and then I made up my mind that at the earliest opportunity I would discard my foreign name. This was accomplished five years later."²⁷ This incident occurred in 1929, and the two compatriots remained in constant touch till 1934, on the very eve of Zik's departure from the United States for home via England. For, in Zik's own words, "Meanwhile, Dipeolu (alias Frank A. Brown) and I had to spend my last night in America together".²⁸ Thus, it was from his friend and contemporary Akintunde Dipeolu that he received his baptism of cultural nationalism.

We have already seen that George Padmore (then known as Nalcom I. Nurse) had corresponded with Zik in 1927 from Fisk University when Zik was at Storer College, soliciting Zik's co-operation in Padmore's project to found a political organisation "among foreign Negro Students in American colleges and universities." Zik had then replied that he thought the priority should be given to the crusade for mental emancipation of the mind of Africa. They met as students at Howard University and were active members of the International Club.

Other African students at Howard University with whom he became friends were Dr Cyril Ollivierre from Trinidad, Simeon Bankole Wright from Sierra Leone. Ollivierre was a good friend in deed because he was instrumental in his securing a job with Professor Locke which enabled him to earn money to enroll at Howard University rather than Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. Another contemporary of Zik's was Prince Hosea Akiki Nyabongo from Uganda who was his room mate at Howard. He also met a Nigerian student, Babajimi Adewakun. At Lincoln University, he was joined by E. A. Schandorf of Accra. Among the students whom he helped to study political science in their freshman year when he was an Instructor was Dosumu Johnson, a student from Sierra Leone.

It is evident that at the time Zik was in the United States there was nothing like an African Students Association that embraced students in all colleges and universities in that country, as became the fashion among the generation of African students who began to arrive from the late 1930's. George Padmore and Mr Davies from Liberia tried to float one about which they wrote Zik while he was still at Storer College, but there is no evidence that anything came of the attempt. What seemed to be the norm in those days appears to be organisations confined to specific institutions where few African

Students were studying, like the organisation of African Students at Hampton Institute, Virginia, of which Mr Dipeolu mentioned in one of his letters to Zik.

Meanwhile, Zik had already started planning for the establishment of an institution in West Africa which would provide intellectual and manual education for Africans, male and female. He was convinced that the highest service he could render to the youth of Africa is to share with them the joys of his new life in the west.²⁹ The institution would be an educational centre where the more constructive and positive ideas of the west would be carefully incorporated into the outlook of the African, but on the basis of African culture and social organisations. Fees and other charges at this institution would be minimum so as to popularise education in West Africa. It would start as an elementary school and gradually develop into a full-fledged university. This project could not take off while Zik was in the United States. But he did not forget the project which he realized lay at the cornerstone of his crusade for New Africa. Two decades later, when the opportunity presented itself, he took up the task again and elaborated a detailed scheme of education he was convinced would extend the same kind of blessings and benefits of intellectual revolution which his American education bestowed upon him to the millions of his compatriots at home to the end that in their lives the teachings of his ideology of New Africa could find fulfilment. But before dilating on this educational blueprint, it will be useful to describe briefly the major characteristics of the British system of education as a foil to the American version and to present a concise analysis of three strands of the ideology of New Africa.

The British and American Traditions

The British tradition regarding education had a distinctive flavour as concerns both quantity and quality, but some modifications have since been gradually allowed to creep in to bring it more in tune with those of other nations. But, by and large, it still retains some distinguishing characteristics, dictated by the history and cultures of the country. Its roots go back to the medieval era and the latter classical influences of the Renaissance. It boasts a literary spirit, is essentially aristocratic and conservative, and consequently elitist. One of its major preoccupations is character building and the grooming of a gentleman. Because it tends to tilt towards literary curriculum, it has not been able to give sufficient emphasis to

technical and vocational education, especially at the post-secondary or tertiary level. As a noted scholar has informed us, "In state-sponsored technical and vocational education, England had lagged behind other Western Industrial countries."³⁰ Being aristocratic and elitist, the British tradition has never pretended to be popular, especially with respect to the tertiary levels. The ideal has been to favour restriction of numbers in order to maintain high standards. Moreover, students are not offered much amplitude in the variety of subjects in their academic programmes, the tendency being to concentrate on the core subjects and ignore those that are considered to be of peripheral character. This quality has been viewed by some observers as a concomitant of that lack of the pragmatic spirit which sees the chief aim of education as the development of the capacity to adapt to change. This tendency towards early specialization, save, perhaps in some professions, has been stigmatized as "vertical"³¹ education. An observer has noted that "The English system is aristocratic and selective and in their universities the system of education still has some affinity with medieval scholarship."³²

The American analogue is driven by an ethos which has its roots in the "Age of Reason and Science". Because of this pedigree, American education is eminently empirical and pragmatic a judgement which the following passage confirms:

The Americans are a serious and a practical people; to expect a nation which wrested civilization from nature to be interested in education merely for the sake of the mind would be folly. It has been to them an immensely pragmatic matter, which trained citizens to perform adequately functions which were regarded as of significant value in American society. Education has not been the training of a gentleman, as so often in Europe, but the training of a clergyman, teacher, a doctor, later a lawyer or a businessman, who could contribute the knowledge of some vocation the importance of which was widely accepted in the new civilization.³³

This is in conformity with the sentiment which has already been credited to Zik that one's education, no matter the number of distinctions earned from it, is a dismal failure if it does not enable the scholar to secure a good job from which to earn an income, to have food, shelter and other comforts.

The American tradition concerning education is democratic, popular and dynamic. Education is free to all, and is looked upon as a right and not a privilege. "America", it has been insisted, "believes that in a society where every citizen is free to speak and vote, every citizen should be free to learn: you do not raise the standard and logic of speech by silencing half the world."³⁴ Everyone should have the opportunity to learn so that the best may ascend to the top

through free and natural selection and open and fair competition, and not through the creation of privileged groups through the institution of artificial and unjust restrictions. An observer who has passed through the mill corroborates this observation in this vein:

America fanatically believes in a free access to knowledge, and she provides the avenues for individual development and for independent search for truth. A citizen once born knows that if the initiative lies within him, he may climb to any heights — from the obscure to the sublime. This is a new faith borne out of dissatisfaction with the restraints of the old worlds ... It is a laudable reaction against the claims and restrictions that enveloped the human personality in the old social order. It is a democratic upheaval!³⁵

All this exuberance and openness that characterises the traditional approach to education, according to the author, has cast that country in the role of the "daughter of untrammelled intelligence".³⁶

Because of this commitment to the ethos of empiricism and pragmatism, American educational institutions, especially the Universities, offer a wide range of disciplines for students' choice and study. Zik's experience at Howard, Lincoln, Pennsylvania and Columbia universities witnesses the validity of this assertion. They "offer all subjects in any field of human endeavour and encourage students to attain fame or specialisation ... on the students' terms or choice."³⁷ This means essentially that every discipline is regarded and treated as having a multidimensional character and that teaching and study in every discipline must be approached with a multifaceted tool to be meaningful and adequate. If, for instance, the student is engaged in the study of mathematics and science, he is exposed to the history of the American Constitution and so is introduced to politics and civics, and economics which awakens his mind to the problems of organizing the production and distribution of scarce resources in society. It is this brand of curriculum, with subjects which cut across neighbouring disciplines, in the effort to bring to bear a multidisciplinary arsenal to the analysis and understanding of problems that has been denominated "horizontal education".

The Ideology of New Africa

At various points in this work mention has already been made of the ideology of New Africa as the revolutionary philosophy constructed by Zik. But, truth to tell, many schools or concepts of New Africa preceded the formulation of his own particular doctrinal system which is now at the focus of attention. "The 'twenties' and early 'thirties' saw the emergence of the New Negro Movement in the United States, which subsequently took the shape of a new

Africa movement in the continent of Africa."³⁸ This was the outcome of the effervescence of ideas among scholars, intellectuals, writers, artists and politicians who demanded fair play and better living conditions for the disadvantaged people of African descent in all parts of the world. The two thinkers whose views and activities will interest us in this context are Marcus Garvey and Dr Kwegyir Aggrey. Zik's concept of New Africa seems to have links with both of them, not least because they all were concerned mostly with the state of Africans and Africa.

Marcus Garvey published his "Philosophy and Opinions" and "struck the first blow for a new Africa that would be politically-minded."³⁹ He founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association as an organisational weapon with which to unite "all Negro people of the world into one great body and to establish a country and government absolutely their own".⁴⁰ His aim was to weave together into one nationalist ideology the currents of cultural, economic, and political nationalism which had been manifesting themselves over a period of several decades in black circles in America. His basic logic was that there existed "no other salvation for the Negro but through a free and independent Africa".⁴¹ And his motto was "Africa for the Africans."⁴² He proposed to use force to achieve this objective.⁴³

James Kwegyir Aggrey's ideas were confined "to the need for social rebirth and a new spiritual outlook among and towards the Africans"⁴⁴ This body of ideas had been considered so vital and profound in its influence on some Africans that it has been given the title of "aggreyism" by which we shall hereafter refer to it. A major element of aggreyism is a profound love for and attachment to indigenous life and values. The ideal community which it yearned to realize "was to be essentially African".⁴⁵ Aggrey constantly harped upon the need to assimilate everything that is good and desirable in western culture, but "let Africans remain good Africans and not become poor imitation of Europeans". He was angry at those Africans "who having made a position for themselves, refuse to identify themselves with and help their fellows".⁴⁷ Aggrey loved and understood the common folk ; he also had a firm conviction about their inherent capacity for self-advancement. He had two priceless assets in his approach to life and the role of the people in it: "faith in God and faith in his people".⁴⁸ Time and again, by word and deed, he endeavoured to prove to them that they "though untutored, could be redeemed and join the angelic train".⁴⁹ He

exhorted them to overcome the attitudes of servility and the mood of hopelessness which he attributed to the responses of a people reeling under alien yoke. "If you beg, you must not be surprised if they treat you like a beggar".⁵⁰

The bulk of his message was devoted to these main themes: "Christianity, education and agriculture".⁵¹ His clear perception that the response the people could make to his appeals depended on their state of mind, that thought was usually the guide of action, and that the mind was the crucible in which thought took shape, combined with the professional bias of a natural teacher, inclined him to look to education to awaken the individual potentialities and to give form and direction to them. "You should be living education"⁵² was his favourite statement. His conception of education depicts clearly the role it is expected to play in the life of the individual and his society.

By education I do not mean simply learning, I mean the training in mind, in morals and in hand that helps to make one socially efficient. Not simply the three R's, but the three H's: the head, the hand, and the heart.⁵³

On agriculture, he was also passionately optimistic about its positive value as a means of introducing desirable changes in the living conditions of Africans. "I am going" he vowed to himself, "to lift my people not only religiously and educationally, but also in trade — agriculture and commerce."⁵⁴ Aggrey's whole life revolved round his Christian faith. "His belief in christianity was the mainspring of his every word and action".⁵⁵ This commitment enabled him to embrace the idea of "co-operation as his first principle of action. "Not amalgamation, not conflict, but co-operation was Aggrey's ideal"⁵⁶ captures the unflinching tenacity with which he held to the principle of co-operation as an article of faith. He disagreed with the tactics of both Marcus Garvey and Gandhi on this score. "As against Marcus Garvey's hostility, I teach the doctrine of love and work; as against Gandhi's Indian policy of non-co-operation I proclaim all the time co-operation".⁵⁷ His favourite symbol of co-operation was the piano keys. A very popular remark of his goes that "You can play a tune of sorts on the black keys, but for harmony you must use both the black and the white".⁵⁸

Aggreyism represented an attempt to re-orient the minds of Africans so that they would begin to shun the old and backward habits which helped to sentence them to a life of grim poverty and squalor. He urged them to undergo a revolutionary change in outlook and aspirations that would sweep away the debris of old

Africa. As a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission on African Education in 1920 and, 1924, he could see already stirrings of such a new world a-coming in Africa, which he called "a New Africa." Aggrey describes this future state with magnificent eloquence:

As we went we found a lot of restlessness. It was vocal in the British colonies, subdued in the other colonies. I thank God for that restlessness. You talk about Youth Movement in other countries. There is a Youth Movement coming in Africa that some day may startle the world. This restlessness all over Africa stand for self-discovery, self-realization. It tells of power just breaking through. The great continent has been asleep for a long time. It is now waking up ... The Africa of twenty years ago is now gone and gone for ever. There is a new Africa coming today, and is a challenge to civilization.⁵⁹

Zik's version of New Africa styled "Zikism"⁶⁰ inherited a rich legacy from aggreyism. The doctrines of Zik represents a direct evolution from the ideas and categories Aggrey had canvassed and treated. Thus, a basic bond unites the two tendencies in New Africa ideology. According to Dr Orizu, this linkage derives from the fact that the ideas of both men were directed at the same set of objectives—reshaping the mental kingdom in Africa—and both are rooted in African thought. Aggreyism came before zikism in time and served as a stepping stone or forerunner of zikist ideology:

Zikism did not drop from the sky upon the naked earth as did the *deus ex machina* onto the Greek stage. Rather it is an offspring of previous ideas and ideals.⁶¹

The underlying categories of Zikism — the vision of a "New Africa", symbolizing an inexorable march toward a state of renaissance, self-discovery and emancipation, and concepts and concerns that focus on non-political configurations — all these are properties Zikism owed to aggreyism.

Zikism or the gospel of New African is set forth in a book written by Zik in 1937 when he was still on the Gold Coast (Ghana) under the title *Renascent Africa*.⁶² In it Zik explained that the concept of New Africa, as he used it, "is used in a psycho-social sense. It is the renaissance of Africans and the reformation of African society".⁶³ He also clarified some terms appearing in the book because of the "revolutionary concept of Africa and Africans."

Old Africa refers to the Africa of yesterday
 Renascent Africa refers to the Africa of today
 New Africa refers to the Africa of tomorrow
 African refers to any indigenous black person.⁶⁴

He adds that the Renascent African exists in a transitional stage between the old and the New Africans. He denies emphatically, once again, that the New Africa is anything physical in conception.

Again, let me inform Renascent Africans that the New Africa is not a movement. Just as the kingdom of God cannot be reckoned along material lines, so too must they not fall into a common error of expecting a new continent, geo-physically. ⁶⁵

It is absolutely a mental state, a state of society where the mind is "brought into harmony with matter. And when such co-operation exists the old order (where matter is master of the mind) will have passed away. It is therefore a psychological conception which is deeply rooted in a material environment."⁶⁶ He also denied that the concept of New Africa advocated "ultra-radical and ultra-revolutionary changes in the social order, by all means, fair or foul."⁶⁷ Conceding that changes, radical or revolutionary, might be necessary for the sake of the emergence of a new order, he stated that he had never held the view that these radical and revolutionary changes should come about through foul means. This explanation was deemed necessary to dispel the misapprehension by critics of the New Africa that the term "is comparable to the Spanish Revolution and other examples of European youth in ebullition."⁶⁸ The revolutionary changes would take place in the minds of Africans.

"The philosophy of New Africa hinges itself on five bases. These are indispensable to its realization."⁶⁹ The bases or "postulates", as Ikeotuonye has called them, are Spiritual Balance, Social Regeneration, Economic Determinism, Mental Emancipation and Political Resurgence. As these postulates have been treated in detail elsewhere in this volume, I shall only summarize them here because they played an essential part in determining the direction and thrust of Zik's later activities in the area of education. Spiritual Balance denotes the manifestation of a state of mind that is tolerant of new ideas or constructive criticism. "No people", Zik has averred, "can hope to be spiritually balanced without cultivating respect for the views and opinions of others, even if they conflict with their own."⁷⁰ Social Regeneration can be considered as the anti-tribalist manifesto of Zikism. There is the explicit insistence that Africans should regard all Africans as brothers and sisters⁷¹ and that the African must recognise that what affects "his brother at Yendi affects him at Offinsu."⁷² Economic Determinism is designed to bolster the economic fabric of African society, especially through

combating the insidious spread of contempt for vocational and manual training in contrast to the rush for clerical or white collar vocations.⁷³ According to Zik, this anomalous situation was attributable to mis-education "which had enabled one to lay wrong emphasis on superficial and artificial values."⁷⁴ The plank of Mental Emancipation is aimed against the mis-education of Africans. "Africans have been mis-educated", Zik believes. "They need mental emancipation so as to be re-educated to the real needs of Renascent Africa."⁷⁵ This gigantic and supreme crusade for re-education would require the establishment of universities in Africa that would reflect African societal idiosyncrasies. Political Resurgence is automatic once the norms of behaviour and level of commitments which the four preceding postulates epitomize have become internalized on the part of a large number of Africans. In that event, the political status of Africans cannot be in doubt because "It is from within that the element of natural greatness springs".⁷⁶

That being so, one of the first things Zik did on his return to Africa in 1934 was to influence a band of youths to depart for the United States in quest of the golden fleece. The first was the late Dr Kwame Nkrumah. In 1938, nine others joined him at Lincoln University, Zik's Alma Mater, including Orizu, Mbadiwe, Ojike, Okala, Disu and others. But he had still to tackle the more important issue of that mis-education which he attributed to the brand of the educational stuff whose lamentable effect was the manifestation of a warped mentality by Africans. By the time the opportunity presented itself, he had already shifted the focus of *Zikism* from universalistic to particularistic goals centred on the territorial entity of Nigeria. This was now the arena on which the struggle for the African Revolution was thenceforth to be waged. He had already in 1943 issued the "Political Blueprint of Nigeria" in which he set forth the high road to the attainment of political *resorgimento*. Now, 1955, as the Premier of the Eastern Region, he formulated the educational blueprint of Nigeria in which he spelt out the way to combat the spectre of mis-education, the rampant prevalence of which was considered an almost insurmountable barrier to the fulfilment of that revolution the hallmark of which would be the shift of popular habits increasingly in favour of the norms of mental emancipation and economic determinism.

Just as he had planned while still an instructor at Lincoln University in the 'thirties', his proposals for educational reforms started from the bottom.⁷⁷ He remarked that many boys and girls

who should be eligible for jobs in many capacities could not do so because they were unemployable. They were intelligent enough but lacked requisite skills in any sector of commerce or industry. This anomaly he attributed to the fact that these young people did not know their aptitudes in certain particular trades or professions but just go through school aimlessly like "a rudderless ship." Most of these school leavers wind up doing blind-alley jobs because they have no other choice. The need for vocational guidance in schools in the country could never be over-emphasized. Therefore all the elementary and secondary schools in the Eastern Region and preferably, perhaps, in the whole country should be provided with experts in vocational guidance.

He confronted the vital problem concerning the acute shortage of indigenous technical cadres, and believed that the most effective and easiest approach to its resolution lay through the adaptation of the spirit of Hampton Institute which produced the renowned Booker T. Washington and that of famous Tuskegee Institute of Alabama. Declaring, after Booker T. Washington, that in approaching the task of developing indigenous skilled personnel "we must be prepared to cast down our bucket where we are"⁷⁸ he argued that "The philosophy of education which is based on the transformation of indigenous material, human and otherwise, from unskilled to skilled, for the improvement of society, is collateral with the idea of education not only as a process of mental and social change but as a means of acquiring skill, to enable the educated person to adapt himself to his society and be useful as a skilled wage-earner and thereby improve his standard of living".⁷⁹

Insisting that it was vital for the policy-makers to take notice of the currents of thought on vocational education in the United States, "especially among Negroes" so that those concerned might learn and appreciate its implications, he launched into an extended history of the long and arduous march of the negroes along the road from penury caused by lack of skills to the realisation that vocational training offered the greatest leverage for their upliftment to a higher condition of life. He referred, with approval, to an observation made by the Commission on Secondary Education "to the effect that the function of the high school is to prepare the children of secondary school age for the lives they are to live and the work they are to do."⁸⁰ In the light of the above considerations, he proposed that all the present Government elementary schools be converted immediately into technical high schools "for the purpose of

imparting skill to our boys and girls and, at the same time, give them an opportunity to have a good all-round educational background."⁸¹

He scrupulously elaborated the curriculum of the technical high schools. It should be divided into two segments, each lasting for two years. The first segment of two years would be used to acquire the fundamentals of knowledge while the other segment of two years will be devoted to learning skill in the vocation or vocations chosen by the students with the advice of vocational guidance experts. The purely academic courses which would take up two years "should include the following subjects: Civics, Drawing (Freehand, Mechanical), English (Composition, Public Speaking), Geography, History, Hygiene, Languages (French, German, Arabic, Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Ijaw, Ibibio), Literature, Mathematics, (Arithmetic, Mensuration, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry), Religion, Science (General, Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany, Geology)."⁸² The second segment spent in learning skill "should be devoted to one or a combination of the following vocations: Animal Husbandry, Beauty Culture, Blacksmithing, Book Binding, Brickwork and Masonry, Cabinet Making, Dress Making, Cookery, Dry Cleaning and Laundry, Electrical Wiring, Farming, Machine Design, Motor Driving and Repairs, Music, Painting, Photography, Plumbing, Radio Service, Shoe Repairing, Shorthand, Tailoring, Teacher-Training, Telegraphy, Telephone, Typewriting."⁸³ This type of comprehensive, horizontal, all-round curriculum was designed to guarantee that children would have the opportunity to acquire knowledge in the elementary schools and facilities to obtain both knowledge and skill in the secondary schools.

Concerning tertiary education, Zik argued the imperative necessity of providing facilities for higher education locally so that those to be benefitted could make full and advantageous use of them. A full-fledged university was needed urgently "In order that the foundation of Nigerian leadership shall be securely laid, to the end that this country shall cease to imitate the excrescences of a civilisation which is not rooted in African life"⁸⁴ and thus hope to redress the harmful effects of mis-education.

The higher institution being projected should be cultural, according to classical concept of universities. But it should also be vocational in objective and Nigerian in its content. For this reason, the proposed institution is discussed in the section captioned "Vocational University Education". The university should begin with six faculties: Arts, Science, Law, Theology, English and

Medicine. Its curricula should relate to the daily life of the people. Moreover, the organisation of the university should be such that its mission would be dictated by the social and economic needs of the region and country. To be able to meet these mandates and commitments adequately, it was suggested that Institutes be established for the professional and technical education of men and women to equip them to cope with the difficult challenges in future. These institutes would include Agriculture, Architecture, Diplomacy, Domestic Science, Dramatics, Education, Fine Arts, Fishery, Forestry, Journalism, Librarianship, Music, Pharmacy, Physical Education, Public Administration, Public Health, Secretarial Studies, Social Work, Surveying and Veterinary Science.⁸⁵ According to Zik, if the activities of these institutes are so organised as to dovetail with those of other six Faculties, "then this Region will embark upon a real renaissance in the field of professional and technical education on the same lines as the land-grant colleges of the United States of America."⁸⁶

Conclusion

The discussions and analyses in this work show one fact clearly and indisputably. That is that the fact, accidental or predestined, that Zik's entire background of higher education was obtained in the colleges and universities in the United States has made a profound and productive impact on his mind and behaviour. His experiences outside academe in the tough and challenging task of making a living, especially for a foreign student who had to fend for himself, have also made significant contributions to the forging of his ideas, attitudes and values. He was able to sense accurately, it seems, that among the qualities that have made Americans great and prosperous have been their pragmatic spirit and insatiable love for experimentalism, which make them value an idea not because its author is learned but because the idea works, and their belief that knowledge is power, and should be popularly available.

He has internalized these aspects of the American environment but he has also succeeded in adapting them to fit into local conditions and circumstances. His greatest projects, the "Political Blueprint of Nigeria", for example, or the scheme for educational reforms embodied in the "Economic Development of Eastern Nigeria", for another example, all show unmistakable signs of his American education and experiences but above all, show also, that

he has been able to synthesize the positive and progressive strains from his American background and his African heritage with resounding success. Whether education in Britain would have affected him as deeply or even more so, and whether it would have elicited from him the same quality of insights and drives or those of a different and higher order, we can do no more than speculate. The truth is beyond our ken.

NOTES

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4. *Ibid* p. 131.
5. *Ibid* p. 132.
6. For information this early stage of Zik's education the following are invaluable sources of information: Nnamdi Azikiwe. *My Odyssey* (London: Hurst and Co., 1970); V. C. Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa* (London: P. R. Macmillan Ltd., 1966).
7. Nnamdi Azikiwe. *My Odyssey*, p. 9.
8. *Ibid* pp. 22-23.
9. *Ibid* pp. 44-45.
10. *Ibid* p. 58.
11. *Ibid* p. 42.
12. *Ibid* p. 45.
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14. A. A. Nwafor Orizu, *Without Bitterness: Western Nations in Post-War Africa* (Enugu: Nwamife Publishers Limited, 1980), p. 102 Reprint.
15. Nnamdi Azikiwe. *My Odyssey*, p. 121
16. *Ibid* p. 138.
17. *Ibid* p.
18. *Ibid* p. 139.
19. *Ibid* p.
20. *Ibid* p. 157.
21. *Ibid* p. 160.
22. Coleman, *Background to Nationalism*, p. 242.
23. Nnamdi Azikiwe. *My Odyssey*, p. 90.
24. *Ibid* p. 125.
25. *Ibid* pp. 140-41.
26. *Ibid* p. 141.
27. *Ibid* p. 192.
28. *Ibid* p. 169.
29. *Ibid* p.
30. Coleman, *Background to Nationalism*, p. 130.
31. *Ibid* p. 243.
32. Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa*, p. 87.
33. Harold J. Laski, *The American Democracy* (New York: The Viking Press, 1948), p. 323.
34. Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa*, p. 85
35. Nwafor Orizu, *Without Bitterness*, p. 276.
36. *Ibid* p. 277.
37. Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa*, p. 85.
38. Nnamdi Azikiwe. *My Odyssey*, p. 136.
39. *Ibid* See also Jacques Army Garvey, ed. *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* (New York: Universal Publishing House, 1923).
40. Robert H. Brisbane, "His Excellency: The Provincial President of Africa" *Phylon*, Third Quarter, 1944, p. 259, in Coleman. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, p. 189.
41. Amy, J. Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, pp. 5-6.
42. *Ibid* p. 34.

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44. Nnamdi Azikiwe. *My Odyssey*, p. 136.
45. Edwin W. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa: A Study in Black and White* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1929), p. 139.
46. *Ibid*
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48. *Ibid* p. 286.
49. *Ibid* p. 40.
50. African Students Association (USA). *Know this of Aggrey*. Unpublished mimeograph of Things said By and of Aggrey (New York, 1942), p. 1.
51. Joseph Kamm, *Men Who Served Africa*. (London: George G. Harris & Co., 1957), p. 153.
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55. *Aggrey of Africa*. British Commonwealth Series A Pioneers who served, No. 3 (London, 1944), p. 3.
56. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa*, p. 124.
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58. W.J.M. Roome, *Aggrey. The African Teacher* (London: Marshal, Morgan and Scott Ltd.), p. 124.
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61. *Ibid* p. 288.
62. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa* (Accra: Gold Coast, 1937).
63. *Ibid* p. 8.
64. *Ibid* preface, p. 7.
65. *Ibid* p. 17.
66. *Ibid* p.
67. *Ibid* p. 34.
68. *Ibid* p. 35.
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70. *Ibid* p. 122.
71. *Ibid* p. 125.
72. *Ibid* p. 249.
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75. *Ibid* p. 135.
76. *Ibid* p. 10.
77. *Economic Rehabilitation of Eastern Nigeria: Report of the Economic Mission to Europe and North America* (Government Printer, Enugu, 1955). Especially Sections 120-153.
78. *Ibid* p. 28.
79. *Ibid* p. 29.
80. *Ibid*
81. *Ibid* p. 30.
82. *Ibid* p. 31.
83. *Ibid*
84. *Ibid* p. 34.
85. *Ibid*
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Azikiwe's Intellectual Origins

Ray Ofoegbu

Introduction

Azikiwe's intellectual origins are diverse. They cover ideas, peoples and events in history. The *ideas* were those which *first* inspired and motivated Azikiwe in the first place to be conscious of the fact that "life had a meaning" and that he, Azikiwe, "had a mission to fulfil" in life. Azikiwe, thereafter, interpreted this mission to be making "life worthwhile for my fellow men ..." ¹ being "a friend to struggling humanity." ²

Thus motivated, Nnamdi Azikiwe went to the United States of America for his higher studies. America moulded Azikiwe's very strong intellectual attachments to democracy, to human liberties and human freedoms, to the rule of law, and to the Bill of Rights. His readings exposed him to the *Magna Carta*, the evolution of the British Bill of Rights, the formation and consolidation of Parliamentary and Cabinet Systems of Government in Britain, and the development of constitutional democracy as well as America's Bill of Rights. Azikiwe was affected deeply by the French revolutionary era which stressed liberty, equality and fraternity as fundamental human rights. In shaping his ideas of man, the state and politics, British Fabian Socialists and America's New Deal theorists reinforced Azikiwe's basic commitments to democracy, constitutionalism and socialism. Specifically, the British Beveridge Report, Roosevelt's New Deal and Progressive Measures, Lord

Keynes' economics, Thayer's *From Log Cabin To The White House*, Sleeman's book, *The Welfare State*, and Azikiwe's awareness of the views and ideas of Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Dubois and George Padmore on Pan-Africanism and the Back to Africa movement of the late 19th and early decades of the 20th centuries, left far-reaching imprints in Azikiwe's mind.

Dr Azikiwe was inspired, at the impressionable age of 16, by Dr James Emmanuel Kweggir Aggrey. This was in the course of a sermon which Dr Aggrey delivered in 1924 at the Tinubu Methodist Church in Lagos. In the lecture, Dr Aggrey called for a reorientation of values in Africa. He demanded from Africans the abandonment of the wilderness of Western materialism; called on them to make sense of themselves and their situation; and asserted that "nothing but the best is good enough for Africa ... If I, one of you, could go to the new world, and make a man of myself, then you can too."³

In the words of Dr Azikiwe,

I became spiritually electrified. It dawned on me that life had a meaning and I had a mission to fulfil. Thus it was my task to make life worthwhile for my fellow men and to be a friend to struggling humanity.⁴

Dr Azikiwe learnt a great deal from this intellectual life in America in the first quarter of the twentieth century and more especially in respect of his pan-Africanism. The centres where he studied in America (Lincoln University, University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University and Howard University at Washington D.C.) deepened his attachment to individual freedom, the rule of law, liberal democracy, safeguarding private property and individual enterprise in a setting of "public welfare under the aegis of the State"; and making public welfare the highest law. Azikiwe's perception of America was good and healthy. It was a nation "where everyone cares enough and everyone shares enough so that everyone has enough." It was a nation, which according to W.M. Thayer was able to lift a man, such as James A. Garfield, *From Log Cabin To The White House*, thereby showing "the possibilities of willpower in the face of abject poverty and the rewards of the frontier spirit."⁵ It was, however, the New Negro Movement and the new Africa movement of the era (the 1920's and 1930's) which competed with Azikiwe's academic endeavours for his attention, his interest and his commitment. Marcus Garvey grappled with the practical problems of "organization" in the Negro Improvement Association. W.E.B. Dubois articulated the intellectual components of Pan-Africanism. These, along with earlier works of Africanus

Horton, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Henry Sylvester, Mojola Agbebi and Joseph Ephraim Casely-Hayford launched Azikiwe on the path to Africa's total political independence. Dr Azikiwe was also in contact with George Padmore on the "intensification of Africa nationalism" (Padmore) which Dr Azikiwe saw as "mental emancipation" of Africans and peoples of African descent.⁶

II

Nnamdi Azikiwe studied Livy for his first degree. In his study, Livy made references to Fabius Maximus Verrucosus who was also known as *Cunctator* (The Delayer). Azikiwe's readings of *Plutarch's Lives* deepened his knowledge of Fabius Maximus Verrucosus. He also discovered that besides Livy and Plutarch, Polybius also wrote on the *Cunctator* in respect of the Second Punic War between Rome and Carthage (North Africa). Fabius was the Roman General who led the Roman army against the Carthaginian armed forces ably led by Hannibal. In the words of Dr Azikiwe, Fabius

cut off Hannibal's supplies and did everything to confront this great Carthaginian warrior in an open fight, except to fight. He would leave an impression that he was going to attack; but, then, he would stay put, leaving his adversary to worry about his logistics. His steady adherence to this strategy made him to be misunderstood and regarded as a victim of cowardice. The Roman public scorned and abused him to their hearts' content. But when he chose to give battle and decisively defeated his opponents at Tarrentum, and thereby saved Rome from conquest, those who had abused him turned round to shower him with praises: "*unus homo nobis cunctator restituit rem.*"⁷

Azikiwe's *patience, caution and tact* were lessons which he drew from his study of the life and work of Fabius Maximus Verrucosus. Fabianism and *Fabian this or that* were derivatives from the name Fabius. Hence, when Azikiwe confessed that he

had been influenced by the doctrines of Fabian socialism, which is still my pet ideology modified to a large extent, by contemporary social forces,⁸ he was sincere.

Azikiwe strengthened his attachment to "pragmatism" and "eclecticism" by immersing himself in the works of William James, John Dewey, Cousin, Leibnitz and Helvetius, and the summaries and evaluations of the thoughts of Cousin, Leibnitz and Helvetius carried out by Professor Alexander and Professor Sauvage. Azikiwe explained that he

chose the Fabian type of socialism because of its emphasis on constitutional, as distinct from revolutionary methods in the solution of national problems."

"Moreover, we took fancy to its basic programmes of public ownership of certain utilities and reform of contemporary society by bringing about socially desirable changes in the lot of the worker.

By peaceful penetration, reasoned propaganda, and the use of existing institutions to spread their ideas, the British Labour Party has succeeded in making Fabian Socialism a force in British society.⁹

On *eclecticism*, Azikiwe chose Victor Cousin (1792-1867), Leibnitz (1646-1716) and Helvetius to "espouse its cause." Writing on Cousin, Nnamdi Azikiwe relied on the works of Professor Alexander of the University of Glasgow and Professor Sauvage. Professor Alexander found that Victor Cousin

critically examined different ideas and combined them into a system, which incorporated the elements of various schools. Cousin reached the conclusion that the successful systems of philosophy elaborated throughout the preceding ages contained the full development of human thought and that the complete truth was to be found in a system resulting from the 'happy fusion, under the guidance of common sense, of the fragmentary thoughts expressed by different thinkers and schools of all ages.

Professor Sauvage

credits Cousin with claiming that four great systems of philosophy expressed and summarized the whole development of human speculation. They are sensualism, idealism, scepticism and mysticism. 'Each contains a part of the truth', he explained: 'none possesses exclusively the whole truth. Human thought cannot invent any new system, nor can it neglect any of the old ones. Not the destruction of any of them, but the deduction of all to one, will put us in possession of the truth.'¹⁰

Cousin demanded of the eclectic to note that every system of thought contained some *truth* and some *error*. It was a responsibility of the eclectic to

"first separate error from truth before building into a system the result of his discrimination."¹¹

This was Nnamdi Azikiwe's typical approach to philosophy. "My aim", he wrote,

is to blend what I consider to be best in each ideology and adapt them to what is adaptable to our indigenous ideologies and thereby produce a harmony of opposites or rather, a new system, in the light of our experience and reason to make it work successfully. Thus, without blowing a flute, I have exposed the impracticability of these incompatibles.¹²

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz was a German philosopher who established reputation for the

mediating tendency of his philosophy in the spirit of conciliation which characterised his attitude to, and his activities in life ... He sought to reconcile Plato with Democritus, Aristotle with Descartes, the scholastics with the moderns, theology and morals with the dictates of reason.

Leibnitz wanted to discover a new, comprehensive, all-embracing higher unity of the "incompatible views of his predecessors."¹³

From the post world war II *Beveridge Report* in Britain, Nnamdi Azikiwe drew inspirations of an all-out war against poverty, disease, ignorance, filth and unemployment. He saw the Welfare State created in the wake of the *Beveridge Report* as an intellectual and practical effort to "harmonize our primordial system of the *extended family* with contemporary political, social and economic problems."¹⁴ It enabled the rich and the poor to partake jointly of "the food of kindness in the realm of human relations." The thrust of the *Beveridge Report* was to "provide benefits collateral with the subsistence level of human existence," through joint efforts in production and very active state involvement in creating and providing vast opportunities for all to work and contribute to production, and through the state bearing the responsibility for citizens who are willing and prepared to work but who remain unemployed due to no fault of theirs. It identified six categories of beneficiaries as

1. the employed worker,
2. the self-employed entrepreneur,
3. the unemployed but able-bodied adult,
4. the house-wife,
5. the dependent children, and
6. the retired persons.

Benefits were to be based on needs and regulated minimum standards, and, of course, the primary responsibility of the individual to work, and of the State to provide work or create vast opportunities for work. Hence, the *Beveridge Report* established

- (1) Benefits for unemployment;
- (2) Vocational training and apprenticeship which equip and prepare individuals for productive participation and involvement in the creation of society's wealth;
- (3) Benefits for ill-health which aim at restoring health and rearing up generations after generations of healthy and productive citizens;
- (4) Retirement benefits and pensions: by these, society repays its senior citizens who spent their productive years in the service of the State;

- (5) Maternity benefits for new mothers and their children at the expense of the State;
- (6) Widows and orphans pensions which blot out destitution caused by the untimely death of breadwinners, and keep all widows and orphans productive and relevant;
- (7) Funeral grants;
- (8) Allowances for dependants; and
- (9) Compensation for industrial injuries.¹⁵

The *Beveridge Report* and intellectual commitment of British post-war leaders to welfarism, led to intensive action in seven specific areas. These were

- (1) *employment* — promoting selection, progress at work, transfers and production;
- (2) *co-operation* — suggesting ideas, promoting welfare and collaborative efforts;
- (3) *education* — expanding technical instructions, continuation classes, seminars, workshops, symposia, extra-mural courses;
- (4) *health* — protection of all parts of the body, providing rest, ambulance and first aid services; enjoying medical, dental and optical services, improving medical records and research; visiting the sick and rest homes and providing canteen services, lighting, ventilation, and sanitation;
- (5) *thrift* — encouraging sick and benevolent societies, pensions and superannuation schemes, holiday funds, tool funds, saving schemes, and protective devices or services;
- (6) *accident prevention* — safety instructions, inspection, and fire drills; and
- (7) *leisure* — providing outdoor activities, indoor games and hobbies, camp and holiday schemes.¹⁶

Dr Azikiwe personally experienced the collapse of the capitalist system in the early 1930's in America; the use of socialist/welfarist measures as President Roosevelt's *New Deal* measures to save America from this collapse; and the costs in human lives, human freedoms and human liberties of Stalin's "Socialism in one country" and his new economic policy in the Soviet Union. Azikiwe was a young university undergraduate in America in the era of the *New Deal* in America, and the New Economic Policy in Russia. He

summarized eight specific acts of the Roosevelt administration, on behalf of the State, which halted the collapse of capitalism and restored stability to the American economy. These were

- (1) *the Emergency Banking Act* which declared a bank holiday in March 1933; closed all banks in the USA; and vested the President with powers to reorganize insolvent banks and galvanize the solvent ones. These measures reaffirmed the State's right and responsibility in the economy as opposed to the capitalist theories of the unseen hands of market forces. It was this direct State intervention which rescued the American Banking System from total collapse.
- (2) *The Federal Emergency Relief Administration Act*: this law created a Federal Government agency to assist states in caring for the unemployed. This agency had power to raise funds; to assist states and local governments in combating unemployment; and to relieve the distresses suffered by the unemployed by providing them jobs, and the comforts of life pending their securing employment.
- (3) *The Civilian Conservation Corps Act*: this was a recovery programme of the State which aimed at providing jobs for the unemployed youths at national parks, forests and reclamation projects in the jungles of America. In the words of Dr Azikiwe, "it instilled in the American an awareness of nationhood and had the advantage of making them more patriotic and altruistic in contributing their fair share to the social development of the American nation."
- (4) *The Home Owners' Loan Association Act* provided three billion dollars for use in financing the building of houses for residents of each State. The money was used to refinance mortgages by house owners and prevent foreclosure of properties due to financial embarrassment.
- (5) *The National Recovery Administration Act* encouraged representatives of
 - (a) the government,
 - (b) employers' association, and
 - (c) employees' unions,
 to eliminate unfair competitive prices, abolish child labour, establish minimum wage, create additional jobs and insure labour with the right of collective bargaining.

- (6) *The Agricultural Adjustment Administration Act (1933-1936)*: By this law the State
- (a) controlled the production of wheat, cotton, corn, rice, tobacco, pigs, and certain other commodities and livestock,
 - (b) paid cash subsidies to farmers, and
 - (c) paid subventions to farmers to sow grasses on fallow land in order to provide cover for top soil in case of sand storm.
- (7) *The Tennessee Valley Authority Act*: The Act placed the power resources of the Tennessee Valley at the disposal of the generality of American people. The area which it covered embraced seven states. It constructed dams, power plants, transmission lines, farms and villages; provided these with electricity at low costs, and provided them also with fertilizers, food control measures, and general improvements of inland waterways.
- (8) *The Federal Securities Act, and The Control of Banking Act*: These provided for federal registration and supervision of stocks and shares offered for public subscription, and created a Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to insure large accounts from the risk of loss.¹⁷

In the areas of banking, unemployment, job creation, housing, elimination of unfair competition, agricultural production, electricity supply, federal registration and supervision of stocks and shares, and Federal Deposit Insurance, the State of America intervened, legislated, regulated and stabilized the economy in spite of the dominant social and political philosophy of free enterprise capitalism. Dr Azikiwe followed these historic events and dutifully recorded them in his book on *Ideology For Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism And Welfarism*.

The collapse of capitalism occurred almost at the same historic epoch as the great epoch of Marxist disillusionment with communism: its internationalism; its failure to emerge in Germany (an advanced industrialized capitalist state); its much expected humanism. The first world war (1914-1918) was a grand opportunity for the working class of the world to unite and throw off their capitalist yoke. Rather than do this (perform this historic function), the working class picked up arms behind their nationalist (capitalist) forces in order to fight capitalist wars. The communist

clarion call in the Communist Manifesto for workers of the world to unite and free themselves from their yoke of capitalism, was ignored. Communism occurred in Russia rather than in Germany (that is, in peasant Russia rather than in industrial Germany — among peasants and not among the industrial proletariat). In order to fight this unexpected emergence of communism among a non-industrial society, Communist leaders, under Joseph Stalin, embarked upon a New Economic Policy: to build communism in one country (Russia); to collectivise and industrialize the Russian economy; and to achieve these goals regardless of the costs in human lives and human values.

It was, therefore, not surprising when Azikiwe expressed his dissatisfaction with both capitalism and scientific socialism as the two major ideologies of our age and time. He said,

"We are familiar with the evils of the capitalist system, in spite of sincere efforts in the days of Thorstein Veblen and Maynard Keynes to reform it. We know from personal experience and from what obtains in other parts of the capitalist world, how citizens live in want in the midst of plenty. This economic way of life does not appeal to me.

We are familiar also with the evils of the socialist system. The ideology is commendable, but its methods of controls and planning have tended towards regimentation, totalitarianism and bureaucratic inefficiency. We are living witnesses of the fissiparous tendencies of socialism, which has scores of schools of thought, ranging from Marxism, Leninism, Stalinism and Trotskyism to Maoism, Titoism, Fabianism and Nkrumahism. ¹⁸

Nnamdi Azikiwe saw in Keynesian economics the redemption which capitalism needed. The particular features of Lord Keynes thoughts which attracted Dr Azikiwe were his anti-inflation public (State) investment features. The era in which these thoughts crystalized within Azikiwe was the inter-war years (1914-1945) especially the early 1930's of bank failures, serious slackening of economic activities, of the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange at Wall Street, of great pessimism over the world economy, and of Great Depression caused by low wages, widespread unemployment, high dividend yields to *rentier* classes, "underconsumption of manufactured goods by the generality of the public whose earning capacity has been constricted." Goods were high-priced and consumers were unable to pay for them. Trusts and cartels which controlled the price mechanism deliberately created artificial scarcity inducing inflation, and complicating the world economic situation. Lord Keynes who was Professor of Economics at the University of Cambridge England, tackled these problems and

made a great impact on Dr Azikiwe. Keynesian analysis as summarized by Dr Azikiwe is relevant. He argued that

- (1) "If there were more savings and less expenditure on manufactured goods, there was bound to emerge a situation where goods would flood the market with few or no buyers."¹⁹
- (2) "On the other hand, if investment in the form of public debts were encouraged, the money market would expand and there would be a windfall to encourage more production and consumption of goods."
- (3) "If private investment spending was inadequate, it was the duty of the State to take action by closer control over the means of production, distribution and exchange collateral with the provision of public works and social services in order to provide employment and alleviate human suffering."²⁰
- (4) "The State should," therefore, "borrow more money by mobilizing domestic loans to finance capital projects for public works, thus enabling the workers to have purchasing power with which to buy the manufactured goods."
- (5) The Keynesian economic revolution thus called for
 - (a) large-scale state investment in public works;
 - (b) manufacture and distribution of goods in *quantum*;
 - (c) availability of capital for social services, and
 - (d) repeat performance of this business cycle largely by the State.²¹

Lord Keynes, thus, prescribed large doses of State intervention in a capitalist economy in order to save the capitalist system from total collapse at the hands of inflation and mass suffering. We have already seen that the American *New Deal* remedy which saved American capitalism from total collapse subordinated "private interests to collective well-being through the increased power and authority of the United States Federal Government."

III

Azikiwe is a convinced democrat; a committed democrat; and a teacher, in all his political life, a teacher of politics and of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human dignity. These strands in Nnamdi Azikiwe's thoughts arose from Azikiwe's exposure to the teachings of the British Magna Carta (1225), and the

British Bill of Rights; the French Revolution which stressed the political concepts of *liberté* (liberty), *égalité* (equality) and *fraternité* (fraternity); the American constitutional revolution which conferred democratic rights, for a fairly long period before other nations, on millions of its citizens; and the bold Socialist experiment, in the United Kingdom, after World War II, to expand democratic values in the areas of education, health, housing, employment, and decolonization.

The *Magna Carta* was a constitutional code of civil liberties which King John of England (Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine, and Count of Anjou) issued to his

Archbishops	Barons	Ministers
Bishops	Justiciars	Bailiffs
Abbots	Foresters	and all his
Earls	Sheriffs	faithful
	Reeves	men

This was on 15th June 1215, and it was in response to mass social discontents which threatened political stability and social progress in England. The name, *Magna Carta*, means the "Grand Charter." It contained concessions which King John of England granted to his nobles and large land owners, and which he demanded of them to "observe toward their men." It was executed at *Runnymede* in England and has been considered "one of the primary sources of modern constitutional law (containing) provisions for the allocation of powers to the ruler and ruled alike."²² The *Magna Carta* provided that

- 1(a) "The English Church shall be free and shall have its rights entire and its liberties inviolate";
- (b) "England has granted to all freemen of our Kingdom all the liberties, written in the *magna carta*, to be had and held by them and their heirs";
9. "Neither the King of England nor his bailiffs (police and court officials) will seize any land or revenue for any debt, so long as the chattels of the debtor are sufficient to repay the debt";
13. "The City of London shall have its ancient liberties and free customs, both by land and by water. Besides we will grant that all other cities, boroughs, towns, and ports shall have all their liberties and free customs";
28. "No constable ... shall take grain or other chattels of any one without immediate payment ...";
39. "No freeman shall be captured or imprisoned or disseised or outlawed or in any way destroyed, nor will we go against him or send against him, except by the lawful judgement of his peers or by the law of the land";
40. "To no one will we sell, to no one will we delay or deny, right of justice";

42. "Everyone shall henceforth be permitted ... to leave our Kingdom and to return in safety and security, by land or by water, except in the common interest of the realm for a brief period during wartime, and excepting men imprisoned or outlawed according to the law of the Kingdom ...";
45. "We will appoint as justiciars, constables, sheriffs, or bailiffs only such men as know the law of the kingdom and well desire to observe it";
52. "If anyone, without the lawful judgement of his peers, has been disseised or deprived by us of his lands, cattles, liberties, or rights, we will at once restore them to him"; and
60. "Now all these aforesaid customs and liberties, which we have granted, insofar as concerns us, to be observed in our kingdom toward our men, all men of our kingdom, both clergy and laity, shall, insofar as concerns them, observe toward their men".²³

From the *Magna Carta* arose strong traditions, customs and political developments which stressed *human freedoms*, *human liberties* and *human rights* of human institutions such as the Church and the cities and of individuals. The traditions of the rule of law pertaining to: trial by jury; the right of an accused to fair trial and to justice; freedom of the individual from capture, unlawful imprisonment and from being outlawed; attributes of justice which demand that justice shall not be sold, delayed or denied; prohibition of illegal seizure of goods; and the restoration of liberties and rights of persons denied these, all had their roots in the *magna carta*

These were reinforced by subsequent developments in England, Europe and America such as the growth of the franchise, the parliament and cabinet in England; the historic appearance of Joan of Arc, the storming of the Bastille in France, and the general proclamation of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* also in France;²⁴ the long struggles of Americans in the battle fields, at the law courts, and in the United States Congress for the legal enjoyment of a Bill of Rights by all Americans. They represented a unique pool of knowledge from which Dr Azikiwe drank his fill in the late 1920's and in the early and middle 1930's in America.²⁵

It was, therefore, not surprising that Azikiwe developed a deep-seated commitment to:

- (1) the right to life,
- (2) the right to human dignity,
- (3) the right to personal freedom,
- (4) the right to trial and appeal,
- (5) the right to privacy,
- (6) freedom of thought, conscience, opinion and religion,
- (7) freedom of expression,

- (8) freedom of the press,²⁶
- (9) the restoration of democracy by building a new political *leviathan* "where there will be political freedom, economic security and social equality,"
- (10) attachment to the Rule of Law,
- (11) the restoration and reinforcement of the fundamental rights of Nigerians,
- (12) being "dedicated in applying the universally recognized principles of the Separation of Powers between the Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary,"
- (13) being "positive and consistent in maintaining the balance of power and not to disturb the equilibrium in the checks and balances implicit in the exercise of executive, legislative and judicial powers,"
- (14) being "competent, efficient, progressive and ubiquitous in the organization and administration of public utilities, welfare services, educational institutions, agricultural production, recreational facilities, and amusements and entertainments,"²⁷
- (15) "support the principles and practice of democracy to imply the government of the peoples of Nigeria, by their duly accredited representatives, who shall be popularly elected, directly, through the secret ballot, periodically, by a democratically constituted electorate, for the peace, order and GOOD government of Nigeria,"²⁸
- (16) "have an inflexible faith in the sanctity of individual freedom under the rule of law,"
- (17) "confirm that it is only by free discussion in a constitutionally established deliberative assembly that the will of the electorate shall be made manifest,"
- (18) "adore and protect the independence of the judiciary as the interpreter of our fundamental and organic laws ... ensure that only experienced persons of integrity and courage with the requisite learning and knowledge of our laws shall be secure in their appointment to this hallowed arm of the State,"
- (19) "maintain a steady balance of power among ... the Electorate, the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary," and
- (20) "encourage the maintenance of efficient and effective armed and security forces ... "²⁹

Similarly, though not a lawyer or scholar in jurisprudence, Azikiwe wrote eloquently on the rule of law and natural justice revealing, once again, a deep-seated commitment and attachment to these democratic doctrines. He delineated sources of Nigerian law as the Nigerian Constitution, Nigerian Customary Law and the Nigerian Sharia Law, and came to the conclusion that

the substructure of Nigerian law and procedure is *natural justice* which must be recognized as the over-riding factor in our legal system.

He categorized the elements of *natural justice* which he held out as the basis for Nigerian law into twelve as follows:³⁰

- (1) No person shall be condemned, reprimanded, punished or convicted of any offence without being given an opportunity to defend himself. *Audi alteram partem* (Hear the Other Side).
- (2) No person shall be arraigned in court for committing an alleged offence unless a case has been stated for the person concerned to answer, under due process of law that is consistent with the Nigerian Constitution.
- (3) No person shall be presumed to be a judge in his own case ... no person, no matter how learned, eminent, well-to-do or affluent, shall exercise the prerogative of judging any case in which the particular individual is personally or officially involved.
- (4) No person shall be ostracised in Nigeria. It is a debauchery of human dignity. Ostracism should be jettisoned as a vestige of our pristine past.
- (5) No person shall be denied access to justice in our duly constituted courts of law with jurisdiction to interpret our Constitutional Law, Sharia Law, Military Law, or any other law in force in Nigeria.
- (6) No person shall suffer any wrong or inconvenience due to delay in dispensing justice. It is the duty of the the State to discharge any person suspected of committing an offence, if a case is not stated for that person to answer, *within one month*, unless mandatory bail is granted and the suspected person is free to exercise all the rights of citizenship, until a public and fair trial has taken place to establish innocence or guilt of the person concerned.
- (7) No person shall suffer any form of punishment for an alleged offence simply because he is presumed to be guilty.

- (8) No person shall be presumed to be guilty of any offence or crime until guilt has been established beyond a reasonable shadow of doubt.
- (9) No person shall be arraigned, tried or punished for committing an act which was not deemed to be unlawful when the act was committed. *Ex post facto* law shall be expunged from our statute books, as far as the liberty of the citizen is concerned.
- (10) No person shall be penalized for an illegal act committed by others unless with his involvement.
- (11) No person shall be presumed to have committed any offence until a fair and public trial has taken place and the accused has been given an opportunity to defend himself.
- (12) No person shall be detained involuntarily by any official excepting during a declared period of emergency according to the Nigerian Constitution, and under the process of law.

Finally, Azikiwe's commitment to welfarism was a commitment which was rooted in welfarism's war against poverty and inequality of opportunity. It aimed at relieving the griefs, hardships and sufferings of the underprivileged even in a welfare state. This was based on the teachings of Sleeman who was a lecturer at the University of Glasgow, and who wrote *The Welfare State*. The salient points made by the teachings of Professor Sleeman were the impact on a Welfare State of

- (1) Rising Aspirations and Expectations;
- (2) Extended education;
- (3) Improvements in medical services even in situations of costlier medical services, and
- (4) New Social services.

Society must, therefore, prepare itself to face society's rising expectations and aspirations for vast improvements in social services in the areas of education, medical treatment, welfare care, and social security. Achieving these goals are not ends in themselves. They generate "new forms of need and new prospects of further improvement and development."

Improvements in education in the lower levels of the educational structure demand vast improvements at the secondary and tertiary levels. More and improved secondary schools, science laboratories, boarding and non-boarding facilities, guidance services, better book and equipment services, and society's greater commitment and

involvement in financing and shouldering the burdens of education, are demanded. In the words of Professor Sleeman,

Once access to higher education becomes less limited, the scope for extending it further and raising its quality comes to be realized and there are calls for more university places, more polytechnics, more colleges of all kinds.³¹

The economy also prepares itself for the products of these educational systems. It creates more jobs, more opportunities for self-reliant and active involvement in production and distribution, and for creative intervention by the newly educated in new activities in industry, agriculture, services and welfare.

Vast improvements in society, especially in its education and earning capacities, demand increases in its medical services. The new services may be costlier to the State, but they cover a higher proportion of the population; they include more and better forms of medical services; and they demand the removal of all "bottlenecks in the way of treating all those who need treatment."

The improvements cover other welfare services such as

the needs of the old, the deprived children and the handicapped; more and more problems are uncovered, which could be tackled if money and manpower were available.³²

Housing is also involved. New grounds have not been broken over public housing. New slums grow yearly. New problems of overcrowding, sub-letting and plight of the homeless, stare us in the face.³³

Money and manpower are the keys, the "magic wands to ensure the smooth operation of these programmes of human engineering."³⁴ These resources are better mobilized, trained, and developed by the State than by private endeavours, especially if they are to be directed towards eliminating human sufferings, human poverty, and inequality of opportunities. State intervention is, therefore, required in any meaningful national programme of introducing and sustaining welfarism. It cannot be left to private enterprise with its targets on private profit. Welfarism aims at public welfare with huge individual benefits. It is financed at public expense and generates public welfare. Individuals contribute fairly and justly towards the capital needs of public welfare, and the State, on behalf of the people, contributes to the mass mobilization of capital needs of mass welfare.

IV

Nnamdi Azikiwe emerges a democrat, Fabian socialist, welfarist and humanist. He was moulded by historical epoches which produced the *magna carta*, the Bills of Rights, the positive gains of the French Revolution (the gains of liberty, equality and fraternity) and the American Revolution, and which

'in 1948, ... were embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 1952, the General Assembly of the United Nations endorsed the Convention on Political Rights of Women. In 1966, the General Assembly adopted the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In 1974, the General Assembly, endorsed the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties. ³⁵

Azikiwe's ways, procedures, tactics and dynamics embodied patience, caution and tact. These resulted from his bold acceptance of Fabianism, eclecticism and state intervention in the New Deal. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, the British Labour Socialist who authored and implemented the Beveridge Report, and President Roosevelt as well as his New Deal measures, were political heroes who directly and indirectly influenced Nnamdi Azikiwe's political ideas and political behaviour.

NOTES

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey: An Autobiography*, London, C. Hurst And Company, 1970, p. 36.
2. *Ibid.*
3. James Kweggir Aggrey, cited in Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey: An Autobiography*, op. cit., p. 37.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
5. W. M. Thayer, *From Log Cabin To The White House*, a biography of James A. Garfield, a former President of the United States of America, cited in Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, op. cit., pp. 40-45.
6. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, pp. 138-139.
7. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology For Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism And Welfarism*, Lagos, Macmillan Press Ltd., pp. 93-94.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 95
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 99
11. *Ibid.*, p. 113
12. *Ibid.*, p. 112
13. *Ibid.*, p. 113
14. *Ibid.*, p. 78
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79
16. *Ibid.*, p. 82
17. *Ibid.*, p. 83
19. *Ibid.*, p. 123
20. *Ibid.*, p. 79
21. *Ibid.*, p. 80
22. Walter J. Raymond, *International Dictionary of Politics*, Brunswich Publishing Company, 1978, p. 383.
23. *ibid.*, pp. 940-941. See also T.C. Holt, *Magna Carta And The Idea Of Liberty*, and A. Pallister, *Magna Carta: The Heritage of Liberty*.
24. There was mass, blind and naked injustice in France in the era of *liberté, fraternité, and égalité*. Dickens captured its intensity when he observed that:
 "... People were so passionately revengeful and fitful. The innocent were so constantly put to death on vague suspicion and black malice...
 "... Released yesterday. Reaccused and retaken yesterday. Indictment delivered to him last night." (pages 283, 311)
 "... How goes the Republic?" "You mean the Guillotine. Not ill. Sixty-three today. We shall mount to a hundred soon ..." (p. 307)
 "... Every day, through the stony streets, the tumbrils now jolted heavily, filled with the condemned. Lovely girls; bright women, brown-haired, black-haired, and grey; youths; Stalwart men and old; gentle born and peasants, and carried to her through the streets to slake her devouring thirst. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or Death — the last, much the easiest to bestow, O' Guillotine!"
 Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, Everyman's Library, New York, 1976, p. 270.

The common people of France were, however, outraged against the nobility for decades upon decades of humiliation, exploitation, denials and oppression. Dickens voiced the dreadful cries of ordinary Frenchmen and women of the era thus:
 "All our lives, we have seen our sister-women suffer, in themselves and in their children, poverty, nakedness, hunger, thirst, sickness, misery, oppression and neglect of all kinds ... We have seen nothing else" (p. 263)
 "... We were robbed by that man who stands there, as all we common dogs are by those superior beings — taxed by him without mercy, obliged to work for him without pay, obliged to grind our corn at his mill, obliged to feed scores of his

tame birds on our wretched crops, and forbidden for our lives to keep a single tame bird of our own, pillaged and plundered to that degree that when we chanced to have a bit of meat, we ate it in fear, with the door barred and the shutters closed, that his people should not see it and take it from us — I say, we were so robbed, and hunted, and we were made so poor, that our father told us it was a dreadful thing to bring a child into the world, and that what we should pray for was that our women might be barren and our miserable race die out."

Charles Dickens, *A Tale Of Two Cities*, Everyman's Library, New York, 1976, p. 319.

25. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology For Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism and Welfarism*, op. cit., pp.129 and 145.
26. *Ibid*, p. 145.
27. *Ibid*, p. 130
28. *Ibid*, , p. 132
29. *Ibid*, pp. 134-135.
30. *Ibid*, pp. 143-144.
31. *Ibid*, p. 86
32. Sleeman, *The Welfare State*, p. 50.
33. *Ibid*
34. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology For Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism and Welfarism*, op. cit., p. 86.
35. *Ibid*, p. 122.

Azikiwe's Political Ideas: Dreams of the African Revolution

Michael S. O. Olisa

One of the most intricate aspects of the study of Azikiwe's life is the survey and analysis of his political ideas — ideas which he persistently held to and tried to concretise at every opportunity in his crowded political career. The ideas are not only scattered in his numerous written works, but were reiterated from time to time in the numerous political programmes that featured his long crowded political career. It follows that perhaps the most convenient approach for the tremendous task is to plot the configurations of Azikiwe's political ideas along the graph of his political positions and conditions. In this way it will be possible to identify and examine what he dreamt his Africa (including Nigeria) to be and what he dreamt his place to be in it; what he alternatively found his new Africa to be and where he found himself in it.

In many ways Azikiwe's life bore out the statement that political ideas arise from the actual life situations of the political philosopher. Even where, as will be argued later, the overall beliefs of the thinker may not change significantly, the ideas are modified or differently re-stated in the light of different circumstances which arise in the life of the philosopher. At the early stages of Azikiwe's life his ideas of government were framed in colourful, sentimental, idealistic and messianic expressions, featuring such phrases as national Resorgimento, African irredentism, social regeneration, mental emancipation, economic determinism, positive action, all of which

represented simple phenomena but all of which were adopted as more effective in motivating, mobilising and inspiring nationalism in the colonial subjects who were his principal audience.

At the later more mature and more experienced stages of his life the basic ideas behind the flamboyant phrases remained the central elements of his political ideas, but they were then couched in their more regular expressions. His liberal democratic welfarist and popular beliefs were stated in ordinary expressions featuring such phrases as the rule of law, fundamental rights, popular franchise, representative government and so on. These later statements did not deviate from his original principle of liberal democracy, but they conveyed it in more pragmatic workable forms.

Azikiwe's Political Philosophy: The Climate

Interpretation or criticism of Azikiwe's political philosophy will have more meaning and carry more conviction if undertaken against the background circumstances or environment which stimulated or inspired those ideas which constitute his political philosophy. In the far off years of the 1920's and the 1930's during which he formulated his ideas about Africa and its future, the world was still much less complex than the 1940's upwards in terms of the level of communication and information technologies, of the scope of popular education, of the sophistications of industrial production and marketing techniques, of popular awareness of the injustices of imperialism and colonialism, and of popular impetus of nationalism as the effective response to deprivations of the two unjust phenomena. To ask why Azikiwe became so sensitive to the injustices of colonialism as to be able to embark so early on writing against them is perhaps to ask why as early as the 1900's Pan-Africanism as a movement and as a protest began in the African diaspora instead of in the continent itself where colonialism existed.

Reformers are often visionaries or dreamers with a lot of prophetic instincts; they see the future in more perceptive and inspiring images than their contemporary society and take particular pains to draw clear pictures of their visions. That is where Azikiwe would fit into in contemporary explanation of why he, among the numerous "pioneer" Africans who sailed to America to study in those early years, embarked so early on prolific exposition of his sensitivities towards white domination of the African continent and the programme of action which he considered as the instrument for

eliminating the ugly effects of colonialism and emancipating the continent.

Of the several factors which accounted for Azikiwe's early writings on and commitment to African nationalism, two stand out very prominently and they are (1) his experiences as a black student in America and (2) the Atlantic Charter promulgated by the Western powers after World War I of 1914-1918. Taking the first factor first, Azikiwe's sensitivities towards the unequal relationship between white and black registered even before he left the shores of Nigeria for U.S.A. About his short employment as a junior clerk in the Nigerian Treasury Department he commented:

I discovered that no matter if an African worked for twenty years in the Department, as soon as a newly appointed European assumed office ... he automatically became the boss of the African. ¹

Nevertheless, his aspirations to go to study in America were kept high by the inspiring statements in a particular sermon which Dr Kweggir Aggrey (of the then Gold Coast) preached at the Wesleyan Boys' High School (in Lagos) where Azikiwe completed his secondary school studies. In addition to telling the boys that "nothing but the best was good enough for Africa" Aggrey went on to admonish that "If I, one of you, could go to the new world and make a man of myself, then you can too".

By the time, therefore, that Azikiwe actually left Nigeria for his studies in USA he had become very sharply aware of the unequal relationship between white and black, as demonstrated by the very fact that Nigeria was under British rule. In the USA he only experienced other practical dimensions of this unequal relationship in a system where racism had become institutionalised in spite of the absence of formal colonialism of the British type. Like almost all Africans who studied in the USA in those early decades of this century Azikiwe had to work in order to support his studies and it was in the workplace that racism was dramatised to him in so many situations which strengthened his impressions of the injustice of it. In one of his work adventures he and other African students were among students employed in a North Carolina mine to do work of miners on strike. In addition to the hostility and violence from the miners on strike the white time-keeper created an episode which involved Azikiwe in a hot dialogue with him over the hours for which Azikiwe could be paid; the dialogue, briefly reproduced below, showed the sharp realities of being black in the white dominated system:

- Time-keeper:** You seem to be an intelligent nigger, where did you learn your rithmetic from?
- Azikiwe:** Look here, red nose, it makes no difference where I learnt my mathematics... don't you damn to call me a nigger, for I am a British protected person ...
- Time-keeper:** I see you are a black English man ... so you are an aristocrat, aren't you? Maybe that is why you seem so smart, Sambo.
- Azikiwe:** Yes, I may be a Sambo but of all the dumb crackers and fat headed dudes I ever come across in these good old United States, you take the cake. Go ahead and give me my dough, Al Capone.
- Time-keeper:** I like coons like you. But what gets me is the way you educated coloured folks act. You always want social equality with us ofays".³

Memories of this dialogue and several other episodes of racism, both in Nigeria and in USA, are evident in many ways in formulations and expositions of his dreams for the New Africa and the various prescriptions made for its concretisation. Incidents like the one which caused this dialogue must have commutatively registered in young Azikiwe's psyche the components of what he eventually described as mental emancipation in his *Renascent Africa*. According to him

Mental emancipation ... includes education of the sort which should teach African youth to have faith in his ability: to believe that he is the equal of the people of other races of mankind — mentally and physically; to look at no man as his superior simply because the man comes from Antarctic or Arctic regions. It means that the Renascent African must be rid of the inferiority complex ... Educate the Renascent African to be a man. ⁴

During the formative years of his studies in America as a black student his situational practical experiences were corroborated and given intellectual meanings by his reading of the writings of such exponents of the black predicament as Booker Washington, Marcus Garvey, Kweggir Aggrey and William Du Bois, as well as the advocates of white colonialism and racial superiority. It was therefore natural and logical that his political philosophy was basically protest expressions of the provocative experiences of being black in the world of the whiteman and being a colonial subject back home in the world of the blackman.

The Atlantic Charter, the other prominent factor which shaped the political ideas of Azikiwe was an informal statement of certain basic principles of government which President Franklin D. Roosevelt of USA and Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Britain formulated and agreed on in their meeting of August 1941 while the Second World War was raging.⁵ Of the eight principles which made

up the statement, the one which influenced Azikiwe most and which he and other African nationalist leaders made maximum use of in their nationalist agitations was the third, stated as: "The right of all peoples to choose their own form of government and the restoration of political sovereignty to nations from whom it had been forcibly removed". Later on, as the nationalists continued to flaunt it in the face of the colonial authorities and Winston Churchill made moves to interpret that section as applicable to only the independent nations, nationalist demands became more vociferous. Part of Azikiwe's reaction was the writing and publication of his *Political Blueprint for Nigeria* in which he stated among many other things:

These British criticisms leave me and those of my kind who live in the outposts of the British Empire to begin to ponder whether we should not prepare our own blueprint ourselves instead of relying on others who are busy preparing their own?⁶

Nationalist rejection of British interpretation of the Atlantic Charter was strengthened by liberal opinions from the USA which leaned more towards the nationalists' position. In spite of Winston Churchill's retort that he would not preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, events subsequently moved more and more towards granting of concessions to nationalists' demand for progress towards self-determination.

Azikiwe's *Political Blueprint for Nigeria* was the most comprehensive reaction to the efforts of the colonial powers to curtail the limits of the application of the Atlantic Charter. The main body of the book is an extensive description of what the structure of modern government would be in an independent Nigeria. After quoting several authorities to support his arguments he stated:

In certain circles this is called the growth of democracy, and some of its most important devices are (i) written constitution (ii) universal adult suffrage (iii) representative legislatures (iv) regular elections (v) local autonomy (vi) Responsibility of government to the majority party (vii) use of plebiscite as a criterion of popular will.⁷

The "Atlantic Charter" was formulated in the midst of World War II in which Great Britain wasn't directly involved and America's involvement was looming later in the midst of its governing district of Japan's attitudes and intentions towards United States. By then thousands of Africans had been drafted into the war as soldiers, and African colonies of the Allied Powers had been politically, psychologically and economically mobilised into war effort in support of their colonial masters. The general atmosphere of the war had already driven the colonial authorities into making direct

concessions to their colonies; and promises were made about the rehabilitation of African soldiers after the war. All these contemporary situations, as it were, reinforced the declared principles of the Charter and gave more confidence to nationalists like Azikiwe both in their criticism of British colonial policies and administration generally and in their political demands for colonial subjects.

With specific regard to Azikiwe, if these two factors which shaped his political ideas are assessed in true dimensions, it could be said that while the climate of racism and colonialism accounted for his early formulation of those ideas, i.e. the African revolution, in the form of dreams or visions or prophesies, the Atlantic Charter and World War II situations related to it or surrounding it accounted for his formulation of the dreams of the African revolution in more concrete workable forms, as political programmes that could be applied in a real state. In other words, the Atlantic Charter and the paradoxes which its contents and interpretations presented him as a youth and, later, as a statesman, became a springboard for his crystallizing and concretising his political ideas, if not at a more mature age, in a more practicable form. In addition, this later presentation brought out his ideas more convincingly as those of liberal democracy, shaped by the impressive array of the intellectual makers of Western liberalism — Locke, Bentham, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Seeley, Dicey, Bryce etc — which he read with his characteristic avidity for endless assortment and range of literature.

Azikiwe's Political Philosophy: The Contents

What could be termed the contents of Azikiwe's political ideas were, as stated earlier, presented as dreams or visions of his youth, almost utopian in logic and feasibility in his *Renascent Africa*. His premise was that the development of the black African continent presented a three state evolution of what he described as follows:

Old Africa which refers to the Africa of yesterday. Renascent Africa which refers to Africa of today. New Africa which refers to the Africa of tomorrow.⁸

Both Old Africa and Renascent Africa were handicapped, Old Africa by isolation, ignorance, social fragmentation and economic stagnation; Renascent Africa by imperialism, colonialism and racism. Both Africas therefore had put a stamp of exploitation, degradation, deprivation and inferiority complex on the African man; indeed, as Azikiwe's later phraseology put it: the African man in Old

and *Renascent Africa* was stripped of his dignity⁹ as a human being. Although the African man rejected impediments in *Renascent Africa* he was still with them and could not enter the promised land of *New Africa* if he did not break them clearly and decisively.

The characteristics of *New Africa* thus included all the freedoms, opportunities and potentials of liberated peoples in a liberated continent; *New Africa* was a continent reborn. But the rebirth would not come to *Renascent Africans* with their arms folded; they have to fight and labour for its actualisation, and to achieve victory and success the *Renascent Africans* must be imbued with five attributes listed and described by Azikiwe as spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic determinism, mental emancipation, and political resurgence. These constituted the intellectual arsenal for the *Renascent African* in his immense struggle to bring about the *New Africa*; it will be worthwhile to briefly review what Azikiwe describes as the meaning of each of the five attributes.

Azikiwe interpreted *Spiritual Balance* to simply mean the right of free expression, whether in speech or writing, and the obligation of society to tolerate free speech and divergent opinion (views of others). He argued that tolerance of divergent views preceded consensus of decision from which the traditional political system of many indigenous African societies drew their vitality. Without free speech and free expression of opinions the *Renascent African*, in his view, would be unable to puncture the deleterious logic of imperialism and oppression. On this point he was obviously referring to several restrictive colonial laws against which he worked as a nationalist journalist and writer in the Gold Coast in the 1930's and his eventual trial there on charges of sedition. In other British colonies, too, the most frequent trials of journalists and nationalist press were for seditious publications. He declared that "*Renascent Africans* must, therefore, become fair critics in order to demonstrate their spiritual balance".¹⁰

By *Social Regeneration* Azikiwe meant the abandonment by Africans, and all the world, of divisions, prejudices and discriminations based on race, ethnicity, religion, nationality and sex. In his words, social regeneration would involve

The jettisoning of all forms of prejudice, be they racial, national, tribal, societal, religious, political, economic or ethical; the realisation that an African no matter where he was born whether at Kibbi, or at Zungeru, Narongo or Cape Coast, Bathurst or Accra, Brazil or Manyakpowuno, Patogorua or Tuscaloos, Mrepom or Kukuruku, Nairobi or America ... *Renascent African* must, therefore, regard all Africans as blood brothers and sisters.¹¹

Social regeneration was a Zikist form of Stoicism which thousands of years ago, advocated universal brotherhood, universal humanity and universal laws. The phrase "all men are brothers" was first proclaimed by the Stoic leader Zeno of Citium. Azikiwe thus intuitively advocated stoicism without stating the corner-stone of the philosophy.

This continentalism, or universalistic outlook of his philosophy was to re-echo during the continent's crisis of unity between the Casablanca and the Monrovia powers in the early 1960's over the type of political union that African states would embrace. Universalism of his philosophy emphasized his initial conception of colonialism, racism, slavery and so on as impositions suffered by the black race, and the weakness of the black race as due mainly to their lack of unity. Renascent Africans, armed with knowledge and a more complete perception of the bonds that impede African development, could achieve quicker success through united stand and effort.

Azikiwe's explanation of economic determinism is less lucid than his explanation of the other concepts which constitute the endowments of the Renascent African. Part of the explanation sounds academic while other parts appear too remote from the focal point of discussion; nevertheless he conveys vigorously the ultimate purpose of the determinism which was the emergence of the Renascent Africans as citizens of an economically self-reliant New Africa. The explanation began with what appeared to be an advocacy of Marxist Socialism. He stated:

The Renascent African cannot create a new social order without an economic foundation. No longer must wealth be concentrated in the hands of the few. No longer must the profit motive guide and control the aims in life of the African. No longer must the wage earners be told a dignity that does not seem to exist in labour.¹²

At the same time he warned: "I hold no brief for communism or any other 'ism' which is being disseminated in the world." Leaving these rather startling pronouncements aside, Azikiwe switched on to comments on the increasing unemployment of educated persons in the colonies, on why large businesses organised by whites succeeded where those organised by blacks failed, and on the characteristics of various brands of socialism. In the end economic determinism for him involves Africans teaming together to exploit their physical and human resources in order to create for themselves an African economy that would match that of the white nations in efficiency, productivity and scale. An African economy with these

characteristics would ensure economic self-reliance and end the exploitation, manipulation, and humiliation of Africans due to their collective poverty and underdevelopment. His reference to unemployment of many persons with Western literary education in relatively underdeveloped colonial societies was to point out that if Africans managed and controlled their economies, the profit motive would not be supreme because parts of economic policies of governments, and more of the economic activities of their citizens, would be geared towards national goals and problems and thus ensure the self-reliant economy needed in independent New Africa.

Of mental emancipation, the fourth of the attributes of the *Renascent Africans*, Azikiwe stated:

For the African to cultivate inferiority complex that he is inferior to the other races is to sign the death warrant of Africans ... Let the African know that he had a glorious past and a glorious future. Africans have been mis-educated. They need mental emancipation so as to be re-educated to the real needs of *Renascent Africa* ... An African graduate of these (foreign) universities, unless he has developed his individuality, is nothing short of a megaphone, yea, a carbon copy of these societies.¹⁵

The emphasis on relevant formal education as an essential factor in bringing about the New Africa is not a surprise. It was sound patriotic education that would liberate the mind and imbue it with courage that was necessary for challenging and ending imperialism and colonialism. If education turned out Africans with what was to be popularly termed "colonial mentality" such Africans would be incapable of challenging and ending colonial domination; the birth of New Africa would then be frustrated. As things turned out in the next three decades after Azikiwe's exposition of these ideas, it was the educated Africans who constituted the vanguard of the nationalist struggle which eventually brought about political autonomy of most African states.

Political resurgence would come, according to Azikiwe, naturally and automatically, after the *Renascent Africans* had acquired the first four attributes described above. Even allowing for the fact that these attributes would not be acquired at different points of time, the first four would simply energise and sustain political resurgence. It is a cumulative manifestation of the first four previously defined attributes, and that manifestation is in the form of active nationalism. Political resurgence thus translates all the attributes (the first four plus itself) into dynamic movements and demands directed at the colonial political system. In Azikiwe's words:

When the Renascent African has cultivated spiritual balance, regenerated his society, planned his society economically, and has experienced mental emancipation, his political status cannot be in doubt. It is from within that elements of national greatness springs... The forces of nationalism are automatic, especially when factors leading to them are intelligently directed.¹⁴

In other words, political resurgence is active if not militant, nationalism that was nurtured and fortified by patriotic positive education.

Azikiwe argued that not all educated Africans could play this role i.e. become nationalists who would bring about the New Africa; according to him, many educated Africans had turned timid supporters of the colonial *status quo* instead of fighting to liberate fellow Africans from its injustices. He wrote of these leaders as follows:

After struggling to accumulate wealth, those who succeed, instead of using the same for the benefit of reconstructing their shattered national heritage, use the same to curry favours ... leaders who should be an emblem of courage and manhood to youth, cower before some scraggering officials.¹⁵

Leaders genuinely prepared for New Africa are described as follows:

Renascent Africa regards as youthful all Africans who believe in the cultivating spiritual balance, the practicalisation of social regeneration, the realisation of economic determination, and the precipitation of a reverberation which will give them their lost place in the sun.¹⁶

Political resurgence could, as a conclusion, be described as the terminal stage of the evolution of the New Africa envisioned by Azikiwe, and the nationalism that would be its manifestation would be the midwife who would handle the birth of the New Africa.

At the end of this survey of Azikiwe's political ideas as presented in his youth in his book of youth we see an intriguing resemblance between his situation and that of Plato. Each of them faced an apparently impossible political condition which seemed difficult, if not impossible, to change; each of them then moved to a conceptualization of solutions at the high level of visions or hypothesis, only the educated guardians — philosopher kings — with the highest intellectual capacity (which he described as rational souls) could bring about Plato's ideal republic in which reason and virtue would reign supreme. In Azikiwe's construction the Renascent African, imbued with all the spiritual and intellectual weapons for battling and terminating colonialism, would bring about the New Africa in which political liberty and economic prosperity would reign supreme and maximise total fulfilment for the African man.

The above sketch of the five attributes of *Renascent Africa* could be described as the dream or visionary version of the political ideas or political philosophy of Nnamdi Azikiwe. At the end of the day the five attributes amounted to just an encapsulation of what he and his contemporary African youth educated or being educated in Western intellectual and political climate overseas experienced and understood about colonialism and imperial domination in their various forms; they (the five attributes of *Renascent Africa*) constituted what these protesting African youths and their other fellow Africans needed for challenging, battling and terminating colonial domination. Later, Nkrumah coined it all in his famous slogan "seek ye first political freedom and all other things would be added to you". The two might have parted ways on the question of the ideological framework in which the New Africa would flourish but they shared one fundamental objective — the birth of New Africa through nationalism and termination of colonialism. To Azikiwe the New Africa would usher liberal democracy within individual states and pan-African union of such liberal democracies; to Nkrumah the New Africa would usher Marxist communism within states and a continental government in which these states would be component units. Both were universalists travelling to New Africa, the African Revolution, through different roads.

Azikiwe's early presentation of his political philosophy — his theories, structure and mechanism of the New Africa — had to be in that idealistic form; the New Africa had to be pictured as a dream, a vision, a prophesy because, as stated earlier here, the prevailing global and local environment made it appear far-fetched as a theory and unviable as a possibility. It was similar to the situation that Martin Luther King assessed when he declared the glorious future of the blacks in the USA as his dream. Azikiwe's philosophy had to be presented as a dream at this stage because it had to fire the imagination — and make it see a distant promised land, to inspire the spirit and to precipitate action. His own words remove any doubt about these statements; he painted the dream as follows:

And the God of Ethiopia cleared my vista as I see a noble race of *Renascent Africans*. And the history of the great race was unfurled to me ... And I see him a changed man. He is a *Renascent African*. He is no longer mis-educated. He is a man. He walks majestically with the other races of mankind ... He does not genuflect. He is respectable. He commands respect and does not demand the same ... the scales fell from my eyes, for I see the *Renascent African* inhabiting the New Africa.¹⁷

On the basis of these words at least, he could be correctly called a dreamer of the African Revolution, of the New Africa of fulfilled Africans. But the dreams were projected in a social, economic and political framework constructed on logical, realistic and realisable foundations which he presented at the later stages of his life as the action programme of the same philosophy that was initially presented as dreams.

Between the publication of the book *Renascent Africa*, which vividly presented this early prophetic version of his political philosophy, and the early 1960's when he was on the saddle of public office as Governor-General of Nigeria, many events and changes had taken place, changing the young dreamer into a mature statesman. To mention only a few of such significant events, Azikiwe had held an editorial position in the then Gold Coast, he had returned to Nigeria and joined the Nigerian Youth Movement, he had left the NYM and formed his own organisation, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons; he had had quarrels with several fellow Nigerian nationalists; he had established a chain of newspapers and edited some of them, he had had brushes with the Nigerian colonial authorities in the form of tribunal and court trials; he had contested several elections with victories and failures in some; he had given up the idea of personally leading Africa; and he had seen his leadership positions in nationalist and public offices criticized and challenged; and he had seen his pan-Nigerian and pan-African ideals rejected or impeded or challenged. All these modified drastically his strategy for pursuing the actualisation of his liberal democracy, but they did not alter his belief in it; instead, he carefully but consistently restated it in the numerous speeches and the numerous platforms on which he appeared and spoke during the years of this critical interval between his youthful ideals and dreams of what he never failed to believe in. The consistency probably came out best in the following portion of a speech which he made at Storer College in 1947 on the conferment of an honorary doctoral degree on him; picking once again as the democratic principles of the Atlantic Charter and the efforts of certain colonial circles to distort them; he stated:

According to the leaders of the Allied Nations, we fought last war in order to 'revive the stature of man' and to make the Four Freedoms a living reality. I interpret those war and peace aims to mean the enjoyment of political freedom, social equality, economic security, and religious freedom everywhere in the world. Political self-determination, freedom of speech and press, and the right of the citizen to participate in the government of his country. Social equality implies the right of a human being to associate with

his fellow human being, regardless of such extraneous factors as race, colour, creed, or station in life. Economic security means the right of a human being to have sufficient food, convenient shelter, comfortable clothing and some of the luxuries which go to make life tolerable. Religious freedom implies freedom to worship according to conscience. ¹⁸

This was a clear affirmation of liberalism, with its leading components of economic *laissez faire*, competitive politics and adherence to mutual obligations of the state and the citizen. When he calculated that his basic political philosophy was being given the wrong ideological labels by commentators, he came out once again and reaffirmed it in the following words:

I am a realist but I can dream dreams as well. I have a deep and abiding faith in pragmatism as a useful philosophy to guide the individuals of any nation to accomplish their aims. Reason, experiences and practice should guide us to make our dreams come true. ¹⁹

Much of the disagreements which Azikiwe had with several of his compatriots, especially the early nationalist groups and individuals who became his ardent admirers and apostles, was due to the gap between the real meaning of his pronouncements as the real manifestations of his inclinations and their understanding them as programmes of political action.

Disciples, Theologians and Dissidents

Azikiwe's political ideas, especially the early youthful version discussed; above won a large number of comments among the African students and other nationalists in the diaspora. When later he came home to Nigeria and founded his nationalist organisation, the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) the fervour became even stronger with the formation of the Zikist Youth Movement which aimed at being the militant wing of the NCNC. The first comprehensive reformulation of Azikiwe's political philosophy was done by Dr Nwafor Orizu who also studied in the United States of America and shared Azikiwe's thoughts and feelings about imperialism and colonialism as well as his programmes for battling and ending them. Orizu gave the term "Zikism" to Azikiwe's political ideas and declared in his book, *Without Bitterness*, as follows:

I have coined the philosophy of Zikism to express the unconscious yearnings of my soul. Zikism is irredentism ... Zikism is not a sectional philosophy. It transcends those territorial boundaries. Zikism is not nationalism. It is a way of life which may direct the trend of nationalism. Zikism is neither an old or new philosophy. It is both old and new. It is then and now and it dwells in the future. Zikism is not a revenge philosophy. It is

not a program directed against any race, creed, government, or country but is universal in scope and intention. Zikism is not a list of dogmatic principles which are changeless. It does not claim completeness and finality. Zikism is not a philosophy of the physically young. It does not look at physical age. It is concerned with the age of the mind.²⁰

As stated earlier, younger elements of Azikiwe's NCNC who felt that the pace of nationalism was slow and that there was need to force the hands of the British colonial authorities in Nigeria formed in 1946 a militant wing called the Zikist Movement. Orizu's book provided for the Movement a source of intellectual inspiration and its members embarked on a number of precipitate actions, in the media and in society, which landed several of them in court on charges of sedition. Coincidentally, but probably not intended, what later became known as Azikiwe's "Assassination Story" came out in this period; Azikiwe alleged in the story that the Nigerian colonial Administration planned to have him assassinated so as to end his persistent sharp criticism of its policies and programmes.

Some analysts of the period argued that in the midst of the several turbulent events taking place simultaneously, the publication of Orizu's book was a big booster for Azikiwe's image and opinions on Nigerian affairs at that time;²¹ it was from the book that the Zikist Movement, the Zik Group of newspapers and other radical nationalist group drew their ideas and inspirations. Zikism, at least in its basic forms, was also reechoed in the writings of other nationalists, notably Ikeotuonye and Chike Obi, a university professor of mathematics who threw himself into the nationalist struggle and, later, Nigerian politics for over a decade, forming his own political party at one stage.

Azikiwe's political philosophy, now on the threshold of being tested on the actual grounds of practical politics, had some reverses and some antagonism. Within the fold of Zikism itself frustrations and bitterness arose when no dramatic public supportive statement and action came from Azikiwe himself in response to the actual formation of the Zikist Movement and when several of its members were convicted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. This was the point where the "gap of interpretation" between him and the disciples and theologians of his philosophy was dramatised. Azikiwe himself was in some ways responsible for this gap, one of such ways being his acceptance speech after he was elected the national President of the NCNC. The entire speech sounded like a war cry, giving many of his followers a clear but elusive impression

that he had declared for the militant option. Part of the speech entitled 'Before us Lies the Open Grave' went as follows:

This is no time for rhetoric. It is time for positive action. I want your assurance that you will not desert me when the time of testing comes. I want you to make it plain to me that you are ready for the type of militant leadership which I envisage ... Today I might be with you, but that is no guarantee that I would not be in jail or in exile or in the death-house tomorrow. You must be prepared to suffer heavy blows from the enemy.²²

Such speech, looking back at those long years today, is one of what could be described as Azikiwe's occasional lapses of contradiction in which he gave a public impression of what he was really not or did not really believe. Naturally the speech fired the NCNC youths into zealotry and overzealotry and landed several of them in prison, with no succour coming from their mentor or from their party. Writing nearly twenty years after the Zikist Movement crisis, one of its members who suffered in prison had nothing but bitter remarks about Azikiwe's personal behaviour during the Movement's combat with the colonial government of Nigeria. First of all he stated:

It was to defend and disseminate the message of Zik against his enemies — the colonialists and their local petty bourgeois allies and apologists — that the Zikist Movement was founded, the name having been suggested by Dr A. A. Nwafor Orizu in his book: *Without Bitterness*.²³

Then he went on in what he entitled "A letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe" to address the matter to Zik as a person, dwelling specifically on his abandonment of the Zikist Movement in its hour of travail:

So long as the Zikists re-echoed your slogans and raised your banner in every town without courting arrest or imprisonment, they were *en rapport* with you; but when in 1948 they raised revolutionary issues and demanded a passive avowal of non-violent civic disobedience *à la Ghandi*, you publicly denounced them as 'irresponsible'. And when the imperialist pounded us for our revolutionary activities, in October 1948, and again in February 1950, you denied us before the cock crowed twice and thereafter consigned us into the limbo of forgotten things.²⁴

If Azikiwe's immediate pronouncements to the NCNC in his "Before Us Lies the Open Grave" speech are used as the basis of judging his attitudes to the militancy of the Zikist Movement, there will be a lot of logic in the Zikists' accusation of betrayal and treachery against him. If on the other hand the judgement is based on his clearly identifiable philosophy of liberalism and liberal democracy there would also be a lot of logic in arguing that he responded instinctively to the militancy of the Zikists which he

feared could jeopardise his projected transition to New Africa in which government and development would be based on liberal democracy. In other words, he could have feared that the militancy of the Zikists would turn into a communist-style revolution that would bring about a communist state which he did not accept as the framework for attaining his grand dreams for New Africa. He did not accept Marxist socialism even though he argued that economic determinism applied to both communist and capitalist states.²⁵

Another way of evaluating the same situation is to argue that the disciples and theologians of Azikiwe's political philosophy interpreted it out of his own grasp and grip; the path of Zikism as mapped out by Orizu and the Zikist Movement would have landed Azikiwe on the theatre of communist insurgency and protracted guerrilla warfare none of which was in his original action programme for bringing about and managing New Africa. If this proposition represented his calculations, then it could be inferred that Zikism presented him with options which he could not accept and the rejection of which naturally involved the rejection of that tenet and the Zikist Movement that sought to put it into action. Until Azikiwe writes his memoirs and presents his own explanations of the controversial issues, like this, which dotted his long crowded political career, interpretations of such issues would continue to appear in the form of hypothetical statements such as are offered here.

Conclusion

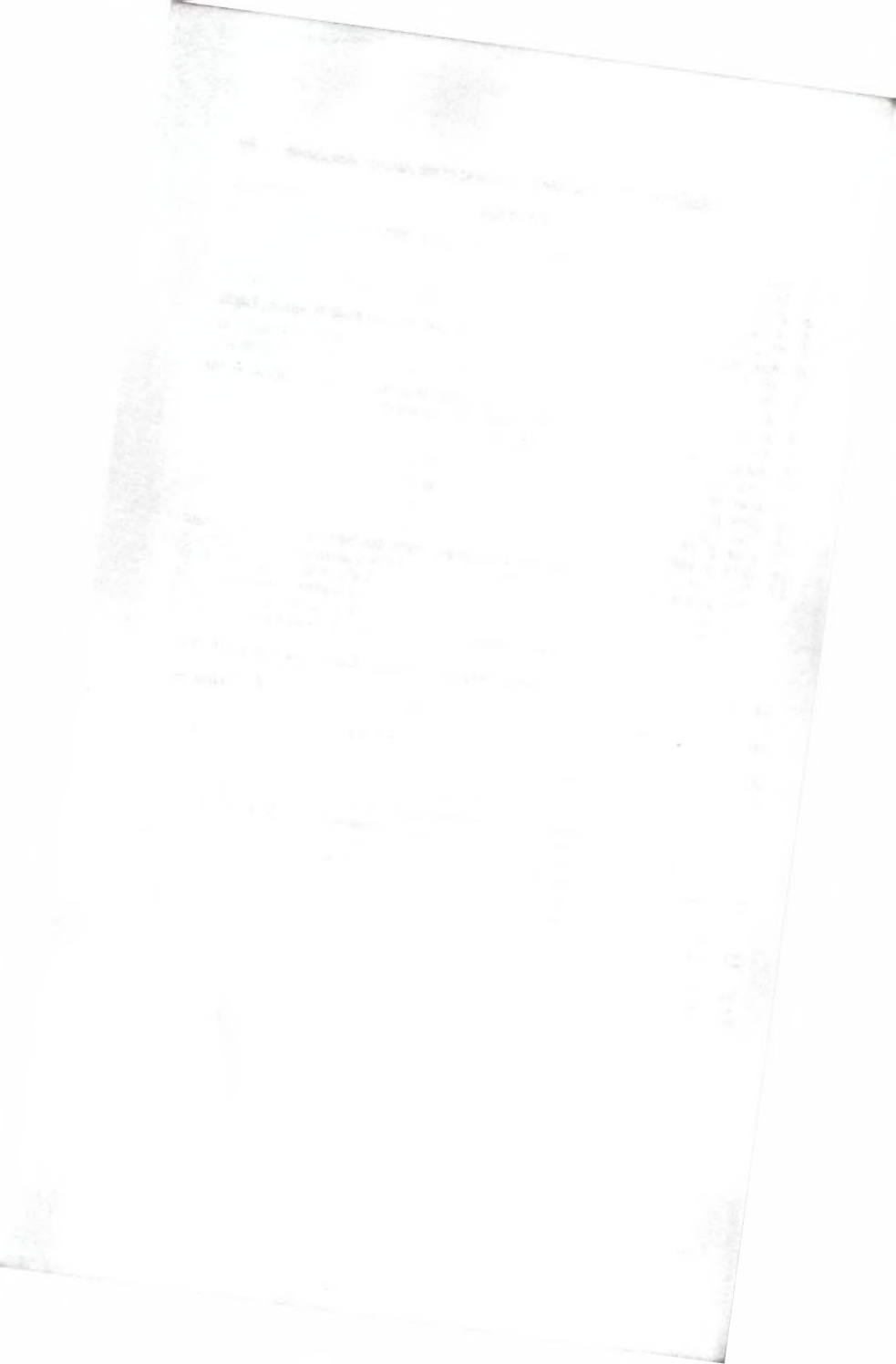
At the end of this brief and difficult attempt to examine and interpret what could be termed Azikiwe's political ideas — the ideas projected in his dreams of the African Revolution that would precede his New Africa — it can be stated with a large measure of confidence that his political philosophy amounted in its basic essences to participatory liberal democracy characterised by economic *laissez faire*, and welfarist capitalism controlled by the African. This political philosophy was presented in various versions at various stages and objective situations of Azikiwe's political career, beginning with the utopian prophetic version in his *Renascent Africa* to the more concrete and pragmatic version of his *Political Blueprint For Nigeria*. In short, his political ideas could be said to amount to an African version of Western democracy.

Because of the very basic essences of his political philosophy it was not communist or revolutionary in ideology, not radical in its

orientations, not outright conservative in its persuasions and not even African in its basic formulations; but Azikiwe displayed flashes of almost all these characteristics in his various presentations of this philosophy in the vast expansive and versatile literature which his prolific mind produced in a lifetime. It is safe to state that on the basis of its very nature this political philosophy of liberal democracy is characterised by pragmatism, gradualism, inclusiveness (in its capacity to accommodate elements of other philosophies), humanism and welfarism. It is probably these human elements of the philosophy which critics and admirers often failed to identify in interpreting and evaluating Azikiwe's political actions and attitudes; just as it is probably his deep-seated and long-lasting sensitivities to those human elements that accounted for his lapses of contradiction during occasional critical situations in which their defective interpretations of his philosophy drove them into expecting responses that could not come from him.

NOTES

1. Azikiwe, N: *My Odyssey*, London: C. Hurst and Co. 1970, p. 38.
2. *Ibid.* p. 37.
3. *Ibid.* p. 106.
4. Azikiwe, N: *Renascent Africa*, London: Frank Cass, 1968, p. 9.
5. Chambers Encyclopaedia Vol. I, p. 749.
6. Azikiwe, N: *Political Blueprint for Nigeria* Lagos: African Book Company, Lagos, 1943, p. 8.
7. *Ibid.* p. 25.
8. Azikiwe, N: *Renascent Africa*, *op. cit.* p. 7.
9. It is a continuation of the same inspiration that made Azikiwe adopt as the University of Nigeria motto: "To Restore the Dignity of Man."
10. Azikiwe, N: *Renascent Africa*, *op. cit.* pages 7, 24, 120-122.
11. *Ibid.* pp. 7, 24-25, 123-125.
12. *Ibid.* pp. 9, 24-25, 125-134.
13. *Ibid.* pp. 9-10, 29-30, 134-140.
14. *Ibid.* pp. 10, 31-32, 163-176.
15. *Ibid.* p. 165.
16. *Ibid.* p. 166
17. *Ibid.* pp. 310-313. These particular pages form the basis of using the phrase "Dreams of the African Revolution" as the title of this chapter. Azikiwe's realisation that he was dreaming of a great future was not in doubt in his mind, but nations have achieved great heights out of the dreams of their leaders. Consequently the picture of the great future he was dreaming for Africa had to be drawn in the powerful imagery and elegant presentation which gave his book *Renascent Africa* its great significance.
18. From Zik: *Selected Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, Cambridge University Press, 1961, p. 82.
19. Azikiwe, N: *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?* MacMillan, Nigeria, 1980, p. 174.
20. Orizu, A. A. *Without Bitterness*, New York: Creative Age, 1948, p. 298.
21. Ebo, M. C: *Foundations of Zikism* (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis for New York University, 1963) p. 117-118. According to Ebo Orizu's book was a booster for Azikiwe's political ideas at a time when his impact on Nigerian nationalist leaders and people was shaken by the "Assassination Story" and other crisis episodes of the 1940's. See also Ezera, K. *Constitutional Developments* in Nigeria, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964, p. 97.
22. Azikiwe, N: "Before Us Lies the Open Grave" (His inaugural address to the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons, NCNC, on 7th May 1947 to mark his election or its president).
23. Okoye, M: *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1979, p. 4.
24. *Ibid.* p. 52.
25. Azikiwe, N: *Renascent Africa*, *op. cit.* p. 125.



PART TWO

Pan-Africanism and African Nationalism

Nnamdi Azikiwe As A Pan-African Theorist

P. Olisanwuche Esedebe

Nnamdi Azikiwe was born and educated when nearly the entire African continent including his home country Nigeria was languishing under foreign domination. As in the continent so outside it Africans and persons of African descent were oppressed, considered inferior to the rest of mankind and not surprisingly exploited and insulted with impunity. This had been the general situation from about the end of the sixteenth century when the Atlantic slave trade began to gather momentum. Perceptive Black patriots saw that Africans at home and in the diaspora faced a common problem. What was needed was a common solution that would bring mutual benefit. One of these patriots, though by no means among the earliest, was Nnamdi Azikiwe. For the greater part of his public life spanning some forty years he grappled with the Blackman's predicament. In the process he became a West African nationalist, journalist, politician, statesman and above all an exponent of pan-African ideas. His cosmopolitan outlook, experiences and early contact with politically conscious Black folk made it easy for him to embrace pan-Africanism.

The upbringing, training and other formative experiences of Nnamdi Azikiwe, fondly called 'Zik', have been discussed elsewhere in this book and need not detain us.¹ For a proper understanding of his exertions on behalf of the peoples of the

African world, it is necessary to first of all analyse in greater detail the problem confronting men of African blood.

The African Predicament

Although the principles of the American Revolution implied civil rights for all men, Afro-Americans continued to suffer injustices because of their race and complexion. The French publicist Alexis de Tocqueville remarked in his well-known book *Democracy in America* (1835) that persons of African origin made every effort to ingratiate themselves with those who despised them. They adopted their oppressors' life-style, echoed their opinions and hoped by imitating them to form part of their society. Having been told from childhood that Black men were racially inferior to Whites they believed the myth and became ashamed of their personality. In their features they discovered a trace of slavery and if it were in their power they would gladly rid themselves of everything that distinguished them from the white race. The plight of African exiles in South America, the West Indies and Europe was no different.

Not only were Black men deemed inferior to White men, they were also denied a past. In an address of 1854 to the American Colonization Society of which he was vice-president, Commander Andrew H. Foote of the United States Navy contended that

if all that negroes of all generations have ever done were to be obliterated from recollection for ever the world would lose no great truth no profitable art, no exemplary form of life. The loss of all that is African would offer no memorable deduction from anything but the earth's black catalogue of crimes.²

Such insinuations implied that Black men deserved to be exploited and governed by men of 'higher' race. And barely three decades after the naval officer's assertion Africa was partitioned by the European powers.

Self-determination was by no means the only loss Africans had sustained. Their culture came under the ruthless attack of the invaders who dismissed African institutions evolved over the millennia as so much archaic debris obstructing the path of progress. Many an European scholar rushed to the aid of the imperial overlords. Thus in 1923 Professor A. P. Newton of London University told the Royal African Society that Africa had 'no past before the coming of Europeans'.³ No less sweeping were the pronouncements of the contemporary British anthropologist C. G. Seligman whose book *Races of Africa* (1930) attributed the civilisations of Africa to Hamites, a mythical light-skinned nomadic

people who, according to him, were 'better armed and quicker witted than the dark-skinned agricultural Negroes'. A notorious variant of this myth is the assertion of the Oxford historian Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper made in 1962:

Perhaps, in the future, there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none: there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness ... and darkness is not a subject of history.⁴

Writers within this tradition tended to portray the colonial interlude as essentially an age of liberation and enlightenment. The result was that quite different labels were used in discussing developments in traditional African society. Thus what was approvingly depicted as 'government' in the colonial situation was denounced as despotism in the pre-colonial. What passed for 'pacification' in colonial regimes became 'slave raid' in traditional African society. African nationalists were dismissed as misguided agitators. This subjective approach reinforced the popular notion of Africa as a 'wild and primitive continent which needed the rough intrusion of the white men to bring it into the twentieth century'.⁵ Of the twenty-six world civilisations analysed by Arnold Toynbee (*A Study of History*) in the 1930s only one is African namely: the Egyptian civilisation. The rest of Africa apparently faced no challenge, developed no civilisation and could only join the mainstream of world history through the challenge of European imperialism. In view of the enormity of the alleged problem one would expect the benefactors to possess expertise and high qualities. On the contrary it was not considered necessary for them to have any special training before being put in charge of the natives. The general view that work in the colonies required men of less education than work in the mother country turned the dependencies into a sort of dumping ground for failures. And 'until recently it was the prevalent opinion that the Gospel could be better preached and interpreted to ignorant savages by less intellectual and less educated men'.⁶

Where the ancient Romans assimilated subject people willing to imitate them the modern European imperialists withheld the privilege for every practical purpose. They were bent on keeping the lesser breeds in their place. Accordingly the British excluded Africans from the highest administrative and professional posts. Azikiwe proved no exception. He was rebuffed when he applied for employment preferably at King's College, Lagos 'where my specialised training can be utilised to the best advantage and to the

ultimate development of the African, socially and educationally'.⁷ From the same patriotic motive he turned to the Liberian and Ethiopian Governments which with Haiti in the Caribbean were the only sovereign black states in the world at that time. He suffered another disappointment.

Azikiwe's humiliation even on African soil dramatised the seriousness of the African predicament. The problem was compounded by the weakness of Haiti, Ethiopia and Liberia. The last disappointed the high hope that its Negro colonists, or the Americo-Liberians as they preferred to call themselves, would make it 'the most direct and efficient means of securing respectability and independence for the African race'.⁸ Like the neighbouring Creoles of Sierra Leone they maintained a certain cultural arrogance towards the local population thereby provoking the animosity of the African populace. From its inception as a republic in 1847 to the eruption of the Second World War Liberia never found its feet. Groping and stumbling as if without a sense of direction it frequently stood in danger of losing its autonomy. Hence pressure groups and articulate patriots picked up the challenge of finding a permanent solution to the Negro Question.

Of the pan-African associations that emerged when Zik was growing up, the Universal Negro Improvement Association was easily the most spectacular. Founded by Marcus Garvey in 1914 in his native Jamaica and with headquarters in New York, the U.N.I.A. had branches in various quarters of the globe. Another contemporary pan-African organisation worthy of notice was the Pan-African Federation which summoned the historic Manchester Pan-African Congress of 1945. A prominent leader of the P.A.F. was George Padmore who like Azikiwe was among the Black patriots searching for a new and more respectable place in the world for Africans.

Having discussed the context in which Azikiwe grew up it may now be appropriate to examine his pan-African role. His ideas are scattered in letters, newspaper articles, monographs, unpublished manuscripts, public speeches and books. The more significant works include *Liberia in World Politics* (1934), *Renascent Africa* (1937), *Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe* (1961), *The Future of Pan-Africanism* (1961) and *Ideology for Nigeria* (1979). Zik's ideas may be grouped under five broad themes: Tactics and Strategy, Respect for Human Dignity, African

History and Culture, Freedom for Africa and the Africans, and African Unity.

Tactics and Strategy

A few years before his return to the continent Zik gave a hint of his temperament and the strategy he would adopt. In a letter dated April 30, 1929 to the Nigerian nationalist Herbert Macaulay, Zik declared:

I am not a radical, although my philosophical concept of Nigerian politics (or African politics for that matter) is revolutionary in character. I am a liberal who would rather be a sane radical for the ultimate redemption of my people

*** The sum-total of my philosophy therefore, is this: independent in all things and neutral in nothing affecting the welfare of Africa ...

Whilst I detest a bloody revolution, my studies in economics and politics have widened my horizon to see the futility of armless Africans staging a non-profitable revolution.⁹

Though he endorsed 'Garveyism, with its elements of race pride, race consciousness, nationalism and its correlant of economic stability', he thought Garvey's 'approach was fantastic and utopian'.¹⁰ 'Modern industrial society and the educational policy of European powers in Africa', Zik warned 'make any *direct* attack at present, suicidal'.¹¹ He did not believe that any one patriot could translate all the major objectives of pan-Africanism into reality. As was the case with the movement for Italian freedom and unity in the nineteenth century so too in Africa, some leaders would have to play only the role of a Mazzini, some that of a Cavour, others that of a Garibaldi depending on the prevailing circumstances. Because what is desirable may not be practicable at the material time, theorists and idealists must wait patiently for the appearance of men of action who produce results. Even then, men of action must not throw realism to the winds.

Respect for Human Dignity

Given his own experiences it is no surprise that Azikiwe should condemn racial chauvinism again and again and in very strong terms for that matter. Throughout his public life he continually demanded respect for human dignity. In *Renasant Africa* he lamented that over the ages men have developed the evil habits of subjecting fellow human beings to terrible treatment. Thanks to the so-called advances in science war has become 'an exhibition of man's barbarity to man'. Writing very much against the background of the

persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany, the Stalinist purges in the Soviet Union and Italy's invasion of Ethiopia, all of which were characterised by the utmost cruelty and brutality, Azikiwe urged passionately:

Let mankind learn to love one another. Let mankind emulate the founder of Christianity and apply the noblest ideals of Christianity so as to change this mad world into a paradise on earth. (Italics in original).¹²

This plea could not prevent the outbreak of hostilities on a global scale barely two years later.

The Second World War raised in sharp outline such questions and the nature of liberty, the rights of the individual and the colour bar. Contributing to a debate in a Legislative Council in Nigeria Azikiwe recalled that during the hostilities attempts were made to bring it home to the African soldiers that they were inferior to their European counterparts. A directive entitled 'Instructions on the treatment of Black People in the Central Mediterranean Forces' forbade fraternisation on the ground that it could be detrimental to the policy adopted by the Government of the protectorates. Azikiwe condemned the document and demanded 'equality of opportunity in our army and respect for human personality, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex or station in life'.¹³ He objected to the abuse of the various media of education, information and entertainment to mislead the world into regarding people of African origin as primitive, imbeciles and clowns. The modern American and English novelist Azikiwe regretted never gives 'the black man or woman a position of respect in his characters'¹⁴ Talented American Negro actors and actresses also came under fire. Paul Robeson, a bachelor of Arts as well as Law 'who has been philosophizing about the destiny of the Negro race' received a severe rebuke for accepting parts in Eugene O'Neil's play *Emperor Jones* and in famous films like "Sanders of the River" based on the novel of the Englishman Edgar Wallace.¹⁵

On the occasion of his installation as the first indigenous governor-general of Nigeria Azikiwe seized the opportunity to protest against the continued humiliation of Africans on African soil. In an address "Respect for Human Dignity" delivered on November 16 1960 before a gathering comprising dignitaries and envoys from different parts of the world, he drew attention to the incompatibility of some of the policies of the White settlers in Southern Africa with their membership of the United Nations Organisation. Africans he said found it hard to understand how intelligent people could be 'so

wicked and inhuman and yet be accepted as civilised nations by the international community'.¹⁶ As firm believers in racial equality and the principle of the brotherhood of man the Governor-General went on, it would be hypocritical for Nigerians to pretend that they were happy 'when the rights of our fellow human beings are wantonly trampled upon by irresponsible rulers and government agencies of undemocratic countries'.¹⁷ He saw the challenge of Nigeria as a free state in twentieth century Africa in terms of 'the need to revive the stature of man in Africa and restore the dignity of man in the world'.¹⁸ Black men will never accept the status of inferiority

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 hypocritical, to believe that we are an inferior race.¹⁹

The title and timing of Azikiwe's address and the fact that his audience comprised influential personalities from many parts of the world are highly significant. Equally important are the implications of what Azikiwe is here saying because they advance his argument. One is that to remain perfect the Creator will always refrain from what is imperfect. A single imperfection suffices to render Him imperfect. And to make a set of human beings superior to another amounts to favouritism which is an imperfection. The present inequalities among men even of the same race are merely due to the different ways individual women and men have been using or developing the talents given to them by the Creator.

A second implication is that 'the image of God cannot be one thing in Africa and another thing in Asia or Europe and so on. Since the various branches of mankind have more or less different complexions it follows that the real man 'created after the image of God' is neither the physical body nor its pigmentation. The equality Zik is then talking about refers to the inner man, the soul or spirit. It is the same in every person and it is what makes every human being tick. It is also what makes all men brothers, members of one human family regardless of race, creed, skin colour, education or sex. Their common brotherhood obliges the races to work side by side respecting and furthering one another. From this perspective the absurdity of racist doctrines and attitudes becomes even more glaring.

African Culture and History

Just as no one race may deem itself better than the other so no culture is superior to another. Each culture is valid and makes sense

in its setting. But this does not mean that Azikiwe uncritically approved of every aspect of traditional African culture. For example he considered belief in magic and witches superstitious. Like the late Congolese (Zairean) nationalist Patrice Lumumba he frowned at the tendency of husbands to treat their wives as gloried maids as if their function lay in gratifying the caprices and pleasures of the male overlords.²⁰ But on the whole Zik idealised pre-colonial African society particularly its communalistic nature. By communalism he meant 'that the welfare of the group was paramount to the welfare of the individual. In other words the welfare of the many predominated the welfare of the few'.²¹ In the process of subjugating the African race the European conquerors substituted communalism with their own concept of individualism. As a consequence, Azikiwe lamented, the African ceased to be his brother's keeper. *Thus African society has deviated from its moral foundations for one of the most unethical superstructures. Self becomes more important than the rest of the group*²² (italics in original). One may sharpen Zik's argument by saying that every true race possesses some values which other races lack. Instead of discarding its cultural heritage each race should develop it to full blossom.

With the same breath Azikiwe refuted the colonial myth that African history began when Europeans appeared on the scene. He took to task Professor A. M. Carr-Saunders, a contemporary sociologist at Liverpool University, for telling members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science that Negroes had made no contribution to civilisation. Azikiwe drew attention to documentary, archaeological and palaeontological evidence contradicting the sociologist's assertion. Among the ancient documentary sources cited by Zik were the works of Herodotus, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus 'founders of History and Geography [who] identified black persons as Ethiopians in their treatises'.²³ He might have added that Homer, the greatest of the Greek poets, called them 'blameless' emphasising that 'Zeus left for Ocean Stream to join the worthy Ethiopians at a banquet, and all the gods went with him'.²⁴

Under the pseudonym 'Antar' Zik wrote a series of articles entitled 'Nuggets of African History' for the *African Morning Post* highlighting Ethiopia's achievements in architecture, astronomy, literature, politics and philosophy. Ethiopian epistemology Zik maintained was not only one of the earliest on record but it also influenced the students who came to Ethiopia and Egypt. 'It was the

insights learnt by these students which formed the basis of the systematic philosophies which emerged in Greece several centuries later'.²⁵ As the Ghanaian political scientist Professor S. K. B. Asante has pointed out, what Azikiwe had in mind was classical Ethiopia which was Nubia on the upper Nile 'and not the medieval or modern Ethiopia which is traceable to the ancient kingdom of Axum.'²⁶

After drawing attention to the part Negroes played in the emergence and growth of the ancient Egyptian civilisation Azikiwe turned to the pre-colonial empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhay all of which brought together large numbers of people under strong central control. So sophisticated were African traditional institutions in places that the colonisers used them with little or no modification right up to the moment of independence. Little wonder Zik asked:

Is it spreading false doctrines to tell the people of Africa that their grandsires were once rulers of the country which civilized Greece, which in turn civilized Rome, which in turn, civilized Great Britain, which in turn believes it is its duty to civilize these self-same Africans?²⁷

Azikiwe is in effect saying that the present relative backwardness of Black men gave no ground for regarding them as an inferior class of human beings. Cicero, Pliny and Tacitus committed a similar fallacy in antiquity when they declared the British people unfit to serve in Roman households even as slaves. A lot of what Azikiwe said about the condition of Africa in ancient and medieval times is now common currency. At that time it was revolutionary representing a major onslaught against anti-African propaganda.

Though Zik was convinced that Africans needed to know about their past and that an equally glorious future awaited them, he discouraged them from reading the historical studies of those days because most of them were written by White scholars bent on demonstrating the supposed superiority of western civilisation. The great European universities he correctly observed were rooted in local soil. An African educated in any of them 'unless he has developed his individuality, is nothing short of a megaphone, yea, a carbon copy of these societies'.²⁸ What Africans needed, Zik concluded was a different sort of educational institution. For this reason he felt disenchanted with the University College, Ibadan which the British colonial authorities established in Nigeria in 1948 as an integral part of London University.²⁹

Azikiwe criticised Ibadan's rather narrow range of subjects, the very small number of students in spite of abundant suitable local material and the high cost of running the place. In a speech delivered

in the House of Representatives, Lagos he complained 'that University College, Ibadan is becoming a million-dollar baby. Every time the baby cries he is given a kiss worth one million pounds, and so the baby has found out that it pays to cry, and crying has become his pastime.'³⁰ More disturbing was the cultural orientation of the new university college. Professor O. O. Akinkugbe, a distinguished alumnus of the institution who later became a vice-chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Nigeria), recalls social life at Ibadan as follows:

Mellanby [the foundation Principal] with his Oxbridge background was partial to the collegiate system (even though watered down in the form of Halls of Residence). Wardens lived in Hall, gowns were worn on special dinner occasions and grace was said to English. Wine was served at hightable, sans port, claret, palm wine or snuff.³¹

While the British saw excellence in academic and architectural terms, Azikiwe was sure it lay in relevance to the needs of the local society and the preservation of the identity of the African.³²

In 1954 the Eastern Nigeria Government under the premiership of Azikiwe began arrangements for the establishment of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka whose opening in October 1960 coincided with Nigeria's attainment of independence. Its motto 'To Restore the Dignity of Man' bears witness to Zik's enormous contribution to what became the country's first autonomous university. Partly because of its independent status the new institution succeeded in Africanising its staff and syllabus to an appreciable extent right from the start. Its motto and the recruitment of Black Americans and Afro-West Indians in general and of a grandson of Edward Wilmot Blyden in particular gave the University a pan-African aura. The History Department not only made African history the centre piece of its programme but also insisted that no student could pass with honours in History unless he took a prescribed number of themes in African history. It was only after 1962 when Ibadan shook itself free of the constraints imposed by the London connexion that that institution began to teach African history as distinct from European activities in Africa and African aspects of Islamic studies. Before then European history monopolised the field.

The initial derogatory remarks by the Oxbridge breed and of course the admirers of Ibadan soon gave way to a curious interest in the 'Nsukka Experiment' culminating in the adoption of many of the innovations introduced by the institution notably the General Studies

Programme, the credit course system and the teaching of certain vocational subjects at degree level.³³

Freedom for Africa and Africans

If Zik was aware of the role an African centre of higher learning could play in the rehabilitation of the continent's image he also recognised that there could be no respect without political freedom. He recalled how Africans of the dispersion fought continuously for liberty. While the slave revolt led by Nat Turner in Virginia failed that spearheaded by Toussaint L'ouverture from Dahomey succeeded in San Domingo where he founded the Republic of Haiti (1804). After the betrayal of Toussaint to Napoleon, 'Dessalines, from the Congo took the command and guaranteed their newly-won freedom. The Maroons of Jamaica made history by their gallantry, even in slavery'.³⁴ The unflinching determination of Black men to regain their liberty found a classic expression at the end of the First World War in the celebrated fighting sonnet of the Jamaican Claude McKay which Zik reproduced in full in *Renasant Africa*:

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain, then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honour us though dead!
O Kinsmen! We must meet the common foe!
Though far outnumbered let us show us brave
And for their thousand blows deal one death blow,
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!
What though before us lies the open grave?

Like Blyden (the grand-father), Azikiwe saw that 'there is no better means to arouse African peoples than that of the power of the pen and of the tongue ... Schools are also important, but the Press is a much wider and more potent avenue for this particular mission'.³⁵ On the pages of the *African Morning Post* and the *West African Pilot* Zik exposed the autocratic nature of alien rule and made the subject peoples aware of their rights. Obafemi Awolowo's description of the *West African Pilot* as 'a fire-eating and aggressive nationalist paper of the highest order' is illuminating.³⁶ Needless to add that the militant journalism introduced by Azikiwe helped to quicken the tempo of the struggle for emancipation throughout West

Africa where his name became a symbol of inspiration to the youths overnight. The hitherto mendicant resolutions of African nationalists which did not seek the overthrow but the amelioration of the colonial system henceforth began to give way to unequivocal demands for self-determination.

The fear that a bad reputation for Liberia might be exploited by racists to justify imperial rule partly accounts for Azikiwe's connivance at the charges of forced labour and slavery levelled against the Americo-Liberians by the American, British and French press. Speaking at an annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in New York City on November 10, 1931 he argued 'that eighty-four years of political autonomy are not sufficient to pass a final judgement as to the political incapacity of the Liberian Negro'.³⁷ He reminded critics that it took Britain many centuries to advance from the promulgation of the Magna Carta (1215) to the establishment of constitutional monarchy (1688).

In his much praised book *Liberia in World Politics* Azikiwe showed among other things how Liberia's weakness as a small state and consequent dependence on certain western powers subordinated its diplomacy to the forces of economic imperialism in tropical Africa. He admitted that it was not possible to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the colonial over-lords resented the existence of a sovereign African nation. All the same he felt that 'the idea of establishing a black hegemony and the psychological results of self-determination and political consciousness among the indigenes of adjacent territories make such a conclusion plausible'.³⁸ Nor had Liberia's influence on the neighbouring African countries, he maintained, been negative. On the contrary Liberia's political ideas and institutions had made them nationalistic inspiring the formation of the National Congress of British West Africa which 'has effected considerable changes in colonial administration' one of them being the introduction of limited franchise. It was Azikiwe's hope that 'Liberia may yet be the medium of political consciousness and national self-determination' in Africa.³⁹ Hence his embarrassment over Paul Robeson's acceptance of a part in Eugene O'Neil's play *Emperor Jones* whose aim, according to Azikiwe, was 'to portray the Negro as lacking the capacity for self-government'.⁴⁰

Interest in Liberia was virtually overshadowed by Italy's occupation of Ethiopia in 1935. It pained Azikiwe that 'black African soldiers, officered by Italians, constituted about half of the Italian forces in East Africa which invaded and subjugated Ethiopia.

A clear example of Africa against Africa.⁴¹ For breaking several international agreements forbidding war, the use of bombs in armed conflict and the spraying of poisonous gas over civilians Azikiwe denounced Italy 'not only as an international criminal, but also as an outcast beyond the pale of honourable international society'.⁴² Africans at home and abroad saw the unprovoked attack as another rape of the continent. Not surprisingly Azikiwe's *African Morning Post* October 14, 1935 told its readers that although the war was being fought on Ethiopian soil, it was 'our own battle, because it is an African battle'. Though the League of Nations did not support Italy's adventure it nevertheless failed to enforce economic sanctions on the culprit. The readiness with which European leaders accepted and even aided the Italian conquest forced men of African blood to conclude that European statesmen were united by instinct and interest against the African race.⁴³

The African peoples' interpretation of western connivance at Italian aggression was confirmed by Winston Churchill's insistence that the principle of self-determination embodied in the famous Atlantic Charter (1941) applied only to the white peoples of Europe then living under Nazi Yoke. Commenting on Churchill's explanation the *West African Pilot* November 5, 1941 wondered how a British premier could make such a statement 'during an unparalleled destructive war which has cost colonial peoples their material resources and manpower'. A West African delegation led by Zik and sponsored by the West African Students' Union visited London in August 1943 but its protest yielded no immediate result.

However shortly after the end of hostilities most of the colonial powers committed themselves to a speedy withdrawal from the continent thanks to the experience of the Japanese in China, the British in Malaysia and India, the Americans in the Philippines and the French in Indo-China. The humiliation of the British and the French in the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the independence of the Gold Coast (Ghana) the following year under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah added further impetus to the 'wind of change' so that in 1960 alone no less than seventeen African territories regained their freedom.

African Unity

By mid-1965 the number of African countries liberated from foreign oppression had risen to thirty-six. Was it possible for them to co-operate on a continental-scale given their different colonial

backgrounds, religions, languages and levels of economic development? Would pan-Arabism which seeks to bring under one fold all the Arab-speaking peoples of not only Africa but also of the Middle East not present an insurmountable barrier? Would plans to set up an Islamic Confederation transcending racial boundaries not constitute an obstacle? Though Zik admitted the existence of these problems he did not consider them formidable enough to prevent integration in the foreseeable future. For him the Federation of Nigeria 'has proved that racially homogeneous [sic] African peoples with heterogeneous languages and cultures can be united'.⁴⁴ He hailed the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union launched in 1961 as 'an experiment with great possibilities'.⁴⁵

Two developments strengthened Zik's optimism. First, the example the United States of America, Brazil, the Soviet Union and India. Second, the unqualified success of two pan-African congresses summoned by Kwame Nkrumah in 1958 namely: the Conference of Independent African States and the All-African Peoples Conference. Both gatherings which incidentally were the first pan-African meetings to take place on African soil demonstrated, according to Azikiwe, the amenability of African leaders 'to reasoned appeals for unity' and the preparedness of African politicians 'to sink their individual differences'.⁴⁶ What remained was for the radical and conservative blocs, better known as the Casablanca Powers and the Monrovia Group respectively, to close ranks.

Azikiwe's notion of unification is not narrow for it is not limited to black Africans. In keeping with his international outlook it also embraced the Arabs of Muslim North Africa and the white settler minorities of southern Africa. By a united continent he meant integrating African society from the Cape to Cairo. Where Nkrumah speaking on behalf of the Casablanca Powers advocated the immediate formation of a unitary political system presumably under the hegemony of Ghana, Azikiwe preferred a federal arrangement with national sovereignties intact. The latter thought it was naive to expect that 'hard bargaining politicians who passed through the ordeal of victimization and the crucible of persecution to win their independence will easily surrender their newly-won power'.⁴⁷

At the Lagos meeting of the Monrovia Group (January 1962) over which Zik as Nigeria's Head of State presided, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia remarked quite correctly that the two groupings had the same fundamental objective in view: unifying the continent.

Their quarrel concerned only the timing and nature of union which were matters of detail. This was why Azikiwe also felt even before the Conference that if both camps implemented the recommendations of their experts 'Pan-Africanism would have been realised without further fuss on the surrender of sovereignty and on the jockey for leadership entailed thereby. But the main task is to reconcile the two groups'.⁴⁸

Azikiwe envisaged a Concert of African States similar in structure to the United Nations Organisation. Crucial decisions would be left to Heads of State or Heads of Government or their representatives. He provided for a continent — wide Parliament, Court of International Justice and Secretariat to handle 'the administration of the day-to-day affairs of this African leviathan'.⁴⁹

Zik was convinced that integration was necessary so as to prevent 'any recrudescence of colonialism', raise the image of the race in the world community, protect the continent against external attack and internal discord and improve the quality of life of the people including 'the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms under the law'.⁵⁰ Members of the concert 'must realise that the continent of Africa, which has suffered degradation for centuries can also set an example of how to restore the dignity of man in Africa'.⁵¹

To achieve the possibilities held out by unification Zik proposed three conventions one each on Collective Security, Economic Co-operation and Human Rights. The Convention on Collective Security provided for an African High Command, a Pan-African Declaration on Neutralism and

a doctrine of non-intervention in Africa, on the same lines as the Monroe Doctrine in the western hemisphere. This doctrine should make it clear that the establishment or the continued existence of any colonial territory in the continent of Africa, by any European or American or Asian or Australian power shall be regarded not only as an unfriendly act, but as an act of aggression against the concert of African States. This is one concrete way of making it impossible for certain nations who have been forced to surrender their colonial swap in Africa, to seek by devious methods to continue their insidious game.⁵²

A foreign policy of non-alignment, Zik felt, would not oblige 'the concert either to inherit the prejudices of other nations or to join forces directly or indirectly with any bloc of nations against any other bloc in any war'.⁵³ Furthermore such a policy would not give the impression that any particular bloc or group of nations is right or wrong on its approach to the solution of international problems.

Among other things the Convention on Economic Co-operation recommended the formation of a customs union thereby breaking

down all tariff walls; the establishment of an African Common Market, Railway System, Airways and Telecommunications Authority and the introduction of a common currency. Movement of people and produce 'in their respective countries would quicken and solidarity of views would be cemented'. The Convention on Human Rights was intended to elicit the confidence and support of the rank and file. Many of the provisions of the three conventions find an echo in the resolutions of the Casablanca and Monrovia blocs.

On May 1963 the two factions assembled in Addis Ababa where they agreed on a compromise formula for achieving African unity. But the Organisation of African Unity which resulted from the reconciliation fell far short of Azikiwe's blueprint. Thanks to a preponderance of the members of the Monrovia Group, the delegates rejected immediate political union opting for consultation and functional co-operation. Assessing the OAU on the occasion of its silver-jubilee anniversary, Julius Nyerere who was a signatory of the 1963 OAU Charter lamented:

African countries really have to move towards political unity if they want a place under the sun. It's a shame they have not done it ... The whole purpose of building the OAU was Africa. We are now so pre-occupied with national problems that the continental problems are in danger of being forgotten.⁵⁴

Criticism

At the time of writing this essay Nnamdi Azikiwe is about to celebrate his eighty-fifth birthday and of course looking forward to many more years of service to the despised race. For this reason this assessment of his contribution to the growth of Pan-Africanism can only be tentative.

On the whole Azikiwe's ideas are of doubtful originality. His erudite publications and learned addresses demonstrate an impressive familiarity with various currents of thought of pan-African interest. The man himself paid very warm tributes to the patriotism of Edward Wilmot Blyden, Marcus Garvey, J.E. Casely-Hayford, W.E.B. Du Bois, J. E. Kwegyir Aggrey, the South African Tengo Jabavu of the Races Congress (London, 1911) fame, Jomo Kenyatta, George Padmore 'and other prophets of Pan-Africanism [who] dreamt dreams and saw visions of a new Africa'.⁵⁵ These illustrious patriots of African blood must have influenced the shaping of Zik's political and cultural sentiments.

For instance, Azikiwe's concept of higher education was anticipated by the Sierra Leonean medical doctor J. Africanus Horton (1835-1883), Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912) and the

Gold Coast lawyer J. E. Casely Hayford whose book *Ethiopia Unbound. Studies in race emancipation* was published in London in 1911. In the second half of the nineteenth century Blyden called for a centre of higher learning to be 'conducted by earnest and well-cultivated Negroes' and free from the 'despotic and Europeanising influences which had warped and crushed the Negro mind'.⁵⁶ And in a letter of May 5, 1905 to the Editor of the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* (Freetown), Casely-Hayford complained that western education tended to denationalise the African making him 'a slave to foreign ways of life and thought'.

Azikiwe's presence at the Kumasi Congress (1953) summoned by Nkrumah and at the Monrovia Group gathering (Lagos, 1962) which he chaired was symbolic. But the force of the symbolism was greatly weakened by Zik's absence from the New York Pan-African Conference (1927) and the most famous in the series, that is, the Manchester meeting of 1945. He also failed to attend the Accra All-African Peoples Conference (1958) not to mention the series of OAU summits especially between the years 1963 and 1966 when he was Nigeria's Head of State. This apparent indifference to attempts to institutionalise the phenomenon of Pan-Africanism is quite in keeping with his belief that some leaders would sow only the seed, some water the plant and others harvest the fruits. He must have set himself the modest task of only watering the developing pan-African tree and leading African countries on the road to political freedom. A federal union of African nations would come within the range of possibility when there were independent territories to federate. It is important to note that from 1957 onwards the field was virtually left open to Nkrumah and Nyerere. And there seems to be no hint of what practical steps Zik expects sovereign African territories in general and the OAU in particular to take towards the amelioration of the plight of the African Diaspora.

Zik's non-violent strategy initiated and popularised by Mahatma Gandhi seemed quite appropriate given the overwhelming psychological and technological advantage enjoyed by the colonisers. As the Oxford historian Dr S. Gopal has shown, Gandhi made the mistake of calling off his passive resistance movement (because of an instance of violent behaviour) 'just when the authorities were beginning to display concern and bafflement'.⁵⁷ Where Marcus Garvey's bellicose confrontation failed, Zik's constitutional approach succeeded in cheekmating colonialism at any rate in his home country Nigeria.

How far are Azikiwe's prescriptions relevant to the aspirations and problems of the African world? On the whole to a large extent. At a time when the Cold War being waged by the East and the West appeared to be degenerating to a nuclear showdown, a Pan-African Declaration of Neutralism was in the best interest of Africa in particular and of the World in general. In addition to removing the continent from the theatre of nuclear war, a foreign policy of non-alignment would place African states in a strong moral position to play the role of a peace-maker, to judge issues on their merits and to look for solutions that are just regardless of the parties involved. It would also enable African statesmen to adopt without undue external constraints values from the African cultural heritage and from the East and the West as well.

Equally realistic and timely was Zik's call for continental co-operation in view of the weakness of the mini-states of Africa and the threat posed by neo-colonialism and apartheid even as self-government was being granted. But his insistence on the retention of national sovereignties cannot be said to be quite helpful considering the experience of the United States of America during the Confederation Period (1781-87) and the failure of Europe to achieve political unity for nearly seven hundred years, that is, ever since the collapse of Christendom in the Middle Ages. The economic, social and political problems facing post-colonial Africa can be tackled most effectively only within the framework of an all-Africa government. And this needless to say requires the abrogation of state sovereignties.

After twenty-six years of OAU summits, declarations and resolutions, African leaders are beginning to appreciate the necessity for a Joint Military Command and a Common Market advocated by Nkrumah and Azikiwe several decades ago.⁵⁸ The adoption by the OAU in 1981 of 'An African Charter on Human Rights' is further evidence that many of Zik's proposals have not outlived their usefulness.

Conclusion

Even after due allowance has been made for Zik's pragmatic constitutional approach and dislike of 'a bloody revolution', it would still be an oversimplification to regard him as essentially a man of ideas who merely 'dreamt dreams and saw visions of a new Africa' and not a man of action. He gave a concrete and an enduring expression to his concept of higher education in the University of

Nigeria. Both in theory and practice he was in the vanguard of the campaign against the cultural, economic and political domination of the African world. The impact of pan-African sentiments as articulated by Azikiwe has been felt beyond the frontiers of the continent. In Africa itself two out of the many patriots who derived inspiration from Azikiwe's activities were the Nigerian publicist Mazi Mbonu Ojike, who deserves to be better known, and of course Kwame Nkrumah.

Nnamdi Azikiwe's abhorrence of man's inhumanity to man and continual insistence on the rule of law are a measure of the man's humaneness and maturity. Not surprisingly, despite the cruelties of the Atlantic Slave Trade in the past and the colour bar and neo-colonialist machinations in our own day, there is a remarkable absence of racial hatred in his writings. The claim that one particular race has been responsible for the progress of mankind rests on the mistaken assumption that the same human beings in a given country or continent have always re-incarnated there. The knowledge of reincarnation⁵⁹ should remind us that many of the countries we may wish to ridicule or oppress were probably once ours and we may be obliged to live in them again. This and another saying of Kwegyir Aggrey's 'You can play a tune of sorts on the white keys, and you can play a tune of sorts on the black keys, but for harmony you must use both the black and the white' add poignancy to Zik's ceaseless plea for racial harmony and co-operation, a plea which is in the best traditions of pan-Africanism. Any history of the pan-African movement that omits Nnamdi Azikiwe's exertions on behalf of the African race is necessarily incomplete.

NOTES

1. The life of Nnamdi Azikiwe up to 1970 has been documented by the man himself and some of his admirers. See e.g. his *My Odyssey: An Autobiography* (London: Hurst, 1970); Vincent C. Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa* (London, 1961) and K.A.B. Jones-Quartey, *A Life of Azikiwe* (London, 1965).
2. Commander Andrew H. Foote, *Africa and the American Flag* (New York, 1854), p. 207.
3. Cited in J.D. Fage, 'The Development of African Historiography' in J. Ki-Zerbo (ed.), *General History of Africa*, UNESCO, Vol. I (London; Heinemann and University of California Press, 1981), p. 32.
4. Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Rise of Christian Europe* (London: Tahmes and Hudson, 1964), p. 9.
5. Margery Perham, 'Britain's role in a world of racial challenge', *The Listener* (3 June 1965), Vol. LXXIII, No. 1888, p. 812.
6. Daniel Thwaite, *The Seething African Pot: A Study of Black Nationalism, 1882-1835* (London: Constable, 1936), p. 3.
7. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, p. 161.
8. Edward Wilmot Blyden, *Liberia's Offering: Being Addresses and Sermons* ('The Call of Providence to the Descendants of Africa in America'), (New York, 1862), p. 90.
9. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, p. 161.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renasant Africa* (Lagos, 1937), p. 18.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
13. *Zik: A Selection From the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe* (Ibadan: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 151.
14. Azikiwe, *Renasant Africa*, p. 153; *Zik: A Selection From the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe* p. 147.
15. Azikiwe, *Renasant Africa* p. 154.
16. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Respect for Human Dignity* (Enugu: Government Printer, 1960), p. 6.
17. *ibid.*, p. 9.
18. *ibid.*, p. 7.
19. *ibid.*
20. Patrice Lumumba in his book *Congo My Country* describes the debasement of women in Congolese society thus: 'When the boss wants to have water on the table, instead of going to get it himself — even when it is within reach of his hand or only three yards away from the dining-table — he barks to his wife "Marie, mai (Marie, water!)" even when Marie completely worn out by exhausting work (going to the market which may be several miles away, looking after the children single-handed, doing the washing up, sweeping the house and yard, in fact everything which falls to the lot of the African wife in her hard married life) is in the kitchen resting and having her meal. She must leave her chop (food) at the mercy of the hens ... once or twice in order to wait on her master who is sitting at the table like a statue and refuses to move'. Quoted in *Patrice Lumumba* (Panaf Great Lives), (London: Panaf, 1978), pp. 74-75.
21. Azikiwe, *Renasant Africa*, p. 251.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 248.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
24. *The Iliad* (Penguin Classics, 1971), pp. 34, 417.
25. S.K.B. Asante, *Pan-African Protest: West Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis, 1934-1941* (London, Longman, 1977), p. 58.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Azikiwe, *Renasant Africa*, p. 30.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 178.
29. For details see Kenneth Mellanby, *The Birth of Nigeria's University* (London: Methuen, 1958) and J.F. Ade Ajayi and Tekena N. Tamuno (ed.), *The University of Ibadan 1948-1973: A History of the First Twenty-five Years* (Ibadan University Press, 1973).
30. *Zik: A Selection From the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, p. 33.
31. Chinelo Amaka Chizca (ed.), *Twenty Years of University Education in Nigeria* (Lagos: National Universities Commission, n.d.), p. 3.
32. *Zik: A Selection From the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, pp. 280-300, *passim*.
33. For details see Emmanuel Obiechina et. al. (ed.), *University of Nigeria 1960-1985: An Experiment in Higher Education* (University of Nigeria Press, 1986).
34. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *The Future of Pan-Africanism* (London: Nigeria High Commission, 1961), p. 2. For details of the exploits of Toussaint L'Ouverture see C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Random House Inc., 1963).
35. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, p. 17.
36. Obafemi Awolowo, *Awo: Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo* (Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 84.
37. Cited in S.K.B. Asante, *Pan-African Protest: West Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis*, p. 25.
38. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Liberia in World Politics* (London: Stockwell, 1934), pp. 15—16.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 398-399.
40. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, p. 154.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
43. For details see P. Olisanwuche Esedebe, *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement, 1776-1963* (Howard University Press, 1982). See also S.K.B. Asante, *Pan-African Protest: West Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis* and his article 'The Italo-Ethiopian Conflict: A Case Study in British West African Response to Crisis Diplomacy in the 1930's' *Journal of African History* (1974), Vol. XV, No. 2, pp. 291-302.
44. Azikiwe, *The Future of Pan-Africanism*, p. 16.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
47. *Zik: A Selection From the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, p. 61.
48. Azikiwe, *The Future of Pan-Africanism*, pp. 18-19.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
50. Nnamdi Azikiwe, 'Realities of African Unity', *African Forum* (Summer 1965), Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 16-17.
51. Azikiwe, *The Future of Pan-Africanism*, p. 14.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
54. *West Africa* (June 6, 1988), No. 3695, p. 1034.
55. Azikiwe, *The Future of Pan-Africanism*, p. 16.
56. Cited in E. Ashby, *African Universities and Western Tradition* (London, 1964), p. 12.
57. S. Gopal, *Modern India* (British Historical Association G. 66: 1967), p. 15.
58. For a useful summary of OAU summit declarations and resolutions from 1964 to 1987 see *West Africa* (June 6, 1988), No. 3695, pp. 1027 - 1029.
59. Professor Ian Stevenson of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, U.S.A. is one of the eminent authorities in the academic study of the phenomenon of re-incarnation. See his four-volume work with the title *Cases of the Reincarnation Type* (University Press of Virginia, 1977-78) as well as Joseph Head and S.L. Cranston, *Reincarnation: the Phoenix Fire mystery: an East-West dialogue on death*

and rebirth from the Worlds of religion, science, psychology, philosophy, art, literature, and from great thinkers of the past and present (New York: Julien/Crown Publishers, 1977). See also Stephen Lampe, *The Christian and Reincarnation* (Ibadan: Millennium Press, 1987).

Nnamdi Azikiwe: Rejection of Socialism

Lambert Ejiofor

*I am a realist but I can dream dreams as well. I have a deep and abiding faith in pragmatism as a useful philosophy to guide the individuals of any nation to accomplish their aims. Reason, experience and practice should guide us to make our dreams come true.*¹

—Nnamdi Azikiwe

The ideology of Nnamdi Azikiwe is at times an enigma and certainly a subject of controversy. What is his attitude to hard line ideologies? Here we specifically put socialism under test. Does Azikiwe reject to socialism? Some, we shall see, believe that he rejects socialism. If so, does he reject socialism partially or totally? In the spectrum of socialist persuasions, does he reject all, or does he accept some aspects of socialism? What ideological convictions dispose him in his encounter and response socialism? Our attempt to tackle these questions will be made in four parts:

- i. Meaning of Socialism
- ii. Accusations against and Indictments of Azikiwe
- iii. Azikiwe's Score of Socialism
- iv. Rejection of Socialism

I. Socialism: What it is

The great debate centres on the concept and workings of socialism. Socialism is a stretched ideology. Next to politics, it is the one

magnetic household word that many people use and claim freely. Many people talk about socialism, but very few relate themselves to its meaning and dynamics. In order to contest it meaningfully, we must first be clear about what it is. What then is socialism? Authorities define or describe it their own diverse ways.

(a) "Socialism is a theory or method of social organisation and government whereby the citizenry jointly own the means of production and distribution and the power of administrative control is vested in the state".²

(b) Socialism "is a system in which most or all of society's means of production, distribution, and exchange are owned by the society as a whole and administered in the interest of all".³

(c) Socialism is an ideology which regards the institution of private property as a principal source of evil in the world and advocates the common ownership of all the means of production as the cure. It advocates the transformation of private property into public property and the division of the income from such property in accordance with individual needs.⁴

(d) Charles Blitzer gives yet another definition/description: Socialism designates a social theory calling for public ownership and control of the means of production, notably industrial machinery or land or both.

(e) Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels introduced the following distinguishing elements into Socialism: total destruction of capitalism or private ownership of production and distribution of property, the "inexorable Laws of historical development" whereby the collapse of capitalism and the establishment of a socialist society and, therefore, scientificity and the neutrability of revolution in dismantling the apparatuses of the existing order and ushering in the socialist order; therefore the inevitability of violence; the assumption of power by the proletariat and absolute equality in common ownership; the collapse of the state as an institution for coercion, oppression, exploitation and suppression. This leads to the withering of the state; the materialistic interpretation of history in a cyclical mode of contradictions; and economic determinism as a universal phenomenon.

Nnamdi Azikiwe now presents his idea of socialism and how it works in practice. For him "socialism means an economic system in which the means of production, distribution and exchange together with the administration of social services are *concentrated* in the

hands of the state and dispersed from each according to his ability and to each according to his ability (sic) need (?)⁵ He has a second definition: "Socialism is a system of society in which there is no private property. It is also a condition of group living in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state".⁶

Evaluation

Socialism as a social, political, and economic theory has inflicted on itself a refraction which makes it an all-comers ideology. As soon as one departs from scientific socialism as propounded by Karl Marx and Lenin, in short communism, one faces a loss of direction. There is no common compass to show the way save a negative posture: namely the rejection of capitalism. All through the definitions, there is no positive denial of relevance and authenticity to proximal institutions. The shedding of private ownership, the collectivisation, or communalisation, of production and distribution do not explicitly annul the re-emergence of the trojan administrative agency which purports to serve the state and the people. The laws of the cephalization of power and Aiken's sociology of power will coalesce with the socio-psychological imperatives which produce again an iron instrument of dictation, perpetuation in office, and group-based subjective principles for deployment and assignments in the societal panorama. The specialization in bureaucratic craftsmanship, endemic and all impersonal organisations, would make thingy the just emancipated and enfranchised masses below the critical line. Through democratic centralism which is the block handover of power, be it temporarily, to a select few to interpret and programme the socialist manifesto, the masses would be relegated to social distance from the institution of which they were supposed to be equal members and participants. Through the moves of existential realities of collective life, socialism breeds a group whose mandate to champion orthodoxy swiftly disposes leaders for repressive tyranny and intolerance. Soon "we" and "they" emerge subconsciously at first, then in perceptible crystals on the criteria of who says what, how and when. The central committee becomes the custodian of society, the panpsychic people of the socialist realm. Those elements of society who openly propose alternatives are destroyers, and should they proselytise, they become threats to the state who find themselves either in the dustbin, scaling off in obscurity, or else detached and isolated from the forum and purgated

in detention camps in chains. The collective crusade for freedom from chains earns many the real chain in the end.

This side of socialism has left out the atavisms of violence and bloody revolution which form the distinguishing characteristics of Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism. The fact of the iron curtain, as featured in the narratives of van Djilas, and the repulsion of the Berlin wall speak for themselves. Joseph Stalin drove home the powers of the sword and its primacy in the Marxist-Leninist paradigm. Competing in ruthlessness with Adolf Hitler, the volume of blood-letting spelt atrocity in the extreme in their-own-style socialism. Furthermore, the world has kept vigil for the proletariat to assume power, for the state to disappear, for the automation of cyclical change, and is yet to witness the semblance of any. If today Gorbachev has benighted communism, China has exacerbated its image by insensitively mowing down young voices of modification and aggiornamento. While Fidel Castro successfully advertised communism by availing the oppressed peoples of the world with a halo of liberation from oppression, China has refreshed people's minds with the stark realities of unnegotiable ruthlessness of communism. These are the contradictions inherent in central socialism as a theory, epistemology and metaphysic on the one hand, and a programme for societal nurture on the other.

Nevertheless socialism has its merits. It alerted self-confident capitalism to its inhumanities down through history. Classical liberalism set moving: cut-throat competition, economic primogeniture, greed and a satanic free market. Adam Smith (1723-90) had believed in the efficacy of the free market and a virtually unrestrained competition. His adherents argued that "competition in the market offered the best imaginable means of harmonizing the conflicting interests of individuals and maximizing the good of society." They hardly thought of the enormity of man's egotistic calculations and his insatiable gusto for advantage, comfort and ascendancy at all costs. They were being simplistic to ever imagine that in seeking profit "the mysterious operation of an 'invisible hand' will assure that through the agency of the market self-life and the universal good will be the same."

The rapacious quest for political power to authoritatively allocate values was a corollary to liberal capitalism. For, capitalists converge with all other ideologues in the supreme value of political power to tell what is not to be, and what is not to arise to be. Following the law of natural selection, liberal capitalism postulates that the best

will emerge from free competition in the open market, and the worst would be extract.

Making common cause with social darwinism, liberal (uncontrolled) capitalism accepts the survival of the fittest and the elimination of the unfit as a sound thesis for social eugenics. It belittled, or positively cast away, the differentials inherent in take-off points of time, resources, opportunities, patronization, and unreconciled surpluses in rewards; sector against sector and person against person. Capitalism least reckoned with the human psyche as a fundamental element in individualism. It least respected the need to regulate in time before overflow came to sway. Capitalism ignored and still ignores central planning as an indispensable prelude to rational economy in society.

It was left to socialism to alert capitalism to the helplessness of the toilers in production and the immodesty of arbitrary appropriation of profits. Socialism set the equation for re-evaluating ownership and entitlements. Before its era, capitalist labour toiled on: "living in surroundings of intense squalor and ugliness, these men and women and children were called upon to work up to — and in many cases beyond — the capacity of human endurance."

Finally, three major values are common to all socialists. The first is that society should undertake to regulate the economic processes of production and distribution through rational control. All socialists, in varying degrees, "advocate public ownership of the means of production and of public utilities." Then "all socialists favour a more equal distribution of wealth within society, although they differ considerably in the means that they advocate for the achievement of this end."

It is on this tripod that we set out to counterpoise or juxtapose Nnamdi Azikiwe and Socialism. We however like to remark that the Socialism under test is not the Marxist-Leninist model, for there has been a major departure from that socialist theory. In a debate hinging on motivation, career, expression, and personality, Marxism will not be totally bracketed.

Socialism, by Nnamdi Azikiwe, postulates "the concentration in the hands of the state of the means of production distribution; exchange and administration of social services are concentrated in the hands of the state. Social services are dispensed from each according to his ability and to each according to his ability."⁷

While his idea of socialism is in line with others, it is pertinent to note the elastic impact of "concentration." For one thing, Zik is not a

scientific socialist or, in other words, a Marxist-Leninist socialist. It is left for us to examine further his socialist convictions. We tender our argument on the accepted fact that Azikiwe is a man of extensive knowledge. By concentration he has identified with socialist theoreticians on the one hand and enjoyed solace with non-socialists as the need arose. Certainly, his definition of socialism is not fanatical, although one must, in the context of his entire person, accord it all the seriousness due to a translocutor who is committed and informed on what he says. By implication, therefore, he does not repudiate the existence of parastatals and private agents within the state system. What he does not bargain away is responsibility to the state and working according to rules.

Implicit Rejection of Socialism

Azikiwe leaves *ability* as the constant for determining the dispensation of social, *not economic*, services. Here again, all is not economic about man. There are other factors outside the economic which determine the pattern of life in society. When, further, social services which are supposed to be common property are left to differential abilities to dispense and consume, the centre of fundamental socialism is dissolved. Relativity in socio-economics has no place in a centralist socialist state. Decisions are taken by the central bureaucratic machine. One may of course contest that ability can still be measured. It cannot be measured with mathematical accuracy. It cannot even pretend to any total expectation as to information or exactitude. Psychic, psychological, idiosyncratic, environmental, temporal and self-automated orchestration of in-put and out-take abilities condition men's abilities. Political calculus works on inherent probabilities in demonstrable data.

Taken together, Azikiwe's definition hits at the rigidity and regimentation of control. It leaves so much to man's will to give and take, as well as to measure and time, the elements of societal control. In this sense, Zik makes common cause with Saint Simon and other Christian socialists. He shares aspirations with St. Thomas More's *Utopia* which, when reduced to what it really is, is a handshake with emancipated communalism. He has defined socialism. The question is how socialist is Azikiwe's concept of socialism with his demonstrable intent to further its cause as a programmatic ideology for any society? The answer flows from the direction to which he intended his concepts to go in real socio-economic life.

His second definition also deserves attention because it is more orthodox and through-going. For him, socialism is a system of society in which there is no private property. It is also a condition of group living in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state. Two words are novel in this presentation: a *system* (of society) and *condition* (of group living). By implication, a system is comprehensive and would, in consonance with Nicholas Berry's configuration, comprise the economic, integrative and traditional cultural values. One assumes once more that he could not have mistaken the whole system for a part. On this note, his socialism is a total ideology. Condition, however becomes more pliable and indiscriminate. Just as age for him is a state of mind, condition is prysmed through the values of those who accept it. It admits of relative epistemology, morality and anthropology of the group in question.

Condition of group living implies a consensus among those who form the group. They maintain equilibrium by pooling individual consent and implicitly repudiating coercion and alienated competence to shape that condition. Here, Azikiwe makes common cause with Prodhoun, Owen, Christian socialists and Nyerere who, in the end, accommodate, and finally, adopt open democracy with individual freedom as its surest support. It was then only logical for Zik to adopt yet another definition:

A universally acceptable definition explains it as 'a political and economic theory according to which the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned and controlled by the people; everyone should be given an equal opportunity to develop his talents, and the wealth of the community should be fairly distributed.'⁸

By this, Azikiwe excises the political from the economic: and that cancels out Marxist. He introduces ownership by the people. This is democratic socialism (which must respond to the choices of democratic freedom). Furthermore, he postulates opportunity to guarantee freedom of individual development and, implicitly, free competition: and this is liberal democracy; when economically stated, it is liberalism, or liberal capitalism with an underpin of responsiveness to control. Fair distribution of wealth moves socialism to existential ethics and jurisprudence. Fairness and equity are marine masts of competitive cultures and other societal values. Here comes the final link: the salience of situation ethics and the dominance of adaptation and choice. They are crucial to the ideology which Azikiwe really adopts as his own and which has guided his public life.

II. Accusations and Indictments

What many people say he says of socialism is summarized in the following indictment of Azikiwe by Mkwugo Okoye:

You had been secretary of the Howard University Communist Association in 1928, distributed communist literature through your bookshop in Lagos in the 1940's, and contributed to communist-oriented party funds; you have therefore no moral justification for condemning in others what you did in your prime!⁹

Left alone, this indictment would not adequately posture Azikiwe ideologically. The effervescence of student days and the aggressive adventure of youth are normal phenomena in self-asserting radicalism of youth in its struggle for social belonging and recognition. Moreover, to date, associations litter institutions of higher learning, the world over, whose bombastic and eye-catching designations may not necessarily x-ray the dynamics of their internal operations and the authenticity of their commitments. This goes as far as Azikiwe's student days go.

A hurl of seriousness strengthens Mkwugo's indictment: when Azikiwe still carried on his communist-oriented promotions in the 1940's after he had long graduated from the University, worked in the United States, edited a leading paper in Ghana, journalized in Nigeria, and stepped clearly into his middle age. On the other hand, Okoye's indictment leaves the issue of precision of commitment unresolved. Communist-oriented parties encompass all parties that range from the centre to the extreme left: from radical liberals, through welfarists, social democrats, all-commoners socialists, and syndicalists, to scientific socialists and thorough-going anarchists. Briefly put, a communist-oriented party may in fact mean a party that would have been communist but for fundamental reservations as to either the ideological commitments of communism or the programmatic methods of communism, or possibly both. Following on this, it could well be the economic pay-offs of commercialising on communist literature which might urge, even today, the most avid capitalists. It could equally be a negotiating tool in the hands of an open-market political schemer who opts to parade a weapon in a psychological war against a possessive opponent in a bid to share power, advantage or income at a non-profited negotiating table. Thirdly, contribution to a party fund does not, in the search for security or in political craftsmanship, necessarily mean membership of that party or even marginal commitment to it. None of these possibilities would scare an analyst of political behaviour in the

context of competing strategies or stratagems. The question therefore rebounces: does Nnamdi Azikiwe reject socialism?

Pointed Accusations

Our point of rigorous search is the cluster of innuendoes which his erstwhile ardent follower, Mokwugo Okoye, wants to prove his case: that Nnamdi Azikiwe really betrayed the communist or socialist cause by a dramatic revision of posture:

I firmly believe that national interest demands this divesting of vested interests, and any surrender to them is a betrayal of nationalism and socialism. For without divesting the interest, it will be impossible to reorganise our national resources, our trade, finance, industry and manpower training or to raise our people's culture and living standard. There can be no middle ways in the struggle between imperialism and socialism: the nationalist movement may compromise on matters of immediate policy but not on principle, and it is most heinous of crimes to use one's comrades as bargaining counters with imperialism while it is naive to think that one can establish socialism without simultaneous change in structures, consciousness and culture of the old society.¹⁰

Okoye's reinforcement compounds the most intercepting view of Azikiwe the ideologist from his assessors. In terminology, Okoye and his group certainly said communism; but in their historical context, they either meant nationalism or a socialism which was a handmaid of nationalism. In this sense, the two part ways as ideologies. Socialism and nationalism can equally coalesce to shade off clear perception of what the point of contention really is.

The accusations of "vested interests" do not coincide or contradict either nationalism or socialism. On the one hand, one can so internalise socialism that it offers the deepest of self-interests. One can equally become so fired by nationalism that it becomes his utmost self-interest. Economically a lone-ranger, or one in the vanguard, might pursue economic self-interest to fire either a socialist or a nationalist programme. Self-interest is a loaded expression which can be interpreted in many ways to achieve a purpose.

The diffusion in Muokwugo's indictment of self-interest becomes apparent in his application of selflessness which, to him, was germane to the socialist spirit: reorganisation of national resources, trade, finance, industry, manpower development, culture, and living standard. It is not clear that they can be improved or accomplished without some veneer of self-interest.

In ideological parlance, self-interest may mean self commitment, consensual self-interest, panpsychic self-interest, or economic interest of the collectivity.

The assumed fight between imperialism and socialism commands limited credibility, put into the test-coat of nationalist struggles. The American war of Independence, the wars of succession, the Belgian independence struggle and, more lately, the many nationalist struggles in Africa and other nationalist groups in the Third World, at best crowned their aggression with socialist propaganda, declarations and support ending up in non-socialist freedoms and, for what they were, never really took a socialist oath to add more punch to their nationalism.

One may then argue that nationalism and socialism are neither identical nor opposed. If the unifying factor is nationalism, vocal socialists and nationalist strategists are not contradictory or even contrary opposites. Socialism or liberal capitalism could equally serve the same purpose. On this score, the indictment of anti-socialism against Azikiwe hollows off. Might he be emphasizing strategy and tactics while his followers were precipitating a still-born "socialism"? Nnamdi Azikiwe's "betrayal" of socialism might be re-examined from this angle. He attributes his earlier attraction to socialism to his encounters in his youth:

I feel that whilst some Nigerians, who were fascinated by, or indoctrinated into alien ideologies, including myself, meant well; this phase of our mental development can be ascribed mainly to the reality that during our student days, our minds were pliable and impressionable. Our lives were therefore conditioned by behaviour patterns of our intellectual mentors. What some people identify as 'colonial mentality'. This is natural phenomenon and one cannot fairly castigate us, or any other band of zealous reformers, for becoming evangelists of the old and new isms, what have influenced the general pattern of human life everywhere in the world.¹¹

The argument here is that anti-socialism cannot, on the above premise, be advanced as a proven posturing of Nnamdi Azikiwe. There were many 'isms' and nationalism was primary in his calculations. It is on the contrary a pointer to the scrutinizing role which socialism can play in the minds of levellers.

The remonstrations of the betrayed youth, whom Okoye represents, were justifiable on the effervescence of youth. Ikenna Nzimiro felt equally bitter. And yet they were not all. Nduka Eze, Osita Agwuna and their militant compatriots in the Zikist Movement paid painfully for their youthful nationalism when they openly denounced the imperial masters in Glover Hall, Lagos. As they targeted imperialism they equally shot at the imperial conquest of the

economy. A ready weapon for attack was socialism and whatever it could offer. Be it as it may, their ordeal arose more because the colonial officials considered their audacity outrageous and capable of frustrating the imperial destiny. In the context, it was treasonable and they were apprehended. It remains a matter of controversy if Zik urged them to engage the titans. Azikiwe still contends that he cautioned them to be modest and cautious. While they were united in accusing Azikiwe of egregious treachery and betrayal of socialist advances, they did not doubt his ability as a tactician.

The inference therefore is that they viewed Zik's tactical and gradualist approach differently. Azikiwe praised them for their dedication and sacrifice for the national cause, and even acclaimed them "heroes to be ranked with African heroes" who would be accorded preferential and honoured position in public places." He echoed a paradox:

But we must warn the youngsters as ever we had done, that hard work and diligent studies will fetch far richer dividends than high-sounding slogans and plans that fizzle out into a nine days wonder.¹²

Did Zik condemn them? warn them? or challenge them? The answer remains locked in the depths of Zik's enigma, which is his asset and liability in one blow and a two-edged sword. Howbeit, the "socialists" were radicals who wanted to bring down the imperialists savagely. Nnamdi Azikiwe shared their aspirations, albeit socialistic, as is patently stated as follows:

The seething cauldron caused by man's dominion over man with its demoralizing effect has created a militant spirit which was generated by a desire to give battle to the authors of our unenviable fate. But the troops were an aggregation of ebullient humanity whose patriotism could never be in doubt, even though they lacked the experience of war strategy. Throwing all caution to the wind, this band of noble warriors charged the Maginot Line of colonialism unmindful of the consequences.¹³

They were however united with Azikiwe in their common struggle against imperialism. After all, he upheld the French revolutionary marshal principle:

The tree of liberty grows only when watered by the blood of tyrants.¹⁴

True to his nature, he visited the incidents and, on July 7, 1950 Zik was able to say:

In truth, my faith in Great Britain has waned and I am compelled to admit openly my belief that freedom for Nigeria can no longer be expected to come to us easily without tremendous sacrifice. I shudder at this thought but history has yet to convince me otherwise.¹⁵

The revolution, once inaugurated, moves with a bandwagon. Nnamdi Azikiwe could never exempt himself from this near-universal behavioural law. He had at least toyed with the serious concepts of socialism, and even if he paid it lip service, he could not have committed its central themes to the dust bin of his political calculations.

Socialism continued informing him and occasionally took control of the better part of him. He might have not admired Lenin or Stalin, he nevertheless called socialist tactics and ideas to his efforts and ransom. Azikiwe surely adhered to the utilitarian dimensions of socialism. His followers might have earlier accepted him as a socialist irrespective of the counterpersuasions of historical factors. Azikiwe, on his part, sympathised with their ideological zest, although he never fully empathized with their consuming dedication to socialism at all costs. This however does not settle the question restfully. The streak for treachery must be addressed and, if with some merit, away from the disarming personality of Nnamdi Azikiwe. Did Azikiwe betray the socialist cause even to the point of "condemning in others what you did in your prime" and thus incriminate himself by using "one's comrades as bargaining counters with imperialism"?

Our submission is that, from the aforementioned thus far, the charge of betrayal appears overstated and in fact gratuitous. Scattered and occasional admirers of socialism are not thereby socialists. Socialism is a comprehensive paradigm for social development, transformation or construction. It is equally an aggregate for revolution and radical reformation. It is not, by this, a reckless ideology. It has ideas, co-ordinated ideas; policies with programmes. It has strategies for achieving its goals; it provides equipment both to inflict and ward off onslaughts; it is rooted in the cyclical realities of history — timing its offensives and consolidation and jealously guarding itself against disintegration and mass suicide. This is where conviction and enthusiasm can part ways. Azikiwe, one would believe, was conscious of these forward and backward thrusts intrinsic to socialist survival. Armed with his knowledge of nationalist struggles, he took his time. That was the real difference. He could not be 'betraying' his followers when he admitted that Mokwago Okoye and other well-meaning youthful "socialists (or is it nationalists?) merited the accolade of "heroes to be ranked with African heroes," and went ahead to emphasize: "but we must warn the youngsters *as ever we have done* (emphasis mine) that hard

work and diligent studies will fetch far richer dividends than high-sounding slogans and plans that fizzle out into a nine days' wonder".¹⁶

To inflict injury is laudable. To win a battle is gallantry. But to win the war, even after losing battles, is vindication of marshal courage and artistry. The one group concentrated on winning one battle (after the other perhaps, provided the battered enemy failed to regroup), the one man in the dock probably concentrated on winning the war against capitalistic imperialism and oppression. The former were strategists, the latter was perhaps a master strategist whose effectiveness and consistency we shall examine critically.

III. Azikiwe's Score of Socialism

A polemicist of the interdisciplinary behavioural school, Nnamdi Azikiwe dialogues favourably with socialism in the following terms:

1. He concedes that socialism prescribes fair distribution of wealth, a fraternal — co-operative commonwealth as against a paternal and patronising distribution of power and resources.
2. Socialism wields power to remedy the ills of injustice and wastefulness which perjure the capitalist system.
3. Socialism applies scientific and rational control of the economic needs of society. By this, the needs of society could be accurately estimated and the available land and capital fairly apportioned.
4. Socialism prevents unnecessary competition and duplication in the economy.
5. Socialism applies the collective regulation of social and economic affairs of the entire philosophy of *laissez-faire* (which makes the fit to survive and eliminates the unfit — we add: the disadvantaged).
6. Socialism had a thorough-going hospitality to class divisions and its aspiration towards a 'classless society.'
7. It admits varieties

Socialism cannot be defined in a sentence or a paragraph because it is fundamentally not a system but a movement which has taken, and will doubtless continue to take, diverse forms from country to country and under the influence of particular theorists and practical experts.¹⁷

8. Traditionally, socialism stands for 'democracy' but democracy can be conceived of in so many different ways that the word, by itself, is not of much help. It does provide the clue to the deep

division that exists today between Communism and the Socialism of the Western countries.

9. Western Socialism is in the last analysis "Utopian" rather than "Scientific". Means to the good life for the individuals who make up human societies and not a distinct outcome of a predetermined historical evolution that lies outside the individual control for Communism is a rule of a class, the working class as the representative champion of the underprivileged."¹⁸

10. The chief merit of Socialism is the focussing of spotlight on the need to reform the capitalist system. In fact, socialist thought has succeeded in arousing common consciousness that, today, most capitalist countries have become transformed into what would be described as socialist society at the beginning of this century. Socialism has compelled many capitalist states to have nationalized land, and enactment of laws: vesting the state with ownership of mineral rights.

11. More accomplishments are in the pioneering of co-operative ventures. It has put into service the Post Office, telegraphs, telephones, coinage, docks, harbours, markets, forestry, water and electricity, and parastatals.

12. Most importantly "the organised attack of socialist opinion has been an effective instrument in urging other parties to be active in social measures."

13. It has crowned its achievement by introducing scientific social planning:

The anarchy of economic life disappears and its place is taken by conscious determination of all the production processes — the plan.¹⁹

One thing is clear from the above eulogies: that Nnamdi Azikiwe (at least theoretically) acknowledges the merits and achievements of Socialism. Is he against socialism? The deduction will begin to crystallize when the *shortcomings* of socialism are also considered:

1. Although as an economic philosophy it is a crusade against poverty, politically it is a struggle to wield power.

2. Private ownership and control of property is not morally wrong. Moreover socialism uses force to commandeer socio-economic change.

3. The capacity of the state as manager is overestimated because of inefficiency due to bureaucratic nature of socialist states' administrative machinery. Government is in a better position to

regulate and control business, but certainly it is incapable of managing business competently and effectively.

4. Often intrusive factors of tribalism, nepotism and corruption have made socialist management disappointing.

5. Most disorganising is the multiplicity of schools of thought which propagate it: Utopian, Christian, Marxist, Guild, Fabian, Democratic-Socialists, and what have you. Evolutionaries, Revolutionaries, Scientific Socialists, Idealists, Visionaries, Revolutionists, Reformists, Reactionaries, Feudalists, Petty Bourgeois, Conservative, and Capitalist Socialists.

6. Nnamdi Azikiwe argues that this near-endless fragmentation of socialist corps destroys its viability and credibility as an ideology. It is yet feeling around for identity, integration and personality. Therefore the effectiveness of socialism suffered mortality.

Illustrating from the British experience Azikiwe categorically states:

The history of socialism in England is a classic example of ineptitude. After the short-lived Ramsay MacDonald regime in the early thirties, the British electorate gave the Labour Party a fair chance in 1945, but preoccupation with internal dimensions, schisms and other doctrinaire exercises so distracted the attention of the Labour Party that they were able to survive for only one tenure of office. I surely wish them a more propitious future.²⁰

7. In Socialist states, Zik maintains, the pattern of nationalism thrives, political chieftains reign unchallenged, and they together make the road to socialism babelian and confused. Even the more centralist Marxian Socialism promotes totalitarianism, polarisation, clanishness, name-calling such as Marxist, Leninist, Trotskyist, Stalinist, Titoist:

These have been so confusing that some sympathizers of this humanist ideology have been perplexed and disillusioned. Mass movements are invariably the seed beds of extreme individualism among its leaders, but in the case of socialism it has amounted almost to *hara 'kiri*.²¹

8. Socialists are always critical but not constructive. They pay little attention to structures.

9. The shocking paradox is that a humanist ideology, socialism, espouses force, dictatorship and the totalitarian hammer for its imposition.

10. Human beings are not so altruistic. Eastern Europe bears out this indictment:

The degree of element of force necessary to maintain law, order and good government will be determinant factors of the success or otherwise of a socialist democratic government.²²

11. Then common sense, reason and experience, evidenced in the internal individual, escapes from socialist territories to freedom, clinch the argument against socialism. The perversity of man and his capacity for treachery and deceit belie the argument for a centralist system which is allergic to organised dissent:

I am not so optimistic about the prospect of the perfect human beings who will be the workers in the socialist society envisaged. From my limited experience ... I have had the opportunity to come into closer contact with human beings, as rulers, administrators, and the ruled. I was so dumbfounded that I have yet to recover from the shock of my almost losing faith in the goodness of human beings.²³

In the end, how does Zik view Socialism? On the scale of human values, and man as the purpose of societal constructs, it is evident that its refracted concept, unfaithful execution, bashless application of force, muzzling of freedom, socialist impersonal administration, repeated revolts against socialist systems, poor management by the state, the risks of centralism, man's proclivity to incrementing and ossification of power to the detriment of humane existence; socialism, to the point it approximates its original conception, stands rejected as a total ideology. Nnamdi Azikiwe with his continuous evaluation adheres to humane tentacles of socialism; but if the great issues of an ideology are its designation, he reserves all adherence to the socialist ideology and, in an equation of preponderance, Nnamdi Azikiwe consciously rejects socialism, not gratuitously, but because it makes itself objectionable in principle and impracticable in execution. The socialist obstruction is far-flung from the world of reality and human existence. Azikiwe has a pragmatic outlook on life. His earlier attraction to socialism splits rationally along the way:

At this stage I should confess my attraction to socialism since my undergraduate days. I was torn between the adoption of Christian Socialism or Fabian Socialism.²⁴

He later chose Fabian Socialism and made it the guiding philosophy for his political party. (He was still to modify it later). Azikiwe chose it within a thought progression.

We chose the Fabian type of socialism because of its emphasis on constitutional, as distinct from revolutionary, methods in the solution of national problems. Moreover we took fancy in its basic programme of public ownership of certain utilities and reform of contemporary society by bringing about socially desirable changes in the lot of the worker.²⁵

Here again he gives a considerate reason for such an important decision in the socio-political milieu of Nigeria. A collectivity of

peoples: with different cultures, languages, religious and economic orientations, was too amorphous and unorchestrated to absorb the traumata of rapid or sudden change. To do otherwise would have cost him the gains of Nigeria's independence. It would have turned him unarmed against the colonial masters, as it would since have alienated him from trusted contact with the small handful of the wealthy elite who generated thought and controlled social action in a country of peasants, serfs and vassals. To Azikiwe, Nigerians were so heterogeneous: their epistemologies so different and yet persisting to date:

The solution is a synthesis of ideologies and we would have dug deep from our roots to discover this secret of successful coexistence ... A fusion of these sources is ample authority for reorientating and postulating Nigerian ideologies.²⁶

To be more exact, by the end of World War II, Azikiwe had turned to the emancipation of Nigeria from colonial status. Anything was too small to sacrifice for this life's task. The forces of disunity were already too many to cope with, what more with the divisive wizardry of British imperialists. The semblance of a synthetic and acceptable ideology was his option:

Indeed, this is a scaffolding with which Nigeria can build a modern system of democratic government because it is native.

The atrocities of the Bolschevick Revolution, of Hitlerism, Stalinism, National Socialism or Fascism coalesced with the gore of the World War to make any sincere thinker revisit his adulation of totalitarian ideologies. Azikiwe now found in himself a new centre for taking the humane black civilization to the world. So consumed was he:

I am a living spirit of an idea — the idea of a New Africa. I am a living spirit of an ideal — the ideal of man's humanity to man. I am a living spirit of ideology — ideology of the effacement of man's inhumanity to man.²⁷

At this, he came to terms with Nyerere who propounded the Ujamaa "Man is the purpose of all activity. Survival, development is in fact the purpose of society itself. No other purpose above this; no glorification of the nation ..., no increase in production — nothing is more central to a ... society than an acceptance that man is its justification for existence". Zik clinched the argument by admitting that Nyerere's exposition was a great lesson to those Africans

who flirt with this ideology and leave one with the impression that their grasp of its ramifications is superficial ... we state that for us society involves building on the foundations of our past, and building also on our design.²⁸

Azikiwe was definitely shifting from any form of socialism, save democracy. He searched through the amalgam of Nigerian social institutions, delineated, and "forged what can be called Nigerian Democracy and Nigerian Welfarism. In doing so, I have divorced them from the universal roots of democracy, capitalism and socialism. But I am not being dogmatic necessarily about Nigerian ideologies". He aimed at insulating them (Nigerians) from the shocks of certain contemporary doctrines which appear to be alien to our way of life". From a veneer of socialism he did not hesitate to shift remarkably:

In other words I am advocating that we should be serious in the creation of a neo-welfarist state in Nigeria.²⁹

His translation to pragmatism was already invoked. When stated, one sees that he was always out for what would lead to new Africa and a free Nigeria:

I have analysed the problem of ideological commitment and suggested appropriate solutions, the issue is no longer whether capitalism or socialism or welfarism is right. Our main concern is what is right for Nigeria.³⁰

Azikiwe clearly enunciates pragmatism and proclaims it:

Because I studied in the United States when (John Dewey) flourished, I became saturated with his interpretation of pragmatism, which has been my guiding principle of life.³¹

His admiration for John Dewey (1859-1952) has lasted out decades of existential encounters. John Dewey

had no patience with any philosophy that is lost in the wilderness of metaphysics. His main interest was in reconciling human responses to the practical difficulties of human living.³²

The charm of pragmatism lay in its empirical promptness and its relevance to the life and problems in hand, the solution of which would provide the ladder to higher goods and attainments. For "the fundamental conception like 'truth' 'error', 'fact' and 'reality' are meaningless without practical application. Ethically, knowledge is good to the extent of its usefulness. A theory that is impractical is an illusion and not real. Therefore it is useless". As Peirce clearly contested: "To find the meaning of an idea, its consequences must be examined, otherwise its dispute would be endless and futile".

Pragmatism in Welfarism

After digesting literature and experience, Azikiwe came out in concrete terms with his neo-welfarism. It is the practical application of pragmatic choosing and arranging. He selects the best elements in the universally recognised ideologies of capitalism, socialism and welfarism. It comprises: *belief in private enterprise*

reinforced by state participation in the private sector and state collaboration in management technology. It claims competence and efficiency in administering statutory co-operations and parastatals, commercial enterprises, including government award, controlled, sponsored companies.³³

- * A guarantee of constitutional government with the law, safeguarding law and order for the citizens.
- * A guarantee of natural justice, rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights embodied in a written constitution.
- * The reorientation of Nigerian ideologies in these disciplines bound to insulate Nigeria from the shock of contemporary doctrines which appear alien to our way of life.³⁴

IV. Rejection of Socialism

Armed with all the above, Azikiwe repudiates any ideology which went against the African approval of the ownership of private property and encouraged private enterprise. "Why" he asked "should we swallow wholesale any doctrines which purport to indoctrinate us with ideas which are definitely contradictory to our own philosophy of life?" Azikiwe has consistently been himself, heading for his goals of "Renascent Africa and a New Africa". His profession was never ideologism, but he understood ideologies deeply. He has exercised his personal autonomy to the full, reasoned astronomically, and yet down to earth. Socialism means the core elements of socialism. Azikiwe is a liberal democrat, a pragmatic welfarist, with some sympathy with the justifying aspects of socialism. He is not a socialist; consciously not one. His reasons are clear.

He, without apologies, wants problems solved and finds socialism too rigid for coping with the variegated and fast-coming problems that deserve resolution.

It is conceded that government may be in a better position to regulate and control business, but *certainly* it is incapable of managing business completely and effectively.³⁵

He had contact and experience and reasoned as he waded through them with the efficient and effective response which they deserved, and which was possible only with a ready flexibility that

defies the core rules and contentions of socialism. All told, Nnamdi Azikiwe rejects socialism.

Final Placement

Is Azikiwe a fickle ideologist? Changes of attitudes and social beliefs seem to overwhelm his demonstrable tenacity to positions, promises and commitments. Some say he has disappointed and even let down the peoples of Nigeria, Africa and the black world.

In the context of his life development and public career, the suggestions deserve re-examination. Zik did not contradict his initial ideas and ideology at any given time. He would not be scored on what he never appeared for. His life's mission is mirrored in the words of Ras Makonnen.

Azikiwe had been in England before he ever went to America, but he had been in America and much earlier period. Padmore and I knew him when we were there and, as I mentioned, he attended the meetings of the Liberian Institute in the Harlem YMCA. He was already interested in Africa beyond his own Ibo country and was writing on Liberia in world politics. Consequently when the time came for him to go back to Africa, it didn't matter which post he went to, because he saw himself as a spokesman for Africa.³⁶

His assumed duty was to build a *Renascent Africa*, a New Africa on the five principles of spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic integration, mental emancipation, and political resurgence. Any ideology was useful if it helped him achieve this objective even in parts. An Africanist, not necessarily an abstract ideologue, events halted his forward march to his continental goal. But they never killed his continental commitments. The abject conditions of Africa are concrete at all times, and he intelligently engaged them in their own grounds: the platform of realism operating with pragmatic tools of success. Chukwuemeka Ebo understood this point well when he wrote:

Zik consistently bracketed one abstract ideal with its pragmatic opposite: mind with matter, mental reformation with social transformation. This phobia was also responsible for his continuous insistence that his doctrine was nothing more less than a psychological conception which is rooted in a material environment.³⁷

In translating his ideals into practice, V. C. Ikeotuonye observed that "He did not hold forth any Utopian empire of wealth or empire, he merely asked for his hearers, young and old, to experience a revival and stand and work for New Africa." Operating in the context of an ideologically divided world of which Socialism was in bad taste: in his hemisphere, to the Empire, the peoples' traditions,

to the Christian religion, to the desiderata of 'the goodlife,' to the dignity of man, Azikiwe viewed politics as the art of the possible. Knowing that nobody is compelled to bash his head against the impossible, and lose the captain of the ship, to the detriment of his African crew, Azikiwe rejected Socialism.

NOTES

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism*, Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria, 1979, p. 174.
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3. Austin Ranney, *The Governing of Men* Hindsdale, Illinois: The University of Wisconsin, 1971, p. 74.
4. John H. Hallowell, *The Main Currents in Modern Political Thought*, New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1950, pp. 368-369.
5. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1961, p. 17.
6. Nnamdi Azikiwe, quoting Elliot and Summerskill in his *Ideology for Nigeria ...*, p. 268.
7. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria ...*
8. Nnamdi Azikiwe, quoting Elliot and Summerskill in his *Ideology for Nigeria ...*, p. 268.
9. Mokwugo Okoye, *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe* Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1979, p. 143.
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33. *Op. cit.*, p. 174.
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Azikiwe and the Second World War

C. Onyeka Nwanunobi

Nigeria: *Pre Second World War — Socio-economic setting*

The Nigeria Azikiwe returned to in the late 1930's was one which, for the most part, was in the fourth decade of formal colonial experience except for Lagos which was already about seventy years old as a colony. By this time some political parties had been founded. Notable among these was the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which was founded in 1922. However, despite the efforts of such organizations as the Peoples Union and other groups the NNDP controlled politics in Lagos from a period prior to Azikiwe's departure from Nigeria until after his return in 1937. The NNDP resumed its dominance from 1943 to 1948.¹ Such pressure groups as were in existence, the Lagos Market Women for instance, were still not properly organized. They, therefore, dissipated their energies without commensurate results. Herbert Macaulay and his colleagues were vocal but this was more so through their newspapers. Even then, there was a general determination to emulate the white man and his ways. This attenuated the import of any anti-colonial sentiments. Before the 1930s some workers unions had been formed but these were still unlike the latter day unions which derive their strength from the massive force of numerous membership. Some government employees had gone on strike in Lagos as early as 1897² and from 1912 unionisation had emerged in the form of the Nigerian Civil Service Union which agitated for the "war bonus" during the First

World War. These were nevertheless a far cry from the active mass union movements of the years immediately prior to the second world war (1939-1945). Whereas the period before the first world war had been marked by an inconspicuous growth in wage labour and by timid challenges offered by the indigenous peoples in Africa to the colonial authority, the post-first world war period witnessed more determined efforts to confront the colonial system. There was, thus, a general air of ferment to which several forces contributed.

Nigerian soldiers had served in the first world war specifically in the Cameroons, Togo and East Africa to oust the Germans thereby consolidating the survival of the British Empire. After they were demobilized they could hardly produce much that was tangible to show for their service except that, like many wars, this had opened up the sensibilities of those who served. It was a peculiar type of quick and relevant education for the erstwhile soldiers. Their discontent and subsequent agitation for reasonable remuneration added grit to the simmering atmosphere of the 1920s. The general restlessness of the period found expression in the anti tax riots in several places in Southern Nigeria notably among the Egba and in Warri Province and reached its culmination point in the Women's Riots widespread in the eastern sector of Nigeria in 1928 and 1929. The last set of events in this chain of "intermediate resistances"³ dovetailed into the hardships, extensive retrenchments, the uncertainties and the general slump in the economic sector during the Great Depression, 1929-1933. Though workers were by now more vocal than hitherto the Railway Workers Union formed in 1931 seemed to have been sired by the forces of the depression. That union was to render a yeoman's service in several areas of mass mobilisation. Other unions were to follow along that line. The combination of all these forces aggravated the level of restiveness in Nigeria by the mid 1930s. One of the traits of the new decade was the greater level of consciousness among people of African descent everywhere. This was a situation which rendered irrelevant the "old order" leadership which Nigeria had known in its relationship with the colonial government.

It was to this fast changing socio-economic and political environment, full of expectancy and a willingness by the masses to rally around a leader in pursuit of an identifiable national cause that a new set of personalities began to return from studies abroad. Among the foremost of such leaders was Azikiwe.

Azikiwe and the Second World War

By the time Great Britain declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, Azikiwe had already spent two years in Nigeria after his return from the Gold Coast (now Ghana). In the Gold Coast he had worked hard as Editor-in-chief of *The African Morning Post* spreading the cause of nationalism. Back home in Nigeria he moved with ease with the topmost members of the political elite and founded *The West African Pilot* in November 1937. This became the first in Azikiwe's chain of newspapers which covered not only Lagos but also the western, northern and eastern zones of Nigeria. Before then, Lagos had a virtual control of newspaper publication in Nigeria. The establishment of *The Eastern Nigeria Guardian* in Port Harcourt on February 8, 1940; *The Nigerian Spokesman* in Onitsha in 1943; *The Southern Nigeria Defender* in Warri also in 1943 broadened the coverage of events in Nigeria. By founding these newspapers, Azikiwe gave effect to one of the foremost of his ambitions articulated much earlier in his life "... to publish a modern, non partisan daily newspaper of high grade quality ..."4 His bent towards journalism was seriously cultivated in tune with his belief in the dissemination of light to his people, so they will find their way.

As editor of the *West African Pilot* during the second world war, Azikiwe was described as "the spokesman of the most vocal section of advanced Nigerian opinion ..."5 In this role he was contrasted with the character of the Legislative Council of that period for, while the legislature as then constituted was a do-nothing body too eager to approve the measures tabled by the Governor and very loath to show initiative, Azikiwe expressed his opinion regularly. And most of such opinions were realistic albeit moderate. Above all, Azikiwe exerted tremendous influence on young Nigerians of that period. His journalism was courageous. This was especially true of his incisive editorials and the 'Inside Stuff' column in *The West African Pilot*.6 But while Azikiwe was ahead of his peers in Nigeria in the articulation of what was to be done in the area of constitutional improvement, his views on the Nigerian constitution were considered less extreme than many of those expressed by Nigerian students abroad. This was hardly surprising. Compared with the students abroad, Azikiwe in Nigeria was probably more constrained in his suggestions and recommendations by the realities of the problems as judged by the man on the spot. Also, whereas the day-to-day life of Nigerian students overseas intensified the resentment

which the students had for the colonial system, Azikiwe in Nigeria was not subject to these same conditions which not only engendered but sustained radicalism in students abroad. Zik's political philosophy was that of a liberal democrat and constitutionalist. His tendency towards eclecticism and non-revolutionary solutions further restrained his commentaries. Thus, although both these students and Azikiwe realized the unwillingness and, indeed, the inability of non-Africans to liberate Africans, Azikiwe preferred a less drastic philosophy of action. He was not a recent convert to this philosophy for before he left the United States, he had declared: "I am returning not to stir my people blindly to mutiny; nor do I wish to inject in them the proletarian philosophy of Marxism on the perpetual existence of warfare between capital and labour".⁷ Faithful to his enunciated policy, Azikiwe played down the advice of Ladipo Solanke who, in 1940 as Secretary General of the West African Students' Union (WASU) had urged the leaders in Nigeria including Azikiwe to ask "for more than they thought reasonable so that the British Government in conceding that demand would at least grant enough concession which would amount to an advance over the existing situation".⁸

Azikiwe got into politics "reluctantly" for it was never his intention to become a politician.⁹ His first attraction in this direction was the Nigerian Youth Movement which he joined in 1938. In contradistinction to the much older NNDP, the NYM was identified with a programme whose components covered such issues as the reform of the electoral franchise, the opening up of top civil service posts to Nigerians, the reform of education and local governments as well as an entire range of social, economic and cultural desiderata. Youth, especially when broadly defined, had for a very long time, held a fascination for Azikiwe. This fascination had found expression in his publication — *Renascent Africa*. Among the numerous qualities of youth, as outlined by Azikiwe, was that youth was the dynamic aspect of society which enables society to be progressive.¹⁰ Moreover, "historically politics is the game of youth".¹¹ In many regards, the NYM symbolized for Azikiwe the umbrella under which the youth and their ideas may be profitably put to work in that historical period. That party was far in advance of its rival the NNDP in many ways. Nevertheless, the NYM did not clearly articulate any programme for wresting political power from the colonialists and wielding it for the good of the people. Though Azikiwe was numbered among the better known members

of that party he was still far from the generally acclaimed leader and nationalist which time and events were to make of him.

In 1941, Azikiwe renounced his NYM membership along with several members of the party and pitched his tent in the NNDP camp. That was the earliest of the crises in which he found himself in the field of politics into which he had entered unenthusiastically. The immediate cause of leaving the NYM, a disagreement over the party candidate to be fielded in the elections then imminent, did not concern Azikiwe directly but the controversy was fundamental as it pitted the executive against the general membership. It was, for Azikiwe, a blow delivered in support of democratic principles as he took a stand against the executive. In this crisis, as in others yet to come, Azikiwe was guided by his experience in the area of sports competitions. From his earlier activities in numerous contests he had learned "this most important lesson of lessons: the crowds on the side lines will always praise a winner and crown him with laurels. As for a loser, no matter if he had previously won all his races, he would always be the butt of jokes."¹²

The result of the 1941 NYM crisis was that the party was torn asunder and virtually ceased to exist. But this was not an ordinary crisis for, as has been observed already, the NYM was the party of youth and had been the hope of many nationalists. Its imminent destruction was analysed by leading Nigerians of the period as inimical to the healthy growth of nationalism. This realisation facilitated the willingness with which several groups responded to the call to tackle the threat posed by the crisis to nationalism in Nigeria. This led to the formation of the Nigerian Reconstruction Group in 1942. This was a broad based group which had room also for the NYM or what was left of it. The main objective was to fashion out a national body which should spear head and co-ordinate the responses of nationalists to the policies of the colonial administration. Following protracted meetings and consultations by diverse groups and considering the need to respond quickly to a battery of outstanding problems among which was the King's College crisis, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) was formed on August 26, 1944. Azikiwe was to play a more important role in the NCNC than he had previously done in any political party. After all, he was the Secretary General, next only to H. H. Macaulay who was the President and from whom he took over following the latter's death.

Throughout the Second World War Azikiwe combined his role as journalist with that of the politician. In an age when the colonial administration could afford to ignore the Legislative Council which, in any case, had a large majority of officially nominated members, Azikiwe made greater impression than the council in criticising the system of administration and in trying to spread the idea of nationalism and race consciousness among Nigerians. He was eminently successful in this role for even within official circles which had every reason to disparage his efforts in this regard, it was admitted that he possessed "a remarkable range of powers (and was) able to talk with conviction and effect to Europeans and Americans and at the same time he is a master of mass psychology and the art of addressing himself to the young radicals of the Nigerian towns".¹³ It was during those war years that Azikiwe wrote a series of articles on the Constitution and made specific and far-reaching recommendations. In respect of the activities of the Legislative Council of the period (early 1940s) which he assessed as making no real contribution to the onward march of the country, Azikiwe wrote:

The deliberations are meaningless from a political point of view. The debates on the Estimates are fanciful, for obvious reasons, the tenure of nominated members is insecure since they hold office at the pleasure of the Governor. The tenure of office of the elected members is an affront to the political susceptibilities because the electors have no right of initiative or referendum for the renunciation of an undesirable representative until after a long period of five years.

In this situation, therefore, Azikiwe continued:

A minority vote is given more representation than the majority vote ... The unofficial majority is calculated to galvanize fear and suspicion in the social fabric.¹⁴

After reviewing the representations of the various groups in the Legislative Council, Azikiwe argued that this institution was: "no liberal institution but a veiled oligarchy of the worst description".¹⁵ He denied the usefulness of questioning the government in the Council since the members could not make the government answer questions or have the government censured if it gave unsatisfactory answers. Only a mandate of the people, Azikiwe maintained, could render the Legislative Council more effective. There was also a need to introduce legislation on labour and to reform the criminal code and the franchise. After scrutinising the allocations on the Estimates, Azikiwe questioned the propriety of apportioning huge sums of

money to personal emoluments especially as these were meant for the senior staff — a cadre almost fully European. He also delved into the amounts allocated to European leave payments and the grants to institutions meant for Europeans and found them unacceptable.

For the reform of the legislature specifically, Azikiwe recommended the granting of the franchise to all British subjects and Nigerian nationals who were educated up to standard VI and who paid a minimum income tax of £1. The elected members of the legislature were to have a tenure of five years which could be cut short if three quarters of the members petitioned the Governor-in-Council. The Chiefs in Council should choose the nominated members according to their population. Vested interests should have no representation whatsoever but may be coopted when specific issues concerned them. The legislature recommended by Azikiwe should have an unofficial membership of forty-two, fourteen of whom should be elected. Only fourteen official members plus the Governor should sit in such a legislature. Finally, the Governor's power of veto should remain but could be overridden by a vote of more than three quarters of the membership of the legislature.

Azikiwe's 1941 suggestions for restructuring the legislature and enhancing the people's participation in their governance were clearly in advance of the thinking of this peers. They were specific and clearly enunciated. A more detailed assessment of these recommendations is reserved for a later section of this essay but even then the evaluation should be made within the context of the Nigeria of that period, the pressures of the war emergency and the forces which advised caution in spite of the exhortations of the London based WASU.

But while the war was still raging, Azikiwe's newspapers, like others, were making valuable contributions towards the success of the British Empire by giving publicity to the government's appeal to able bodied Nigerians to join the army. Furthermore, Azikiwe was among the numerous nationalists who undertook to tour the country to drum up enthusiasm for the war effort and to get their compatriots to enrol for service. While these activities were going on, the population could not be totally oblivious of the severe hardships especially as these touched the basic needs, particularly food. It was true that in its effort to minimize the pressure on food prices government had incorporated price control stipulations into the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act of 1939. A more specific set of

regulations on the control of the price of food was introduced in 1943. Under these regulations the Pullen Markets were meant to sell local staples at control price thereby causing a downward trend in the price of private sellers. These markets, however, could not produce the desired effects and it soon became clear to the government that regardless of the willingness of a people to make sacrifices even for causes which they consider their own there is always a breaking point in these considerations. The cost of living was rising phenomenally and something needed to be done. After a long time of self-denial and forbearance, Nigerian workers were poised to act.

By the end of 1940 the number of wage earners was put at 4,623 represented in 14 trade unions. By December 1941 the number had increased to 17,521 in 41 trade unions.¹⁶ This rapid increase alone could be an ominous sign but the situation was made more serious by the distress caused by the war time economy to the most organized group of Nigerians of that time. The restiveness of workers forced the government to set up the Bridges Committee in 1941. Among other recommendations the Committee awarded the workers a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). This, however, turned out to be barely a stop-gap measure and its inadequacy as the years went by constituted a major item in the list of grievances.

Many commentators on the events of the Second World War believe that the last two years of that war relative to Nigeria would have been more peaceful but for the arrival of Sir Arthur F. Richards who replaced Sir Bernard Bourdillon as Governor of Nigeria in 1943. Though Azikiwe had had skirmishes with government officials and viewpoints prior to the arrival of Sir Arthur Richards, the tenure of the new Governor represented a period of greater tribulations for Azikiwe. In many ways Sir Arthur Richards was high handed and uncompromising. His style provoked a chain of reactions associated from the start of his tenure with his unwillingness to discuss a review of the COLA in any useful way. Then followed the King's College crisis of 1944. It is true that the discontent of these students over victuals and general upkeep antedated Sir Arthur's arrival, nevertheless he was in Nigeria for barely one year when the students went on strike. His reaction in conscripting the ringleaders into the army was unprecedented. The response of the nationalists to this high-handedness was the determination to close ranks and hammer out a political organization which could co-ordinate and spear head the answers to the threat

posed by the new Governor. The NCNC was born of this effort and, as has already been noted, Azikiwe was a key figure in that new political party where he was second only to Herbert Macaulay whom he later succeeded.

The King's College episode was hardly over when in March 1945, Sir Arthur Richards generated another crisis by introducing, without consultation, what later formed the essential parts of the Richards Constitution. Such provisions of the new constitution as the principle of regionalism and the entrenchment of unofficial majority in the legislature were opposed by Azikiwe and the NCNC. As if these issues were not enough provocation, Sir Arthur introduced in the legislature what has become known as the 'obnoxious bills'. These made a four pronged attack on the economic factors and values which until then had not been thus assaulted. With one stroke the colonial government empowered itself to acquire titles to minerals and lands in Nigeria and appropriated unto itself the power to make and unmake the chiefs. Nationalists of all hues opposed both the constitution and the 'obnoxious bills' but whereas the NYM adopted a "stay-home and fight" tactics, the NCNC decided to undertake an all Nigeria tour as a prelude to a London tour during which the party planned to present their viewpoint on the constitution and the bills to the ultimate authority in the colonial system. Azikiwe was a prominent member of that delegation which is outside the time frame of this chapter.

The formation of the NCNC in 1944 — an event which also occurred during the tenure of Sir Arthur Richards — brought closer the contact between several organizations. As one of the truly mass party organizations in the then Nigeria, the NCNC attracted active support from workers. Azikiwe had never subscribed to a "radical philosophy". Rather he had been an avowed liberal. He also loathed any thought of a "bloody revolution" and appreciated fully the futility of armless Africans staging a non-profitable revolution.¹⁷ During the 1945 General Strike, however, Azikiwe's pragmatism was given full rein for he seized the opportunity to consolidate his status among the beleaguered Nigerian workers by identifying with them generally and with their President Michael A. O. Imoudu in particular. The premium derived from this action carried Azikiwe through critical periods for quite some time. James Coleman asserts that Azikiwe emerged from that event with increased prestige and a reputation as the champion of labour.¹⁸ His pro-labour role during the 1945 General Strike which lasted forty-four days in Lagos and

as long as fifty two days in outlying parts of the country was acclaimed even by the radical West African Students' Union (WASU) in Great Britain and Ireland. Riled by the resolve of Nigerian workers to sustain the strike, in spite of the Government Order of October 1942, under the Nigerian General Defence Regulations which had made strikes and lockouts unlawful throughout the war, Sir Arthur Richards decided to look beyond the workers' unions for the real inspiration behind the strike. Azikiwe and his newspapers became the scapegoats. Two of the newspapers, *The West African Pilot* and *The Daily Comet* were banned for almost six weeks beginning from July 8, 1945. The alleged threat to deport Azikiwe and an alleged plot to assassinate him came very soon on the heels of the ban of the newspapers and evoked widespread resentment of the activities of the colonial administration. WASU denounced the colonial authorities and were joined in this condemnation by organizations and personalities even in the United States. In the light of the impression which Azikiwe's support for the strikers created even outside Nigeria some credit ought to be given to the claim by *The Daily Comet* before the ban that "the consensus of opinion in the provinces was, and still is, that Nnamdi Azikiwe engineered and inspired the strike".¹⁹

When the second world war ended in the Japanese sector in September 2, 1945 thus marking the cessation of hostilities in all the theatres of combat it was as if the stage were merely set for future economic and political confrontation between the colonial government and the Nigerian people. Azikiwe was thrust into the centre of the impending controversy for even by the end of 1945 none of the key issues with which he identified himself had been resolved. Since the 1943 London visit arranged by the British Council for some West African journalists including Azikiwe he had become painfully certain that "Nigeria has very few friends in England".²⁰ Thereafter he had grown a trifle more inclined to radicalism. But the road was still unclear. Also, in spite of reassurances, Azikiwe was unsure of his personal safety after the alleged threat of assassination. And the Governor, Sir Arthur Richards, having trivialized Azikiwe's fears with cultivated sarcasm was as ever determined to have his way. It was certain, for instance, that the governor was still manipulating his recent constitutional proposals which would later take on the name of Richards Constitution. On another front, the aftermath of the General Strike had forced the workers and the government to feel their way

carefully as the major demands which caused the strike were yet to be met.

However, further development in these issues with their social, economic and political consequences lie outside the scope of the present essay. It should be observed, however, that the London Delegation of a later period, the preparation for it and the composition of the membership serve to underscore the priority which Azikiwe placed very early in his political development on the need to cultivate a broad based support. He certainly had this support in his journalistic and political activities during the Second World War.

Assessment

An assessment of what Azikiwe should have done or did or did not do is necessarily an *ex post facto* exercise. However, in so far as Azikiwe towered above most of his contemporaries and assumed the leadership role in varying degrees at various times his career is not only a public issue but may also be scrutinized from the position of hind thought as of some value to the future of the nation. For the respect and admiration it did, and is still prepared to, shower on deserving leaders the public may take the liberty to examine their leaders' performance as an area of high interest. All the same, a useful assessment should benefit from the recognition of the value system relevant to the period. This ensures that an actor is not assessed through the touchstone of a different and strange era.

Of the Nigerian political elite when Azikiwe returned to Nigeria, it has been observed that these members of "the old order" were mostly "opportunists who took advantage of the painless acquisition of wealth and, their objectives achieved, either confined themselves to their narrow ways or expanded with disgusting greed the avenues by which further wealth could be acquired; it (the old order) consisted chiefly of doctors more interested in house-building than in efficient practice of medicine; of religious ministers who preached to their congregation the virtues of the simple life but easily out-mammoned Mammon in their private lives; of lawyers eager to win wealth more by foul than fair means". It may not be valid to hold that such a group determined Azikiwe's attitude towards the acquisition of wealth as soon as he returned to Nigeria. His propensity in this direction was fully expressed much earlier in his New Year resolution for 1934. The second item in that resolution had articulated his determination "to earn an honest livelihood,

henceforth I shall devote my energies either to work on my own or to work for others, with the sole aim of accumulating wealth to ensure that I shall never be in want".²² This resolution sprang from his experiences in severely reduced circumstances in the United States. The bleakness of his condition had almost resulted in suicide in Pittsburg.

We may observe that the need to accumulate wealth was a factor which accounted for his reluctance to get into politics. "I have always regretted my incursion into active partisan politics," Azikiwe informs posterity, "and have never been happy that I yielded to this sentimental decision. I am thinking of the contradictions of an avowed idealist in politics, but at the practical level the prosperity of my newspapers suffered".²³ Nevertheless, having decided for politics, the urge to accumulate wealth still seemed to protrude through many of his actions even when his followers would have wished otherwise. Some of his less friendly contemporaries called Azikiwe's "commercial journalism" — a term which was not complimentary then as the newspapers of those days were not money making ventures. In any case, Azikiwe would not quarrel with the term as he had set out to "demonstrate that journalism can be a successful business enterprise ..."²⁴ But Azikiwe was not an ordinary journalist. He was also an acclaimed political leader from whom followers expected a higher standard of behaviour than they would of ordinary businessmen. Besides, the two roles were not clearly separated in Azikiwe with the result that the followers' expectations were liable to be mixed up to the detriment of their leader. It may be suggested that Azikiwe should have jettisoned the relevant aspect of his 1934 New Year resolution as soon as he got into politics. We need to observe, though, that he needed the business side of his activities to sustain his role as a politician but the two role ought to have been clearly kept apart.

Throughout the relevant period under discussion Azikiwe remained true to his liberal viewpoint. And even though he had become more inclined to radicalism after 1943 this hardly altered his behaviour. True, he was on the side of the workers in his effort to build up the nationalist front but he had never been revolutionary. Nor did he subscribe to the necessity of constant conflict between capital and labour and the underlying implication of violent confrontations. Some of the more zealous of his followers, however, were much in advance of Azikiwe in appropriating as their strategies the tools of violence. Given his antipathy towards violence

and revolutionary action, Azikiwe felt he had to denounce such over-zealous followers. He ought to have foreseen, however, that his courtship with the Youthful and his deprecation of the old²⁵ would lead to violent incidents. Should he have run the gauntlet so early in his career? This was not what his philosophy advocated. But not to supply such a support to his followers when the expectation was strong weakened his status.

The assessment of Azikiwe's role as journalist in the Second World War period showed that he was an acclaimed and effective communicator. Not only was he persuasive, he also had a knack for homing in on the crucial issues of the day. His favourite column 'Inside Stuff' in *The West African Pilot* was popular and incisive. Azikiwe's writings contributed immensely towards the political education of the population and especially of the Youth of that time. There are, however, insinuations from many quarters that his action fell short of his writings and demagoguery. This is an allegation deriving from Azikiwe's combination of two roles — the journalist and the politician. It ought to have been clear to him, however, that in that young era of fiery nationalism, the Jekyll and Hyde role was damaging to any leader. The realization that followers in such contexts would expect their leaders to take them even into violent situations should have tailored the pronouncements to the real action. It cannot be seriously held that although he had meant to show the light so the people would find the way,²⁶ as the motto of the *West African Pilot* stated, that he wished to do this from distance. This course of action could lead to a less than felicitous ending for, as has been observed long ago, there could be many a slip between the cup and the mouth. Thus, in spite of the light shown, the people may move in directions other than the one desired. Azikiwe himself seemed to appreciate this problem fully and recognized that "the man who holds the light leads the way ... he confidently moves ahead followed by others who entertain no doubt about his integrity".²⁷

On his strategy towards the colonial system it was observed that Azikiwe and his disciples in the legislature did not carry into the Council the violence which characterized their public criticism of government actions and proposals. Some critics saw in this strategy the early signs of a tendency in Azikiwe as a politician to recoil from a situation when action mattered most. Mkwugo Okoye, for instance, recalled Azikiwe's declaration as Party President some years after the Second World War. In that declaration he deprecated

the failure to reconcile theory with practice. "Such a failure" Azikiwe had maintained "renders our professions as mere platitude. But it is even more than that: we create a spirit of bitterness and a sense of frustration in our youth."²⁸ Such arguments on the need to match theory with action assumed greater importance in the post second world war period and have constituted for some, especially erstwhile Zikists, an enduring reason for their disillusionment. "After preaching revolution for a decade", says Okoye, Azikiwe "was terrified when he saw one".²⁹

Olusanya states that in 1943 Ladipo Solanke, the Secretary General of the West African Students' Union (WASU) in Great Britain and Ireland wrote to Azikiwe and a few other nationalists urging them to ask for "Self Government Now."³⁰ What could Azikiwe have done towards the achievement of this goal at that time? We recall that that was the year in which the British Council arranged for the visit of some West African journalists to London. Proposals for better government of the West African colonies were made by Azikiwe and the others but these were not even seriously discussed. This had disillusioned Azikiwe as to the genuineness of our professed friends in England. We recall also that 1943 marked the start of the tenure of Sir Arthur Richards and the battery of crises which attended his style of government. With regard to the by then moribund Legislative Council, we have already noted that Azikiwe's suggestions for improvement were far in advance of the ideas of most of his contemporaries who, in the main, nursed whatever affinity they thought they had with the colonial personnel. And in any case, most of the members were appointed by the government. The possibility of carrying such opinions with him at that time might have seemed remote to Azikiwe. A more realistic line of action seemed that of sensitizing the population to the issues at stake, increasing the level of consciousness among the people and strengthening the organization thereby laying a firm foundation for the take off of the nationalist movement towards eventual self government. Further developments in this regard lie outside the second world war period and, therefore, beyond the scope of this chapter. Later developments, however, suggest that the difficulty encountered in persuading a large section of this country to ask for self-government more than one decade after the second world war indicate that the hope of achieving this status in 1943 was misplaced.

Azikiwe's preoccupation with universalistic principles has also come under attack at various times. It should be remembered, however, that even before he left Nigeria his experience was more national than local. In addition to being born in Zungeru he had acquired his early education in Onitsha (his home), Lagos and Calabar. His early circle of friends reflected this broad background. Reinforcing this experience was the fact that the period when Azikiwe was acquiring formal education in the United States was one conditioned by the global teachings of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and the Pan African Movement. Azikiwe came under this strong influence very early in his sojourn. Relative to the scope of these all encompassing organizations, the West African Students' Union (WASU) was restrictive yet Azikiwe identified it as nearer the supra-ethnic movements he was acquainted with in the United States. At that stage he could not tolerate nationalism truncated along territorial lines since he felt that was divisive of racial sentiment. More specifically, Azikiwe maintained that: "The West African colonies have a common foe ... so long as we think in terms of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia, and not as one United West Africa we must be content with a Colonial Dictatorship instead of a Government of the people, by the people, for the people — namely Democracy."³¹

On his return to Nigeria, Azikiwe strove to apply universalistic ideas to national problems. It was not his fault entirely that here again he ran ahead of the pack. In view of what happened subsequently in Nigeria, many critics would have preferred a more parochial approach in the belief that charity begins at home. Azikiwe's rivals were certainly more noted for what may be likened to a brand of agoraphobia as they were ill at ease in a wider Nigerian setting. In view of his wish to operate on the national plain Azikiwe could not have done better during the period under discussion. He was not unaware of a home base for he retreated to his home on the Niger when he feared assassination in 1945. Nevertheless, he remained "semi-ethnocentric" and this situation could leave the occupier in a state of being neither fish nor fowl. Also as events were to show later the arena of effective action kept shrinking while his universalistic ideas remained unchanged.

Although Azikiwe's arrival on the Nigerian scene as a journalist and politician predated the formal inception of the second world war by two years, it was during the war years that he settled down to start making his mark. During that period, Azikiwe established a

reputation as an effective critic of the colonial government rivaled only by a few of his contemporaries. His observations and recommendations in the early 1940's led to accelerated constitutional development in Nigeria. His ability to galvanize the heterogeneous organizations and individuals to react directly to issues albeit through his writings and speeches was acclaimed even in the colonial official circles. More directly, his style and contribution in this regard represented the highest development of the application of mass psychology to the propagation of nationalism up to the end of the second world war. His single greatest contribution to African Revolution is perhaps his ideas in *Renascent Africa* (1937) whose message was as relevant in the Gold Coast and Nigeria as it was elsewhere on the continent. The book which reserved a special place for the youth contained exhortations for the upliftment of the consciousness of the African, the need for 'spiritual balance', mental emancipation as well as purposeful exertions in the social, economic and political spheres. An earlier hope to contribute directly to African development by serving either in the Liberian or Ethiopian Diplomatic Services was dashed. Yet Azikiwe completed and published his widely acclaimed book: *Liberia in World Politics* (1934).

Back in Nigeria, Azikiwe's additional contribution to African revolution is better garnered through his successes in Nigerian politics and journalism through which political awareness reached even the outlying districts. Such was Azikiwe's stature in this regard beginning from his career in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) that Coleman's conclusions retain their validity to the effect that: "During the fifteen-year period, 1934-49, Nnamdi Azikiwe was undoubtedly the most important and celebrated nationalist leader on the West Coast of Africa; if not in all tropical Africa."³² In spite of the pressures of the war effort on the Nigerian population, the 1939-45 period saw the inception and phenomenal rise in Azikiwe's activities in Nigerian politics. There were challenges but these were met in a generally satisfactory manner. Azikiwe's image during this period (1939-45) was admirable. Greater challenges lay beyond.

NOTES

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, Lagos, 1937, p. 5.
2. A. G. Hopkins, "The Lagos Strike of 1897: An Explanation in Nigerian Labour History," *Past and Present* 35, pp. 133-55.
3. Basil Davidson, *The African Genius*, Boston, Little Brown and Co. 1969 p. 253.
4. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, p. 162.
5. John Wheare, *The Nigerian Legislative Council*, London: Faber and Faber, 1949 p. 164.
6. Mokwugo Okoye, *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe: A Dissent Remembered*. Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers 1979, pp. 3-4.
7. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, p. 162.
8. Quoted in G., Olusanya "The West African Students Union and Nigerian Politics" *Nigeria Magazine*, 132-133, p. 40.
9. James O. Ojiako, *Zik is 76: 76th Birthday Anniversary Celebration of Chief the Rt. Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe*, P. C., The Owelle-Osowa of Onitsha, Times Press, Apapa, 1980 p. 19.
10. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa* 1937 p. 19.
11. *Ibid.* p. 20.
12. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*. p. 94.
13. Wheare, *The Nigerian Legislative Council*, p. 59.
14. Extracts from *The West African Pilot*, May and June 1941 Quoted in Wheare *op. cit.* pp. 162-3.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Wogu Ananaba, *The Trade Union Movement in Nigeria*, Benin City: Ethiope Publishing Corp. 1969, p. 26.
17. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, p. 162.
18. James Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 259.
19. Quoted in Ananaba. *op. cit.* p. 58.
20. James Coleman, *op. cit.* p. 241.
21. Quoted in Mokwugo Okoye, *Storms on the Niger: A Story of Nigeria's Struggle*. Enugu Forth Dimension Publishers 1981, p. 74.
22. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, p. 175.
23. Nnamdi *Ibid.*, p. 313.
24. Nnamdi *Ibid.* p. 291.
25. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*
26. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*, pp. 290-291.
27. *Ibid*
28. Quoted in Okoye, *Storms on the Niger*. p. 110.
29. *Ibid* p. 122.
30. Olusanya "The West African Students' Union and Nigerian Politics". *Nigeria Magazine*, 132-133 p. 40.
31. *West African Pilot*, July 21, 1938. Quoted in James Coleman *op. cit.* p. 222.
32. Coleman, *op. cit.*

The West African Experience

Johnny I. Obiukwu

I. Introduction

A man's history is hardly complete unless it touches on his total life experience, or least, the major influences on his life. This is because a man's history is largely the embodiment of his own life experiences. Moreover, there are usually certain events in a man's life that make so much imprint on him that they can only be ignored at the risk of leaving a visible gap in the account that establishes his authentic history. I would like to attribute such a significance or degree of importance to Azikiwe's West African Experience. What this implies is that when the time comes, Azikiwe's West African Experience would form part of his history.

The task before us is essentially two-fold namely, to make a preview of what could be described as Azikiwe's West Africa and to examine the nature of his experience within it. For clarity of purpose, Azikiwe's West African Experience bears reference to people, activities, incidents or phenomena that tickled or gingered his personal involvement in such a way that any one interested or fortunate to examine the records, must see his footprints and their indelible marks. Again the events under study took place within a specific platform whose impact cannot go without reference. A preview of such a stage becomes pertinent at this point without necessarily going into his bio-data which have been adequately covered.¹

II. Azikiwe's West Africa — A Preview

The image of West Africa today as we know it is not what it was when Azikiwe began his career and operated within it as an actor. It is not that we have a West Africa with different attributes of vegetation, rivers and mountains, but our West Africa of today is not the same as those entities that were viewed merely as "Satellites"² of Europe. There is a geographical region which territorially speaking, falls within the West coast of Africa. It is the base of the ECOWAS community comprising sixteen politically-independent territories with black presidents and indigenous administrators. Azikiwe's West Africa was different from this. As a geographical expression, Azikiwe's West Africa could be related to the same West Coast of Africa, but as a political unit, Azikiwe's West Africa could refer to those entities controlled politically, economically and socio-culturally by the key imperialist states of West Europe such as Britain, France and Portugal. In a sense, Azikiwe's West Africa is now an historical experience just as his own personal experience within it. Essentially, Azikiwe's West Africa is not merely a case of territoriality but also a sociological and historical milieu. These are of course the aspects that should be examined in order to recast the stage within which Zik operated as "Zik of Africa".³

Politically, the individual colonial territories such as Nigeria and the Gold Coast were administered as mere Provinces of large Political communities, namely British West Africa and the British Empire.⁴ Thus, at the time of Azikiwe's arrival, what mattered to the British was its West African extension of the British Empire. In other words, it was West Africa that had more relevance as a political entity than the individual colonial territories that composed the Empire. In a sense therefore Zik was born not strictly a Nigerian in the true sense of the word today, but by colonial definition, a West African. Thus, his earliest influences in life were essentially West African with British orientation.

Apart from a West Africa defined by political platform, there was the economic perspective which guaranteed the application and use of common currency under the British crown designed specifically for the British West African colonies. It was not until the close of British rule in these colonies that this currency was withdrawn.

In the area of education, there was an extensive missionary involvement throughout the British — controlled area by the same

missionary bodies but education was strictly carried on under close supervision of the colonial Authorities with a curriculum duly censored and approved by the colonial Government. In terms of content, the curriculum was a design that was not only meant to propagate the social values and ideology of the British, but also to project and promote the virtues of the British Culture and extol the "British civilization" as the best thing that could happen to the African. Under the imperial education, children were taught the virtues of altruism and patriotism and which meant, from the colonialists' point of view, loving and adoring the British Empire and what it represented. Thus, singing the British National Anthem, celebrating the Empire Day, doing the March past and saluting the Union Jack, were all mandatory as it was compulsory to pay obeisance to British Authorities and administrators. These were no doubt an exercise in social disorientation, at best, a planned institutionalization of false consciousness.

In practical terms, the society which the British erected was the one that was meant to remain perpetually a British dependency and one that would continue to be responsive to British interests. It would remain a class society where the majority of the populace would live in poverty and in which a few individuals could by chance, rise to prominence while the rest would remain effectively marginalized or alienated. Realising these objectives was a responsibility thrust in part, on the colonial educators, colonial authorities and administrators. In all, the excruciating state machinery was used for actual implementation of policies tailored around these objectives.

This was the socio-political environment into which Azikiwe was born. His early education took place within it, and as it were, life held little promise for the British subjects given the background and objective of the colonial mission. Any wonder then that University education was an enterprise blotted out of the colonial education curriculum. Two main reasons account for the educational situation just described. First, the British felt that the colonial subjects could not meet the demands and rigours of University education, and were intellectually unequipped for it. Second, to insist on educating the colonial subjects at great financial costs and beyond the limit of reading and writing would mean to equip the colonized with the instrument with which to challenge and fight British domination and British interests in the region.

However, events proved eventually that civilization was not an exclusive preserve of the British. It turned out to be that the source

of inspiration which tuned up Azikiwe's desire for greater knowledge was not British. Thus, the two main sources of inspiration for the young Azikiwe were black elements, Marcus Garvey and Kwegyir Aggrey. I should not bother my readers by belabouring the account and nature of this inspiration as this has adequately been covered by my colleagues who treated "The Formative Years". It may suffice to just state here that Zik read Garvey extensively, thanks to the introduction of Garvey's works made to Azikiwe by his Yoruba friend.⁵ The sermon which ultimately gingered the young Azikiwe to irreversible decision to go to America came from Kwegyir Aggrey who was quoted as saying, "Nothing, but the best is good for Africa ... If I one of you, could go to the New World and make a man of myself, then you can too ..."⁶

Consequently, between 1925 and 1934 Azikiwe had swam through many rivers, crossed many bridges to acquire the education and knowledge he needed to serve Africa and making generally. Azikiwe returned from America in 1934 to West Africa only to discover that instead of things changing for the better, colonialism and imperialism were eating deeper and deeper into the fabrics of the society. Zik was not discouraged by the magnitude of the task before him. Redeeming his people was a task that must be accomplished. Zik plunged into it unmindful of the consequences.

III. Foundations of the West African Experience

Azikiwe returned to Africa full of enthusiasm to take up a social role in order to make his contribution to the development of his native Africa. He would accept employment in any African country. It would appear that Liberia appealed most to Azikiwe. He had maintained a sustained interest in Liberia right back from Hope Waddel Institute, Calabar, where he got to know from his school mate, a Liberian that in his country, "the President and the governors of the counties were black men; so were all the judges, the law officers and the heads of department in the civil service."⁷

In America, Azikiwe's dissertation was on Liberia. Azikiwe's work, *Liberia in World Politics*,⁸ actually went a long way to place the country in the correct perspective by dispelling some of the wrong notions held about Liberia in the international community. His thesis on Liberia, no doubt, helped in sharpening the perception of black consciousness around the world, particularly in Africa.

In keeping with Azikiwe's interest in Liberia, he desired to work in that country. He sought employment in the Foreign Service of Liberia. Surprisingly, his application was turned down with the explanation that such a post was for Liberians, not foreigners.⁹ When he tried Ethiopia, he received a similar reply. It was then he knew that Africa was divided within. Africans were not thinking of a United Africa with common aims and ideals. Azikiwe felt that what Africans needed urgently was direction. Thus, as soon as he became finally settled, having secured a job as the Editor-in-Chief of *The African Morning Post* in Accra, Gold Coast (now Ghana), he knew that the stage was set for leading an active political life. Azikiwe knew from his study of both politics and journalism that the newspaper, a veritable means of Mass Communication could be used for mobilizing a desired population, and as Bertrand Russell¹⁰ would contend, for securing political power. Nnamdi Azikiwe demonstrated a strong faith in the print medium as a means of mobilizing the populace towards a desired direction.

Thus, from the time Azikiwe took up his post as Editor-in-Chief of *The African Morning Post*, January 1 1935, he directed his writings to a specific focus, and essentially his theme was Africa, its politics and development. Through fiery editorials, articles and commentaries, he attacked the British Colonial government and its obnoxious policies. His articles were also to serve educational roles for the Africans. It was of course a collection of some of those educative articles that was published as a book under the title *Renascent Africa*,¹¹ a book considered like Plato's *Republic*, to be the epic of Azikiwe's Political thought.

It should be pointed out here that all along, Azikiwe's political and nationalistic writings, were being closely monitored by the colonial authorities who naturally, were not at ease. Azikiwe's epic political work was published in 1937. It was during the same period that he was convicted with Isaac Wallace-Johnson over an article in the *Morning Post* regarded by the colonial authorities as seditious.

The publication that brought Azikiwe facing a charge of sedition was actually written by Wallace Johnson who wrote under the pen name "Effective." It was a serious, courageous piece insulated in humour and sarcasm. It was essentially nationalistic in terms and in objective. The contents of the article as outlined in *My Odyssey*¹² together with the meaning to which the colonial Authorities attached to every word or sentence in it are reproduced below:

Personally, I believe the European has a God in whom he believes and whom he is representing in his churches all over Africa. He believes in the

god whose name is spelt deceit. He believes in the god whose law is Ye Strong, you must weaken the weak. Ye 'Civilised' Europeans, you must "civilise" the "Barbarous" Africans with machine guns. Ye "Christian" Europeans, you must "christianise" the "pagan" Africans with bombs, poison gases, etc.

In the colonies the Europeans believe in the god that commands "Ye administrators..." (meaning to include therein the Government of the Gold Coast) "... make Sedition Bill ..." (meaning to include therein the Criminal Code Amendment Ordinance No 21 of 1934 of the Gold Coast) "... to keep the African gagged. Make Forced Labour Ordinance of the Gold Coast to work the Africans as slaves. Make Deportation Ordinance ..." (meaning to include therein the Kofi Sechere Detention and Removal Ordinance No. 1 of 1936) "... to send the Africans to exile whenever they dare to question your authority.

Make an ordinance to grab his money so that he cannot stand economically. Make Levy Bill' (meaning to include therein the Native Administration Ordinance No 25 of 1936 of the Gold Coast Colony) 'to force him to pay taxes for the importation of unemployed Europeans to serve as Stool Treasurers. Send detectives to stay around the house of any African who is nationally conscious and who is agitating for National independence and if possible to round him up in a "criminal frame-up" (meaning thereby a criminal charge in which the evidence is fabricated) "so that he could be kept behind the bars" (meaning thereby prison).¹³

IV. The Sedition Trial

What we refer to as "The Sedition Trial" is the highly celebrated court case which resulted from the publication in the Gold Coast, of the article shown above, by the Ocan Press Limited through the medium of its newspaper - *The African Morning Post* of which Nnamdi Azikiwe was Editor-in-Chief.

The Sedition Trial - The Crown Vs. Nnamdi Azikiwe, was a full legal battle involving the charge, the defence, the judgement, the imprisonment, the appeal and the acquittal. The case was executed in Accra by the judicial arm of the colonial Government. It was a sensitive and controversial case made more sensitive by its political - legal nature. For one thing, Azikiwe was the Editor of a newspaper regarded as the mouthpiece of the colonized and oppressed people of the Gold Coast, a paper widely known for its political orientation, fiery views and militant nationalism. The Judiciary in the Gold Coast was one of the 'defence' arms of the colonial Government. So, right from the outset, the direction of the case was clear. Once pronounced guilty, it would be an opportunity to imprison the militant journalist and put him out of circulation to give the colonial Government its peace.

What was Azikiwe's crime? We are told that:

In the opinion of the Crown the article was calculated to bring into hatred and contempt or to excite disaffection against the person of His Majesty, his heirs, or successors or the Government of the Gold Coast as by law established. It was also calculated to raise discontent or disaffection among His Majesty's subjects or inhabitants of the Gold Coast; and was also calculated to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between classes of the population of the Gold Coast.¹⁴

These were the assumptions on which the Prosecution rested its case. It was also claimed by the Prosecution that Azikiwe admitted that he was Editor-in-Chief of *The African Morning Post* which in effect implied that if he was not the author of the article, he authorized its publication. But being an Editor-in-Chief of a newspaper did not mean that Azikiwe wrote the article or that he edited it, authorized its publication, inserted or published the seditious libel. Azikiwe did none of the above. Thus, on account of a technical 'no case' submission, his Defence Counsels argued his case dedicatedly, to save him from personal humiliation and embarrassment. In the course of the trial, the newspaper edition which published the said seditious article was tendered as an exhibit by the Prosecution to support its case.¹⁵

The mind of the trial Judge appeared to have been set to imprison Azikiwe. As it were, what the Judge stood to fight was any form of hatred, contempt or prejudice brought against his employers namely, His Majesty, The King of Britain, the Royal Head of the British Empire and his government. Ironically, the Judge demonstrated through his behaviours during the trial that he had nothing, but contempt and hatred for the young African nationalist. For, even before he pronounced his full judgement at the end of the proceedings, he had started addressing Zik as a "prisoner." Mr Justice Yates had stated:

prisoner at the bar, you have been found guilty of publishing a seditious libel.

It is a very serious offence for an editor of a newspaper to commit in a largely illiterate country like the Gold Coast.

I am therefore constrained to make you an example as a deterrent to others.

The sentence of the court is that you shall serve six months in prison, and in addition, you shall pay a fine of fifty pounds and, in default of payment within 14 days, to be imprisoned for three months.¹⁶

After the pronouncement, Azikiwe was on the order of the Judge, marched away into the cell to mix with other prisoners. But that was not the end of the matter. Azikiwe was intent on Appeal to a higher court. Meanwhile, the fine of fifty pounds was paid and Azikiwe held his receipt of payment. But while his lawyer was

making arrangements relating to his bail and the Appeal, the Judge who had adjourned the court briefly detected what he felt was an error in his judgement. The provision of the punishment had an alternative of fine, but the Judge wanted to ensure that Zik served out his sentence in prison and so he decided to alter his sentence in the light of his desire. He did just that! And to effect it he said to Zik:

Prisoner at the bar, my attention has been called to the fact that the penalty stipulated for an infraction of section 330 of the criminal code is an imprisonment or fine.

I will now alter my original sentence as follows: The sentence of the court is that you shall serve six months in prison. ¹⁷

Even though Azikiwe's counsel informed the Judge that Zik had already paid the fine, he closed his case and ordered that the receipt be returned to the Register, but Zik would not get his money back until, and if, a higher court decided so.

Azikiwe naturally secured an Appeal, and thus took his case to the West African Court of Appeal in March 1937.

Azikiwe went to the West African Court of Appeal with the same team of Lawyers that did his case at the lower court. Mr Dove leading Messrs. Akiwumi and Bosman argued Azikiwe's case along the same line as in the lower court. The Prosecution was thus required to prove any of the following clauses in order to win its case:

- (a) That Azikiwe was the author or writer of the article in question;
- (b) That Azikiwe edited the article or had a hand in editing it;
- (c) That Azikiwe directed or authorized its publication; or
- (d) That he inserted or published the article.

The Prosecution which was unable to substantiate any of the above clauses, rested the thrust of its argument on its earlier submission that Azikiwe on the day of his arrest, Saturday, May 23, 1936, admitted that he was editor of the *African Morning Post*. But the seditious libel appeared in the issue of that newspaper on May 15, 1936. Consequently, it was difficult to adduce any evidence that Azikiwe was editor of that paper on that day. Evidently and glaringly unable to prove its case without doubts before the President of the West African Court of Appeal, Sir Donald Kingdon, the Prosecution lost its case and Nnamdi Azikiwe was acquitted and discharged. The Court therefore allowed the appeal, quashed the conviction, remitted the fine, and acquitted and discharged the accused.¹⁸

What a glorious victory! It was victory for the African Nationalists. In fact, the mammoth crowd that came to the court to listen to the proceedings received the historic pronouncement with loud ovation. Full of ecstasy, the people carried Azikiwe shoulder-high through the streets of Accra, singing, dancing, jubilating.

V Aftermath of Sedition Trial

The protracted legal battle had been fought and won. Azikiwe had cause to celebrate. If he had been goaled, what would have become of his young new wife? We recall Azikiwe saying:

In spite of my stout heart, it was the first time in my life I had ever been served with a criminal writ. Moreover, it was the first time it ever occurred to me that I was no longer alone in the world, but that I was now a husband, with a family to take care of, apart from myself. I heaped a deep sigh as I noticed that cold seat had over-taken me, and I shivered under an external appearance of a bravado.¹⁹

Family influence apart, Azikiwe's dream of the African Revolution stated initially in his *Renascent Africa*²⁰ as "Spiritual Balance," "Social Regeneration," "Economic Determinism," and "Political Resurgence"²¹ was yet to be realized. On their part, African Nationalists and patriotic Africanists had cause to be happy. Azikiwe's non-imprisonment meant victory for the nationalist struggle. Besides, Azikiwe would continue to provide the inspiration and leadership required to make his dream of African emancipation a reality. Azikiwe had a goal and a determined direction. Thus says he,

My main objective in returning to Africa was to infuse in the indigenous African a spirit of constitutional resistance to foreign rule and to inculcate in him certain psychological disciplines to facilitate the organisation of such resistance and the realization of political freedom.²²

Definitely, Azikiwe did not detract from his original mission and direction. He returned to Nigeria to continue the nationalist struggle. However, the sedition trial did not go without far-reaching implications. For instance, the basic traits which coloured Azikiwe's political behaviour thereafter, can largely be traced to this experience. I am inclined to think that extreme caution, tact and compromise were specific traits which grew out of the sedition Trial. These attributes evidently combined to move Azikiwe out of the path of idealism and to reduce the tempo of his militancy. Where idealism stopped, realism began, and where pragmatism took over, ideology became neutralized. All these had obvious implications for the African Revolution.

Did Azikiwe continue to believe that if the need arose, he could die for the cause he believed in, as demonstrated in his "*Before Us Lies the Open Grave*."²³ This of course, is a mute question. But whichever way, Azikiwe's footprints in West Africa, have been as indelible as they had been a source of great inspiration to many African nationalists; and from their inexhaustible list, we can mention such notables as Mazi Mbonu Ojike, Mallam H.R. Abdallah, Mokwugo Okoye, Michael Imoudu, Ikenna Nzimiro, Anthony Enahoro, Mbazulike Amechi and Kwame Nkrumah among others.

Nkrumah, who took up the torch, the mantle of the Revolution from Azikiwe, did not only receive his early inspiration from Zik, he also got direct personal blessings and scholarship²⁴ from him. "Wherever you go, remember God and Africa"²⁵ were the historic contents of a telegram which Zik sent to Nkrumah as the latter set sail to the United States of America for higher studies. Whatever West Africa may have contributed to the overall development of Africa and the black world generally, Azikiwe has a significant part in it, and has made his own imprints and indelible marks within it. It is quite interesting to note in conclusion, that Azikiwe has remained grateful to all those who advanced him and those who complemented him in his political struggles. For instance, Zik's "Reminiscences of The Gold Coast"²⁶ has an interesting account on those who may be considered as his compatriots. These include his own mentors - Kwegyir Aggrey and Marcus Garvey, his fellow comrades in the nationalist struggle and people he had known in some other ways, including newspaper staffers who were opposed to his *African Morning Post*, all have received remarkable tributes. Among African nationalist about whom Zik had spoken pleasantly and with notable tributes were J. E. Caseley Hayford, Wallace-Johnson, Dr J.B. Danquah, Rev. (Dr) Mark Hayford, Mr A. J. Okanse, Ako Adjei, Mr Dove and Messrs. Akiwunmi and Bosman. Countries such as the Gold Coast, Liberia and Nigeria had prominent place in his West African Experience. But in all, it was the Gold Coast (ironically not Liberia, the country he loved so much and whose image he helped to promote) that created him space, offered him the pedestal to participate actively in Accra politics, to launch his editorial attacks on the Colonial Rulers and ultimately to build his fame. The Gold Coast must be viewed as the main thrust of Azikiwe's West African Experience. In fact, it was 'The Land of Kwegyir Aggrey'²⁷ that offered the earliest platform for Azikiwe's

fiery journalism and militant nationalism both of which summed his politics and its achievements. But Zik must receive credit for his part in hastening the pace of the nationalist struggle in the Gold Coast, thereby helping to realize what has come to be known as "Nkrumah's Ghana."²⁸ Put differently, Azikiwe was a key actor in Ghana's politics of liberation.

NOTES

1. See Part One of this book - "The Formative Years."
2. Reference to African Dependent territories as "Extension of Europe" was vividly discussed in G. Aforka Nweke, *African Security in the Nuclear Age*: Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1985 pp. 1 - 8.
3. As a frontline African Nationalist, Nnamdi Azikiwe was able to earn for himself the popular name "Zik of Africa" especially because he was considered a Spokesman for Africa. See for example Vincent Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa*: London P.R; Macmillan Ltd, 1961. Vide also Kenneth King (ed) *Pan Africanism*: Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 150 - 151.
4. All the West African territories which fell under British Possession in contradistinction to those of the French or other imperialist countries of Europe were referred to as "British West Africa."
5. See Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey; An Auto-biography*: London; Hurst and Company, 1970.
6. Quoted by Onome Osifo-Whiskey, "A chequered Life" in *Newswatch Magazine*: Lagos, November 23, 1987 p. 13.
7. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *op. cit.* p. 32.
8. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Liberia In World Politics*, was an outcrop of Azikiwe; dissertation entitled: "Liberian Diplomacy, 1847 - 1923."
9. Onome Osifo-Whiskey *op. cit.*
10. Bertrand Russell, *Power: A New Social Analysis*: New York; Norton, 1983.
11. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*: Lagos; the author, 1937.
12. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey: An Auto-biography*: London; Hurst and Company, 1970, pp. 262 - 263.
13. The title of the article that brought about the sedition Trial was entitled: 'Has the African a God?'
14. *op. cit.* p. 269.
15. *Ibid.* p.
16. *Ibid.* p. 270.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.* p. 272.
19. *Ibid.* p. 266 - 267,
20. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*: London; author, 1937.
21. Vide also Gideon-Cyrus M. Mutiso and S. W. Rohio (eds) *Readings in African Political Thought*: London; Heinemann Educational Books Limited, 1975.
22. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey: An Autobiography*: London; Hurst and Company, 1970.
23. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Before Us Lies the Open Grave*, Walchamaston, Foz Printing Press Limited.
24. Marshal Kebby, "The 'Treasonable Felony', Camp: *Headlines*: Lagos; September 1989 p. 13.
25. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*.
26. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey*: London; Hurst and Company, 1970, pp. 272 - 285.
27. *Ibid.* p. 250
28. Nkrumah is widely acknowledged as the man who brought independence to Ghana. Se for example, Bankole Timothy, *Kwame Nkrumah: The Man who brought independence to Ghana*: London; Longman Group Limited, 1979. Not only that Azikiwe gave Nkrumah the torch, he also contributed personally to the national liberation struggle in the Gold Coast.

Azikiwe and Nkrumah

Johnny I. Obiukwu

I. Introduction

Kwame Nkrumah is brought into this work for the simple reason of giving a comparative and contrasting touch to the analysis of the political life of a man widely acknowledged to have made considerable impact on the African society of his day that he deserves a significant place in its history. What is important however, is not just that Azikiwe deserves a significant place in the history of his society, but that he is appraised objectively, recorded correctly and given his proper place in that history. This chapter is aimed to serve as a modest contribution in this direction.

Proposed for this enterprise is a history that is basically analytic, not merely a concern with recording of events, but one that is clearly located within the background of the events that ultimately became history, and critically examined against the setting and issues that lend credence to such events, and of course, the activity of the man whose part in the whole phenomena, becomes dominant, significant and worthy of special note. This kind of history must of necessity be a blend of the records, facts and values of the epoch under study and from those, accurate deductions could be made.

The Need For Comparison

A man's actions or reactions to stimuli cannot be meaningfully measured out of the milieu and value-bases within which they were

located. Azikiwe's era has produced other men of substance whose activities must have impaired, advanced or complemented his own activity to chart the direction of history. Such men should be seen as sign-posts for locating the place and part of the actor under study. Of particular relevance in this regard is Kwame Nkrumah, of blessed memory, who is placed in perspective because, to use Azikiwe as the only measure of his own circumstances and history, would be an error. What is more, many factors and reasons tend to commend the decision to match Azikiwe and Nkrumah for comparative study and which can be viewed as essential links between the duo. These links by no way exhaustive here, can be examined with reference to the following:

- i. Background; especially with regard to early life, environmental socio-political circumstances and colonial experiences;
- ii. Involvement in active political life: the motivation, preparations, potentialities, personal and social equipment employed and their outcomes;
- iii. Contributions to political development: the personal touch, commitments, efforts, approach to issues and sacrifices;
- iv. Achievements: conscious and deliberate acquisitions, conferred honours of appreciation and personal attitudes towards these; and of course;
- v. Failures: unfulfilled dreams and hopes constraints, weaknesses, misused opportunities and impacts on community and self. Finally, this writer will endeavour at every stage, to highlight his impressions through a combination of objective assessment of facts, issues raised and personal reflection, inherent in human judgement.

II. Azikiwe

Perhaps, a brief account on Azikiwe's career should have been necessary at this juncture if only to set the necessary framework on which to compare Azikiwe and Nkrumah. But this course would only be taken at the risk of unnecessary repetition. The basic contours of Azikiwe's career have been adequately covered in earlier chapters as in his own autobiography — *My Odyssey*.¹

We may therefore take advantage of the valuable information already provided with regard to Azikiwe's family background, educational career, sources of inspiration and motivation, recruitment into social roles, the challenges of office and the colonial

setting, issues of major social concern, the constraints, setbacks and effects.

These aspects are as essential to this contribution as the information on Azikiwe's involvement in active politics which not only covers a significant phase in his career, but also has an elaborate table of contents embodying such aspects as his nationalism, particularly, the struggle for independence, the instruments employed, his strategies orientation and even personality attributes. Perhaps, it is necessary to state here that at every given stage, we are bound to see Azikiwe in the context of other makers of history. Zik was a star, but not a lone star. He lived with others, interacted with others and worked with others in the public sphere. Those others were all actors in the Nigerian political scene. As labour leaders for instance, they rose for workers' rights. As workers, they joined in demonstrating for better job conditions. As oppressed masses, they were all involved in the struggle for decolonization in which Zik also played a worthy part. In the course of the struggle, many Nigerians laid their lives. Many others were imprisoned or humiliated. But they all made sacrifices. At the same time, we are bound to see that Azikiwe's part as a history maker became evident in the context of the same people for whom, and in whose interest he actually fought. We have been told for instance, that Azikiwe employed his newspaper organisation entirely to the services of his people. Above all, he devoted considerable attention to the oppressed and the down-trodden. According to Mbazulike Amechi, the *West African Pilot* was "the foremost organ of the oppressed and the down-trodden."² At the same time, the people did not fail to demonstrate their reciprocal goodwill towards the man who showed such a devoted concern for their survival and dignity as a people. It was upon such a foundation that Zik built his political support and power. His success story or otherwise cannot therefore be divorced from these facts of history.

Beyond this scope, we have gone a little further to place Nkrumah in perspective for purposes of comparative study. However, little has so far been said on Nkrumah to establish the basis for the comparative study. It is my conviction that a meaningful comparison could demand that Nkrumah's bio-data should be briefly examined at this stage. As we turn to this exercise, I should like to direct our attention specifically to his background, socialisation and involvement in active political life.

III. Kwame Nkrumah

Background and Early Life

Kwame Nkrumah was born in the Gold Coast on Saturday, September 21, 1909. Nkroful is the name of the small village in which he was born. His parents were poor. His father Nkrumah was a goldsmith. His mother Nyanibah was a trader.

Though poverty-stricken, Nyanibah and her husband were determined to send the only child of their union to school. Consequently, Kwame was enrolled as a pupil of Roman Catholic Primary School in Half Assini in 1915 at the age of six. The young Kwame instantly incurred the love of Father Fisher who on the day of his enrollment at school promised Kwame's parents "to make a man of him".⁴ Kwame on his part demonstrated interest and diligence in his school activities, and carried on with his studies under close guardianship of Father Fisher. When Kwame took his Standard VII examination and passed, Kwame's parents were eager to send him to Secondary School, but they were worried about how to get money to pay his fees. Kwame was well behaved and clever. Consequently, Father Fisher's love for the young Kwame was further strengthened. He offered Kwame a job as a pupil-teacher, a job he did for only one year and proceeded to the Teachers' Training College in Accra still under the guardianship and care of Father Fisher. After his studies in the Teachers' College, he decided to work for the Catholic Mission as a teacher at lease, to show his appreciation for the love and interest which the missionaries had shown towards him in his time of need. He appreciated particularly the help and encouragement from Father Fisher.

At the same time, Kwame was full of burning ambition to read up to the University level like Dr Kwegyir Aggrey, who as a teacher, had made great impression on him. Two men made similar impression on Kwame. These men were Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Mr. Wallace Johnson. Kwame had listened to the two men deliver speeches in Accra. And inspired by their speeches, Kwame Nkrumah resolved to go to America to study, in order to be equipped with the appropriate degree of learning and knowledge which he needed to serve his fellow men.

When the opportunity finally came, Kwame went to the United States of America in 1935 to study. He attended Lincoln University in Pennsylvania where he obtained his B.A. degree. He also wanted a degree in Theology. He studied for it and got it. He was not yet satisfied. Demonstrating his great love for knowledge, he read

for two more degrees at the Master's level and obtained them. Four degrees by a man whose financial background had been so precarious that getting through the primary school was to a large extent a matter of chance were by no means a simple achievement. Although Kwame obtained a scholarship valued at 100 American dollars later in the course of his studies, he did all sorts of odd jobs in order to get money to pay his fees. After his education in America, Kwame wanted to return to Africa. But somehow, he decided to go to Britain following a piece of advice by his friend – Ako Adjei. His friend had advised him to take a degree in law, probably on the understanding that he was going to take to politics back home in Africa. But environment played its part. In Britain, unlike in America, job opportunity for Blacks and even work aid was not common. So, Kwame Nkrumah could not fulfil his bid to study law.

But while in London, Kwame Nkrumah became the Vice-President of the West African Students Union (WASU). Also, "He became Secretary of the original Pan-African Congress ..." ⁵ These were the initial platforms which brought out Nkrumah's political acumen. Following the effective way he handled his activities both as secretary of the Pan-African Congress and Vice-President of WASU, Kwame Nkrumah became widely known among Black activists. Kwame moved in close comradeship with Isaac Wallace-Johnson, George Padmore, Peter Abrahams and a host of other Black activists in London.

Meanwhile, nationalist activities had earnestly begun in the Gold Coast on the platform of an organisation known as the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). Dr J. B. Danquah who was at the centre of it all, had initiated the search for talented young people in the Gold Coast to help him accomplish the goal of liberating the country from the grip of imperialism. That was how, on the recommendation of Ako Adjei, Kwame was invited by Danquah to come home. For Nkrumah, this was a great call. This was a great opportunity to serve Mother Africa and humanity generally; in fact, the fulfilment of a dream! Before he went to America to study, he had summed his life dream in the application form sent to him for completion thus:

... In all things I have held myself to but one ambition and that is to make necessary arrangements to continue my education in a University in the United States of America, that I may be better prepared, and still be of better use to my fellow men ⁶ (Emphasis mine).

On Involvement in Active Politics

Kwame Nkrumah was actually invited home to take up the role of piloting the UGCC as its Secretary. That was in 1947. After initial discussions with Dr J. B. Danquah on his return, in which Kwame pledged his preparedness to take up the assignment, he was virtually handed over the entire UGCC and entrusted with its activities by Danquah. It was on this political pedestal that Kwame Nkrumah launched himself into the mainstream of the nationalist struggle in the Gold Coast. Using this platform, Nkrumah travelled from place to place; in fact, to all the nooks and corners of the Gold Coast, holding meetings with various groups addressing people mobilizing members, interest and support for the UGCC. Beginning with the chiefs and the educated elites, he permeated the mass of the populace and his popularity grew by leaps and bounds in all of Gold Coast. The increasing support which the UGCC mustered made the Colonial Authorities uneasy. They trailed the UGCC officials and surveilled on their activities. Soon, Nkrumah and the key officers of the UGCC came face to face with the Colonial Government when the Governor, Sir Gerald Creasy, charged the UGCC of being a "Communist" Front.

The Colonial Authorities had arrested and detained the key members of the UGCC who had come to be known as the "Big Six",⁷ following some civil disturbances in the country in 1948. The disturbances actually resulted from civil protests directed to nationalist objectives. This was championed by one Chief Nil Kwabena Bonne III who planned a boycott of all imported goods, and one Tamakloe, who with other ex-service men, demanded that certain irregularities in the country perpetrated by the Colonial Authorities, be put right. The planned demonstration designed to be peaceful however led to shooting by the Colonial Authorities, and some people lost their lives. This aggravated the situation, leading to large-scale rioting. Touched by the shooting incident, and determined more than ever to liberate their people, Nkrumah and Danquah resolved to act out. For them, self-government was the answer. They must set their people free and uproot any vestiges of imperialism in the country. They thus drafted a long telegram which they sent to the Secretary of State for the colonies, to register their protest and demands. Accused of being the brain behind the civil disturbances, Nkrumah, Danquah and some other colleagues of theirs in the UGCC were arrested and detained on the orders of the British Governor in the Gold Coast.

The "Big Six" finally returned to Accra, welcomed after their release from detention as heroes of a pro-people, anti-imperialist movement. Time had come to plan for self-rule. Danquah believed that with their nationalist organisation, the UGCC, they would work consistently until their country secured independence. He observed that it would not be long before Gold Coast achieved its independence. For Nkrumah, the slogan was "Self-government Now!"⁸ Nkrumah was poised for positive action.

Meanwhile, the Colonial Authorities, on the direction of the Colonial Secretary, set a Commission of Inquiry to look into the disturbances. The Commission of Inquiry was headed by Mr. Aiken Watson. At the end of its work, the Commission recommended that a new constitution be worked out. Sir Henley Coussey, a Ghanaian Judge, was made the chairman of an All-African Committee. Five officials of the UGCC were also appointed members of the Committee. But Nkrumah felt that appointing members of the UGCC to the committee would make the UGCC lose its freedom of action. He thus impressed his views upon his colleagues and urged them to reject the offer. Nkrumah's colleagues did not seem to buy his ideas on this subject. This led to disagreements and intra-party feud. As the crisis in the UGCC deepened, Nkrumah and his colleagues began to go apart. Finally, they broke ranks, with Nkrumah forming his own political organisation in 1949 known as the Convention People's Party (CPP) while Danquah carried on with his leadership of the UGCC. Arising from this crisis and schism between one time colleagues, was a brand of politics predicated on acrimonious opposition and name-calling.

Having known his direction, and conscious of this desire to secure power, Nkrumah turned to the groups he felt would provide a base for him. He had been with them over time and often interacted with them. He only had to mobilize them to provide the needed political support for his party. Thus, to these groups — the Youths, Women Association, Ex-Servicemen, in fact, the grassroot population, he turned. The CPP rose to be a mass party. Nkrumah's posture against imperialism, the strategies and tactics he employed in his national liberation struggle were soon to 'land him in jail'. Despite his imprisonment, his party swept the polls in all the elections held in the country at various levels. He was in prison when his party won the election that enthroned him as 'Leader of Government Business'. He later became the Prime Minister. He and his party finally led the Gold Coast to independence in 1957 under

the name Ghana. However, Nkrumah's active involvement in the politics of Ghana which began in 1947 came to an abrupt end on February 24, 1966 when his CPP Government was overthrown by the Ghanaian Military.

I should like to state here that my account on Nkrumah is by no means exhaustive. What I have simply done is to establish a framework around which we shall direct our comparative focus, and reflect, as a matter of emphasis on Nnamdi Azikiwe's political life, both as a political theoretician and as a political actor. I am not unmindful of the roles of Nkrumah and Azikiwe as political leaders at varying levels in their respective countries after independence. I shall explore these aspects when I enter into their comparative study, especially those areas that would help us to establish the essential links between Azikiwe's politics and that of Nkrumah. And above all, those areas that would help us to underline what they did, or did not do under similar situations and circumstances, the factors that led to their success or failure and their relevance to the African Revolution.

The point has already been made that every man has some part in history making. But a man's part in history becomes significant only when his role is dominant enough to be worthy of special note. Azikiwe and Nkrumah have, by their dominant roles in the politics of their society, achieved some significant place in the history of their society. Perhaps, the contents of their history are not yet fully determined. But given the task of looking at the political roles of both Azikiwe and Nkrumah for purposes of comparison, then, at what points do we establish their links, similarities and contrasts? Precisely, such a task is the major concern here.

IV. Azikiwe and Nkrumah — A Comparative View

Introduction

The basic elements which should be taken seriously in determining the political roles and contributions of Azikiwe and Nkrumah are background, situational factors and personality. They are of course the essential factors that inform our analysis at this level.

On Early Life and Education

Nkrumah's family background was one stricken by poverty. Azikiwe's parents were not rich, but they cannot be viewed as poor

by any definition, given the social status of his fore-parents and that of his father who had become a clerk, an educated elite of his time by the time of Azikiwe's arrival. Azikiwe and his parents were town dwellers. Apart from providing him the cosmopolitan setting for a wider world view, the town had the added advantage of better basic amenities which make living happier. Nkrumah and his parents were poor rural dwellers. And even till date, residing in an African rural environment, imposes special difficulties on the inhabitant that living has to be eked out in a much harder way, with the added disadvantage of narrow world view and inclination towards superstition.

Nkrumah, due to poor and precarious financial circumstances, attained primary education, even the secondary stage with great difficulty, but thanks to Father Fisher's love and charity towards Kwame. Azikiwe did not only have his school fees paid in time, he had a colourful early life. But thanks to the personal qualities of these young people, Azikiwe was not carried away by the comfortable circumstances of his parents' established background, nor was Nkrumah deterred by the poverty of his parents' background and circumstances. Both Azikiwe and Nkrumah were boys of great promise. They both displayed great attributes of intelligence sustained by hard work and perseverance. As young people, they drew inspirations from the lives of great men. Azikiwe, from Kwegyir Aggrey, and Marcus Garvey about whom he read extensively. Nkrumah, by Kwegyir Aggrey, Nnamdi Azikiwe himself and Wallace Johnson. Both Azikiwe and Nkrumah had a burning ambition to receive University education and each desired to study in the United States of America. Each achieved his ambition and desire remarkably.

Azikiwe studied in Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. So did Nkrumah. Each drank from the fountain of knowledge by amassing degrees at the Bachelor's and Master's levels, a feat which each achieved by sheer determination to succeed and to use his hands. Both did odd jobs in order to pay their school fees in America. Both survived in America despite hardships and exposure to circumstances of racialism.

Each taught in the very university where he studied. Azikiwe was an instructor in political science. Nkrumah taught Negro History. Despite the prospects of obtaining doctoral degrees, given the background of their fine academic records, both were spurred by concern for Africa and desire for its liberation that such ambition had

to be abandoned half-way through. Apart from early contact with the British in their native countries in Africa, both Azikiwe and Nkrumah were occasioned to visit Britain where they observed their socio-political values and the attitude of their government towards their own population in Britain, and were able, to discern the degree of injustice meted on their own people by the same British in Africa. Each was motivated to return to Africa at the time he did, by the singular desire to go and serve Africa and specifically to free his people from colonial bondage. No doubt, both were products of British colonial experiences. Both Azikiwe and Nkrumah were fired by similar visions on Africa. The character of their involvements as nationalist agitators can also be described as essentially similar. But their activities as leaders both in the politics of national liberation and in the politics of national administration after independence, contrast greatly. Even as students, their love for Africa was emphatic. For instance, Kenneth King, in a commentary he made about Zik as a student in America, implied this when he said:

He was already interested in Africa beyond his Ibo country and was writing on Liberia in *World Politics*. Consequently ... saw himself as a spokesman for Africa ...⁹

Nkrumah on the other hand was quoted as saying:

We must rid Africa of imperialism, capitalism and colonialism. Africa must be free from the tentacles of foreign domination ... The cause of the African is a just one. In the long run right will triumph over might. Education is the key to progress in Africa, for only knowledge can counteract ignorance.¹⁰

The desire for better Africa in the thoughts and visions of both Azikiwe and Nkrumah are evident in their political essays and books. In the course of their political careers, both wrote extensively, and each devoted considerable attention to Africa. Of greater relevance here, is their interest in the African Revolution. Their visions for Africa were directed towards liberation from colonial bondage, self-rule and African Unity. Azikiwe and Nkrumah believed in the potency of education and mass-mobilization to achieve desired political objectives.

However, it is pertinent to point out here that certain differences which are fundamental exist between what Azikiwe believed should be the character of the African Revolution in practice and what Nkrumah wanted.

Whereas Azikiwe believed in change by constitutional means, Nkrumah believed that liberation could only be achieved through organisation and effective revolutionary tactics. Their ideological

directions were of course rooted in their thoughts and actions. It is thus not by accident that Azikiwe displayed attributes of constitutional and liberal democrat, while Nkrumah emerged as an advocate and harbinger of Marxian socialism. Whether they ultimately achieved their goals and dreams on African Revolution in the direction they wanted it or not is quite another question. Evidently, many other forces came into play to mar the dreams of both Azikiwe and Nkrumah, but the frame of thought which informed their orientation in practical terms, is evident in their written works.

Azikiwe's thoughts on African Revolution are crystallized in the *Renascent Africa* (1937), *Respect for Human Dignity* (1960) and *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism and Welfarism* (1980). Nkrumah's thoughts on African Revolution on the other hand, run through the pages of most of his books. These include: *Neo-Colonialism — The Last Stage of Imperialism*, *Class Struggle in Africa*, *Africa Must Unite*, and *Consciencism*. We may briefly examine the thoughts of both Azikiwe and Nkrumah as reflected in their various works starting with Zik.

In writing his book *Renascent Africa*,¹¹ Azikiwe did not fail to harvest from the ideas of his great mentors Garvey and Aggrey. But beyond serving merely as a framework for political agitation which had characterized the ideas of universal Black consciousness and rallying point for a Negro Movement proffered by Garvey; and beyond Aggrey's "Gospel of New Africa", Azikiwe's *Renascent Africa* was based on five basic precepts or postulates which he referred to as Spiritual Balance, Social Regeneration, Economic Determinism, Mental Emancipation and Political Resurgence.¹² Simply put, Azikiwe felt that Africans should adopt a new frame of mind and make constructive criticism an acceptable political principle. Africans should consider one another as brothers because without a united front, Africans would not be able to present themselves as a social force capable of emancipating themselves from colonial servitude. Africans should take the destiny of their economy in their own hands and defend it as a basis of their survival and ultimate independence. Thus, Africa should strive toward economic self-sufficiency. Azikiwe observed that food, shelter and clothing were determinants of history and these were still primary in Africa. What is more, Africa must discriminate between positive ideas as false values, products of false consciousness and the veneer of decadent civilization. Azikiwe felt that by the time the African had

achieved the first four goals, his political status would hardly be in doubt. He would have become a free African — an African spiritually balanced, socially emancipated and above all, economically independent. These would be the bases of his political independence. In sum, the African would have moved from the old Africa, Africa of yester-years through the New Africa, to the Africa of our dream, the Africa of tomorrow.

Azikiwe's work "Respect for Human Dignity"¹³ is directed to the need for preservation of civil liberties, fundamental human rights and basic freedoms such as freedom of conscience, thought and expression; governance based on democratic ethos and that which does not suppress minority rights and opinion.

The third plank of Azikiwe's thought on African Revolution, relates to the ideological foundation on which a new independent African state could be rested. Focusing on Nigeria, Azikiwe made this the subject of his book: *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?*¹⁴ He held quite optimistically that where capitalism, socialism and welfarism have failed to achieve the desired results, "neo-welfarism" would succeed. As a philosophical basis for fulfilling the needs of the new African state, he found each of capitalism, socialism and welfarism inadequate. He thus advocated for an eclectic design whereby the best in capitalism, the best in socialism and the best in welfarism, would all be sifted out, tailored together and modified in the light of African needs. It is the product of this synthesis that Zik referred to as "Neo-Welfarism".¹⁵

There is a trend in Azikiwe's works which is consistent with Nkrumah's trend. First is the recognition of Africa in bondage, gripped in exploitation and colonial servitude. Second is the effort to arouse and awaken the Africans to take up the mantle in order to liberate themselves from colonial bondage, and finally, to build a self-reliant society for the benefit of Africans. Another meeting point between Zik and Nkrumah is on African Unity. Zik and Nkrumah demonstrated strong belief and faith in African Unity, but their views regarding the manner of its realization are basically divergent. Of the approaches advocated by Zik and Nkrumah, David Marvin had this to say:

Kwame Nkrumah represents what is on the whole the more radical view — the impulse to unity is strong, and is justified on the ground of need for a common front against colonialism ... Nnamdi Azikiwe views more seriously the problems which African variety and number create for the Pan-African movement.²²

Thus, where Nkrumah stood for a unified, strongly integrated Africa with a common government, Azikiwe advocated for loosely federated African States that retain their autonomies, but relate with one another in a common association as we find in the contemporary formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Discussing the two views in relation to the extent to which they are tenable, David Marvin further stated:

In a sense, the confrontation here is another skirmish in the perennial battle between idealist and realist in public affairs. Nkrumah, the idealist, regards diversity and differences among Africans not only as dangerous, but as mutable by any act of will, and calls for that act of will. Azikiwe, although also committed to the ideal of unity, starts from the assumption that the facts will be difficult to change, that the acts necessary for mutation cannot simply be willed, and therefore adopts the gradual, relatively conservative approach characteristic of the realist position.¹⁷

In Nkrumah's works, we find a radical departure from the optimism evident in Azikiwe's works that liberation and freedom could be achieved by constitutional means and in a gradual manner. The mood and mode of Nkrumah's works attest to this fact. As already stated most of Nkrumah's works directed their focus and energy to the African Revolution.

In his *Neo-colonialism — The Last Stage of Imperialism*, (1965) Nkrumah made a vivid exposition of the activities of African multi-nationals and the character of their operations which result in economic exploitation of the African people. Nkrumah saw imperialism as a doctrine directed to political and economic domination, made emphatic in the contemporary world by the dominance of industrial capital.

In his *Class Struggle in Africa*,¹⁹ Nkrumah advocated that Africans should rise and wage a struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, and of course all the forces that aid and abate mass exploitation and alienation. Nkrumah believed that with adequate ideological direction, active involvement of the masses and relentless struggle, authentic revolution which leads to effective destruction of capitalist roots and transformation of the society would be achieved. Nkrumah demonstrated his confidence in the potency of socialist education as a tool for orienting the people towards the progressive path.

In *Africa Must Unite* (1963),²⁰ he emphasized his long standing vision for a unified and united Africa in which a people's democracy is entrenched. He saw Africa as a monolithic entity and a veritable platform for united political action. In Nkrumah's Africa, class differentiation and social alienation would be a thing of the past.

Nkrumah was not concerned mainly with the destiny of any particular African country, but "the freedom and dignity of the African continent". *Africa Must Unite*, represents the epic of Nkrumah's political thought, and provides the foundation of what has come to be referred to as "Nkrumaism". Ebenezer Babatope²¹ has outlined the essential features of Nkrumaism thus:

An undivided Ghana-united in true independence. One united and indivisible continent of Africa ... Large-scale socio-economic reforms to eliminate and eradicate all colonial institutions. The struggle for economic independence of African states based on socialist principles. Establishment of African High Command to combat all imperialist and racist forces in Africa [and] the radical restructuring of the neo-colonial economy of most African countries in such a way that socialism is enthroned.

Finally, in his *Consciencism* (1964)²² he recommended an integrative ideology for Africa. Like Azikiwe's "Neo-Welfarism" he advocated a synthesis of elements, namely Euro-Christian and Islamic cultures which he believed would provide a veritable foundation for economic development of Africa.

These theoretical postulations guided to a considerable extent, the political activities and political behaviours of both Azikiwe and Nkrumah in their bid to actualize their dreams on the African Revolution. We have already shown that a number of other forces were at play in the African political scene which tended to militate against the realization of some of the highly articulated ideals as we have found in the works of these intellectual and political giants and African Statesmen who have advanced and complemented each other even from divergent angles.

On Involvement In Active Politics

The emergence of Azikiwe and Nkrumah in African political scene, was not a product of accident. It was rather a conscious or deliberate decision to serve and undertake some leadership role among their people. As already shown, we can perceive some elements of resemblance in the political circumstances around which they operated. Apart from coming from the same geographical region (West Africa), their two countries, Gold Coast and Nigeria, were subjugated to British imperialism and colonial rule. The machinery of government and the yoke it imposed on the people were so hard that the people yearned for freedom and liberation from colonial bondage.

As I said earlier, men make history in the milieu where other men are also actors. Neither Nkrumah's nor Azikiwe's politics started from a vacuum. Nkrumah's involvement in active politics

was prefaced in London by a brief involvement in Black activism under the platforms of the Pan-African Congress, WASU and the West African National Secretariat. Azikiwe's involvement in active politics was prefaced in the Gold Coast where he built political fame through his fiery editorial views against imperialism and demands on African Liberation, human rights and freedom generally. On his return to Nigeria, Azikiwe embraced the existing Nationalist Movement, the NYM, from which he made a survey of the country's political terrain. Nkrumah joined a similar organisation, the UGCC when he came back to the Gold Coast from London, and used it to launch himself into the mainstream of his country's politics. When Azikiwe resigned from the NYM he collaborated with Herbert Macaulay to found a political party, the NCNC with a Pan-Nigerian image and orientation. When Kwame Nkrumah broke away from the UGCC, he established the CPP, a militant political party with which he intensified his nationalist struggle. The degree of militancy in the CPP was evident in the Zikist Movement, the Youth Wing of the NCNC. As party leader, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was elevated by his supporters to the point of deification just as Nkrumah was deified by his supporters to a level only next to God. Hence, his title "Osagyefo" which means "saviour and redeemer"²³

Despite the constraining effects of intra-party feuds, ethnic chauvinism and the harassment from colonial authorities, Nkrumah continued the nationalist struggle until he and his party won independence for Ghana in 1957. And despite the emergence of local oppositions and the rise of ethnic parties which tended to blur the Pan-Nigerian or nationalist orientation of the NCNC, Zik and his party continued to be in the forefront of the nationalist struggle until independence was won in 1960.

However, before independence, both Zik and Nkrumah were faced at given times, with serious political tests which showed their attitudes towards power — their strategies, weaknesses and strengths as they affect their striving for power. In Azikiwe's case, the most remarkable test was the Zikist affairs. In the case of Nkrumah, it was the disagreement with his colleagues in the UGCC over the most practicable approach to hasten the realisation of self-rule.

In Nigeria, it was Azikiwe's followers — the Zikists who called for "positive action" which was a vote for militant strategy directed to the use of force to uproot British colonialism. Even though Zik appeared to imply the use of such an approach from his fiery

writings and speeches, he did not in practice favour it. But Zik wanted in practice, a cautious, tactful and mature approach in which the struggle for liberation would be predicated on clear logic defined and directed to the requirements of universally accepted principles of freedom and fundamental human rights. Zik evidently demonstrated that politics is a masterly art played with words where only the witty can win. And when defined in the context of "war", the victor is the man who lives to fight again. For, the Machiavellian injunction is that the Prince should be "Part fox and part lion."²⁴ However, the way Zik dramatised his disapproval of the Zikists' strategy was bound to bring him to open criticism, only short of being ridiculed. Rather than advise and teach his youthful followers whom he had stirred to militant action, his real art in the game, Zik rebuked them in a most unexpected manner that some of them have never recovered from their shock till date. Zik was definitely in position to do this, but he did not. I am inclined to think that this was a costly political miscalculation that cannot be adequately rationalized. In fact, many of the Zikists still lament that theirs was an "unfinished Revolution".²⁵

In the Gold Coast, it was Nkrumah who called for "positive action" while his more cautious colleagues opted for Fabian tactics. For Nkrumah, colonial rule had to be overthrown and this meant liquidation of imperialism by militant means. Nkrumah was convinced that a political actor might perish in a revolutionary struggle, but the ideals for which he died would be written indelibly in the books. All these are now history. But we may observe here that where Azikiwe would insist on caution and tact, Nkrumah would boldly call for courage and bravery. Between effectiveness and efficiency, Zik would choose the latter while Nkrumah would choose the former. Where Zik was flexible and compromising, Nkrumah was rigid and defiant. Where Nkrumah would insist on implementing an idea Now, Zik would prefer to give it a test-run and appraise the outcome.

Zik and Nkrumah must be seen as great political philosophers and political actors. But while Zik has been described as a catalyst and "an ideas man",²⁶ Nkrumah has been viewed as both an idealist philosopher and strong believer in organisation and revolutionary tactics. Nkrumah is widely quoted as saying that "The strength of the organised masses in invisible ... organisation decides everything".²⁷ These attributes actually went a long way in determining how both Azikiwe and Nkrumah reacted to political

stimuli and issues during their involvement in active politics. There is no doubt however that a number of socio-environmental factors impinged on their political activities and influenced the character of political outcomes.

For instance, in both Nigeria and Ghana, tribalism, a form of ethnic chauvinism, became a major impediment on the way of political actors who desired not merely the creation of authentic political state, but a nation. How did Nkrumah and Azikiwe handle the situation in their various countries? In the case of Ghana, Nkrumah strove hard to contain tribalism and to integrate the divergent ethnic groups, forging out in the process a polity predicated on unitary principles. Nnamdi Azikiwe, on careful reappraisal of the Nigerian situation, did not insist on stamping out tribalism, but instead, employed it as a "Pragmatic instrument"²⁸ for realising political objectives. Whereas Nkrumah saw unitarism as an absolute necessity for effective realisation of his political vision, Azikiwe has maintained strong belief in federalism predicated on the principle of "unity in diversity".²⁹ This posture makes evident the pragmatist and realist traits that have come to dominate Azikiwe's political personality and political behaviour.

Finally, we may note here that although to a large extent, Azikiwe and Nkrumah were involved in the politics of national liberation, and to some extent, in the politics of national administration, only Nkrumah was able to secure the power base to implement his far-reaching political thoughts and visions as the Prime Minister of independent Ghana. Azikiwe lacked such a locus, except perhaps, as the Premier of Eastern Nigeria, where he functioned in an executive capacity. But his other posts of Governor-General and President of Nigeria did not offer him such a standing.³⁰ Azikiwe was able to achieve great political heights and stature only comparable to those of Nyerere, Jomo Kenyatta, Kenneth Kaunda and Sekou Toure. But in all honesty, I do not know of any African leader, past or present, who has made such an emphatic impact on the fortunes of the African common man as Dr Kwame Nkrumah.

There is no doubt of course that despite socio-environmental constraints, such as ethnic chauvinism, imperial opposition and neo-colonial sabotage, Azikiwe and Nkrumah contributed greatly to the political development of Africa generally, and their various countries in particular. Any wonder then that they have been, and are still

being heaped with honours: statues, street names, doctoral awards and so on, all in appreciation of service to fellow men.

NOTES

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4. Bankole Timothy, *Kwame Nkrumah: The Man who brought independence to Ghana*: London Longman Group Limited 1974 p. 2.
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7. Genoveva Kanu, *op. cit.* p. 13.
8. Bankole Timothy *op. cit.* p. 15.
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11. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*: Lagos, the author, 1937 Vide also Gideon-Cyrus M. Mutiso and S.W. Rohio (eds) London, Heinemann Educational Books Limited, 1975.
12. See Vincent Ikeotuonye, *Zik of New Africa*: London P.R. Macmillan Limited, 1961.
13. Nnamdi Azikiwe, "Respect for Human Dignity" an inaugural address delivered 16 November, 1960. Enugu Government Printer, 1960.
14. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria, Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?*: Lagos, Macmillan Limited, 1980.
15. *Ibid.*
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17. *Ibid.*
18. Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism — The Last State of Imperialism*: International Pub. 1965.
19. Kwame Nkrumah, *Class Struggle In Africa*: International Pub., 1970.
20. Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*: International Publ., 1972. See also Afari Gyan, *Political Ideas of Kwame Nkrumah* New York, African Heritage Publishers, 1976, p. 113.
21. Ebenezer Babatope, *The Ghana Revolution*, Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1982, p. 4.
22. Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism, Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization*: Monthly Review Press, 1970.
23. Genoveva Kanu, *op. cit.*
24. Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*: London, translated by W. K. Marriott, 1958.
25. Being the title of a lecture on the Zikist Movement delivered at the University of Nigeria in 1974 by Professor Ikenna Nzimiro one of the jailed Zikists.
26. Chris Offodile, *Dr M. I. Okpara, A Biography*: Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1980, p. 71.
27. Bankole Timothy, *op. cit.* p. 17.
28. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Tribalism: A Pragmatic Instrument for National Unity*, Enugu, Eastern Nigeria Printing Corporation (1964).
29. Nnamdi Azikiwe, "Creation of More States in Nigeria" Lecture delivered by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chancellor of the University of Lagos, under the auspices of the Political Science Association, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Published in *The*

- Senator* Vol. No. 1. — A Journal of the Political Science Association, UNN. 1974.
- 30 In both his posts as Governor-General and President of the Nigeria, Zik's standing was that of father figure, and essentially ceremonial in status.



PART THREE

Nation-Buuilding in Nigeria



Nigerian Nationalism: Crises of Ideas and Strategies

Ogban Ogban-Iyam

Introduction

One of the major assumptions of the discussion in this chapter is that Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe (Zik) had ideas and strategies for the pursuit of Nigerian nationalism. What is not popularly known, however, is whether or not these ideas and strategies were marked by crises^{1(a)} and the implications of these crises of ideas and strategies for the pattern of development of Nigerian Nationalism.

The main tasks of this chapter are: (1) to present Zik's major ideas and strategies on Nigerian nationalism, (2) to determine whether or not these ideas and strategies were marked by crises, and (3) if they were, what the implications were for the development of Nigerian nationalism.

The terms tribe, tribalism, nation, nationalism and state are imprecise in meaning, subject to different interpretation and yet very crucial in the discussion of Zik's ideas and strategies on Nigerian nationalism. Sometimes scholars and publicists, including Zik, have used these terms "tribe" and "nation" on the one hand and "tribalism" and "nationalism" on the other hand interchangeably, even though they are not synonymous. What one sees, therefore, as tribalism or nationalism, tribalistic ideas and nationalistic ideas and strategies depends on one's conception of tribalism and nationalism. Furthermore, there appears to be considerable confusion in the use

of the terms anti-colonialism struggles, fight for civil rights and nationalist struggles, especially in a colonial territory. These are related, and one may give rise to the other, and may even occur simultaneously, but they are not the same thing.

In a similar vein, nationhood is often mistaken to be the same thing as statehood. For this reason all anti-colonialist struggles by the colonized have often been called nationalist struggles when a number of them are struggles for statehood (self-governance).

It is also necessary for the reader to note the sense or senses in which the terms: idea, crises and strategies will be used. None of these words mean just one thing. In order to minimize confusion in meaning a number of these key words in the title of this chapter will be clarified before we embark on the achievement of the objectives of this chapter.

We shall proceed as follows: I. Definition and clarification of terms, II. Dr Azikiwe's Ideas and Strategies Pre-1943, III. Dr Azikiwe's Ideas and Strategies from 1944 to the 1970, and IV. A Summary and Conclusion.

I

Definition and Clarification of Terms

Idea, Crisis, Strategy

Idea means "mental conception, notion, cognitive process; ... thought, opinion, plan, knowledge."² In discussing ideas it is important to note that we are concerned with expressed ideas, essentially written. We are also aware that words rarely express exact thought pattern or ideas. This state of affairs, therefore, creates problems both for the analyst and the author whose ideas are under scrutiny, especially when clarification cannot be obtained from such an author as the need arises.

Crisis here means a turning point for better or for worse³ or a major shift in position for better or for worse. Whether or not there is a change or a turning point in ideas and/or strategy may or may not be clear cut. For instance, when a global concept such as "Blackman" is replaced with such a component concept as "Nigerian," or "Iboman" or "Yorubaman," the user when told that he has shifted grounds can always say that he had always had these categories of blackman in mind. This difficulty notwithstanding, an

attempt will always be made to state when this writer thinks that a turning point has been reached.

Strategy is employed here to mean "... large scale plan or method for winning a war, battle or wits, contest, game,"⁴ etc. This means that we shall deal with the plans Zik had or has for advancing Nigerian nationalism. It must be noted that every plan is a set of ideas. There is, therefore, no clear distinction between nationalist ideas and strategies. The set of ideas that we shall regard as plans or strategies will be those that are concerned with how an objective can be achieved. For instance, if one believed in equality (as an idea) then how to bring about equality becomes the strategy. One can express an idea without stating the strategy for its attainment. Furthermore, a shift in idea need not correspond with a shift in strategy.

Tribe, Tribalism, Nation, Nationalism, Statehood. Tribe and nation will not be synonyms in this text. Similarly their derivatives—tribalism and nationalism will not be used interchangeably even though Zik himself used them as synonyms.

A *nation* in this text means a large group of people more or less sharing the same culture, history, occupying a definite territory and with a sense of group consciousness. We say more or less because all these attributes are not always shared by people regarded as a nation. A nation may or may not have common territory and common language or even a common government. Some of the most common attributes of a nation may be: a sense of belonging and desire to remain united⁵ in one territory under a common government. Nationalism then becomes a "devotion to the interest of a nation,"⁶ "an organised political movement designed to further the alleged aims and interests of nations"⁷ such as national unity and independence.

On the other hand, the use of the terms tribe and tribalism follow Setton-Watson⁸ usage.

the word 'tribe' has usually been applied to comparatively small groups of people with rather low level culture ... most of these communities, scattered across the globe and centuries shared fierce loyalty both to their chiefs and fellow members of community. The difficulty is to decide at what point 'tribal consciousness' becomes 'national consciousness.'

Tribalism then means devotion to the interest of the tribe or an organized political movement designed to promote the interests of a tribe. In the sense in which we use tribe and tribalism, there were many tribes in the area now known as Nigeria before the advent of colonial rule. However, colonial rule inadvertently facilitated the

emergence of these tribes into nations. For example, there were a number and a mixture of Ibo tribes and Ibo nations, while the Edo, Kanuri and the Efiks were already nations. By the 1950s the Ibo nations and tribes, and the Yoruba nations and tribes had become one Ibo nation and one Yoruba nation. Tribalism, therefore, is a more limited and primitive state of group consciousness which has historically developed into nationalism.

In many instances nationalism has led to the achievement of statehood (independence or self-government). However, in many other occasions statehood has been attained without nationhood. Having a state is to have a form of domination exercised through a government over people within a definite territory.⁹ Such domination may be exercised by a foreign class (colonial state) or by an indigenous class (a sovereign state). It is possible that many so-called Nigerian nationalists wanted a sovereign state not nationhood with statehood.

The application of the term "nationalism" to a colonial situation in Africa and in other non-European countries creates problems, particularly, when it is synonymous with anti-colonial struggles. European nationalist struggles were not generally equivalent to anti-colonial struggles. To use nationalism to characterise all kinds of protests movements under colonial rule is to stretch the meaning too far and to make it difficult for an analyst to separate nationalist ideas, whether religious, cultural and/or political, from non-nationalist ones. Agitation over wages, franchise, employment opportunities, racial discrimination, and availability and adequacy of public services, on the part of colonised people are often referred to as nationalist ideas. It is this kind of broad usage, which we do not accept, that can account for an apparent paradox. While nationalism in Europe left European nationals more united and tolerant of fellow nationals, nationalism in Africa left supposed nationals more disunited and intolerant.

While, for example, French, British, German and other European nationals became united and could vote and be voted for in the different parts of their nations, the same could not be said of Nigerians, Kenyans, Ugandans, etc. One suspects that the answer can be found in the inappropriate characterisation of protests ideas and movements in colonial Africa. Perhaps most of the so-called Nigerian, Kenyan, etc nationalists were not Nigerian or Kenyan nationalists: they were anti-colonialists, and at best, sub-nationalists (Efik, Hausa, Kikuyu nationalists). They were virtually unanimous

in their demand for an end to colonial rule (quest for sovereign statehood) but not necessarily concerned with forging a common culture and identity among all the nations that have been forced to live under one colonial government (nationhood). The foreigners should leave so that the indigenous people can govern themselves. This is not to underrate anti-colonialist struggles. The termination of colonialism is a necessary prelude to forging one nation out of the various nations in one state.

In this discussion we make a distinction among different levels of nationalism such as African, Nigerian, Hausa, Efik, Kanuri, etc. At these various levels one can have cultural, religious, economic and political nationalism. We also distinguish between what we call nations-state and nation-state. When many nations are subordinated to one state within one territory it will be known as a nations-state (for example, Nigeria). But when a nations-state like Nigeria evolves into one nation (i.e. has a sense of unity, common culture, and the desire to live together as a people with a common destiny) like France, it becomes a nation-state. ✎

Any idea and strategy will be considered nationalistic if it is concerned with promotion or strengthening of unity, common culture, common language, common loyalties more often than not within a common existing or envisaged territory. This may or may not be accompanied by a common self-government. When we append African, Nigerian, Hausa or Ibo prefix or adjective, respectively, we mean that the scope of nationalism is limited and centered around Africa, Nigeria, Hausa or Ibo. For example, the pursuit of African nationalism means promotion of unity, self-government, culture, etc. at the continental level; not nationalism within African countries. These distinctions are imperative for not only identifying Zik's nationalistic ideas and strategies but also for determining whether or not they were any turning points or major shifts in these ideas and strategies.

When we, therefore, talk about Nigerian Nationalism: Crises of Ideas and Strategies, we are concerned with the turning points or major shifts in the ideas and strategies of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe Nationalism (the development of a sense of belonging among Nigerians, a common culture, language, self-government and a common desire of Nigerians to continue to live as Nigerians). The quest for self-governance alone may simply be anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism and will not be equated with nationalism. In a similar vein, ideas on pursuit of civil liberties will not be regarded as

nationalistic. We shall now proceed to discuss Zik's ideas and strategies as contained in his recorded speeches, articles and books.

II

Azikiwe's Ideas and Strategies Pre-1943

In this section we shall confine ourselves to the pre-1943 ideas and strategies on Nigerian Nationalism. This periodization reflects our concern with not only the ideas and strategies but with turning points. 1943 appears to be one such turning point as we shall discuss shortly.

Zik's ideas and strategies on nationalism can be found in his numerous speeches, newspaper articles and books.¹⁰ Some of these ideas he expressed before he was twenty years of age.¹¹

The major point being made in this section is that Zik did not express explicitly any ideas and/or strategies on Nigerian nationalism before 1943. There was mention here and there of "African freedom" and "human freedom." His main concern and basis of fame, from his student's years in the United States of America (USA), through his editorship of *Morning Post* Newspaper in Ghana (the then Gold Coast) until 1943, was with the dignity of the blackman and especially with the African. It is necessary to discuss these ideas and strategies which informed Zik's ideas on Nigerian nationalism when he made a significant shift to a lower level of nationalism.

In May 1927, as a college student, when he was about twenty three years old, he stated in a toast as follows:

Since my experience in life is limited, all I can advise the upper Classmen and women is to remind them that this college (Storer College) stands for high ideals, it stands for purity of youth; it stands for the advancement of colored youth, it stands for what is good, noble and lofty in life.¹²

In 1931, in a funeral oration of a dead Nigerian, late Hogan Edem Ani-Okokon, he stated that Ani-Okokon

... had visions of Nigeria becoming a great country, emerging from the continent of Africa, offering freedom to those in bondage and securing democratic way of life to those who have been lulled into a false sense of security under colonial rule.¹³

He continued:

It is my fervent prayer that God may sanctify the life of this young African so that we, his survivors, will not forget the sacrifice made by this pioneer of freedom in Africa. If God spares me to return home alive, I pledge that I will join crusaders for human freedom anywhere in the world. We shall intensify

the struggle for democracy in Africa... May his memory be an inspiration to Nigerian prosperity. ¹⁴

Note that subsequently "youth," "struggle for freedom," "freedom to those in bondage" and those who have "been lulled into a false sense of security" reoccur constantly in Zik's speeches and writings. However it is not exactly clear what "Nigeria becoming great," "struggle for democracy in Africa" means with respect to building a nation-state out of Nigeria or Africa. These could imply securing democratic rights such as extension of franchise, elective representative government, abolition of legal racial discrimination in Africa and/or the termination of colonial rule. Whatever is implied we need to note that termination of colonial rule does not necessarily confer nationhood.

Zik later wrote *Liberia in World Politics*¹⁵ in defence of Liberia against the intrigues of American and European countries. In the book he tries to dispel the view that Africans have no initiative and creative ability. He also called for less oppression, equal treatment, safeguard and liberty of individual and nation in Liberia.¹⁶

Zik's most famous ideas and strategies of the period under review can be found in his equally famous book *Renascent Africa*.¹⁷ Both his admirers and his critics testify to the significance of this book in the rise of protest movements against colonial rule in Africa. Although this book was not on Nigerian Nationalism, the most militant Nigerian nationalists, the Zikists, received their initial inspiration from the views expressed in this book. The ideas were couched in such general terms that most Africans living in a racist world, under colonial rule and/or suffering one kind of oppression and aspiring to forge themselves into nations find the ideas and strategies enunciated appropriate and applicable.

The major themes of the book are New Africa, the indispensability of the youth for progress generally and in Africa in particular, spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic determinism and political resurgence. Old Africa of complaisance, inferiority complex, economic insecurity, etc, must give way to New Africa of freedom and progress. The ideas of new Africa makes one young and those of old Africa makes one old. There are young old people as well young old people depending, on their ideas. The greatness of Africa must be revived. The Renascent African is one whose ideas have been attuned to the material conditions.

The New Africa is a state of society where the mind is brought in harmony with matter. And when such co-operation exists the old order (where matter is

master of the mind) will have passed away. It is therefore a psychological conception which is deeply rooted in a material environment.

To achieve mental emancipation, the apostle or disciple of the New Africa must hurdle over barriers of race and tribe. One must be willing to be called names and suffer persecution, so that truth may be allowed a chance to flourish on earth...¹⁸

The place "youth" in Renascent Africa could not be over-emphasized.

It is too evident that throughout history a secret battle has been waging between Old Age and Youth.¹⁹

Youth and Old Age are not synonymous with the term old and new. Some elders seem to be youthful perennially. This explains the justification of the use of the term "Young Old Man" and Old Young Man.²⁰

Zik disagrees with those who believe that politics, if taken as the application of the principles of political science, is too intricate for the youth, and that it is the claim of the Youth to be engaged in intellectual and physical pursuit. To substantiate the basis of disagreement and demonstrate that Youth has "laving effect and make for progress," he stated:

Again, Youth act as a sort of catharsis to society. It is the revolt of Youth against injustice of the old which enables Old Age to realize that it needs a new set of values, morally or otherwise...

Neither Alexander the Great, nor Julius Caesar had grey hair, wrinkled brow, honours, etc, before they set out to see and conquer.

The same is applicable to Boadicea, Joan of Arc, William of Normandy, Richard the Lion-Hearted, Antar, Taharka, Clive, Nelson, Napoleon, Chaka, Garibaldi, Peter the Great, Frederick the Great, Thomas Paine, Lord Lugard, Menelik, Ras Nasibu and other great men who have left their political achievement in History.

There is no need to belabour this point. Historically politics is the game of youth. Think of the most sensation manifestation of the revolt of youth to-day in the area of Nationalism.

Think of the names of Stalin, Ataturk, Mussolini, Hitler, Pilsudski, Mosley, Morley, Rex Tugwell, Matsuoke, Chiang-Kai-Shek, Ghandi, Nehru - these men either attained the climax of their political careers or were great statesmen before they attained old age.

Because it is ethically inconsistent for one section of the community, from the standpoint of age, to do the dictating from time to time; because it is not in the cards for society to stagnate sociologically; because the verdict of history from 4241 BC to 1937, is that youth is a sine qua non in the political evolution of the various nations of the world.²¹

In order to attain such New Africa envisaged the "Youth" of Africa must first attain what Zik called spiritual balance.

Criticism, to be fair, must expersonate the critic, else one will allow one's personal idiosyncrasies to influence the criticism. In case the critic allows

himself to be impersonate with the object of criticism, he reduces his observations to an illogicality, popularly commented upon as a species or argumentum ad hominem.

Africans, in the majority of cases, are fond of impersonate criticism without attempting to expersonate themselves. Even among highly educated persons, the critical outlook is usually blurred by the forces of this type.

No people can hope to be spiritually balanced without cultivating respect for the views and opinions of others, even if they conflict with their own.²²

A second quality that is indispensable for Renascent Africa is social regeneration.

If the brotherhood of man is universal truth, the Africans are brothers, one to another...

this doctrine is the noblest in the world, because it reflects leadership of a constructive nature. It demonstrates that no individual can successfully distinguish himself from the rest of mankind without proving his mental subnormality...

Thus I pleaded for spiritual balance which would lead to social regeneration...

Renascent Africans must therefore regard Africans as blood brothers and sisters.²³

The third crucial step towards the attainment of Renascent Africa is economic determinism. Zik accepted the Marxian thesis of economic determinism. Africans must, therefore, strive for economic security. Towards this end he recommended co-operative ventures instead of the one man business.

Youth may talk about monopoly, you may scream about fixing prices, you may harangue about unfair competition until your epiglottis ceases to function, but unless African business organizations learn to unite their efforts in co-operative (working together) combine (union), African business will continue to be a one-man's affair, and the economic emancipation of the African is a long way off.²⁴

The fourth imperative for Renascent Africa is mental emancipation. Africans must rid themselves of colonial mentality through re-education.

All that I have said can be summed up in these words: Africans have been miseducated. They need mental emancipation so as to be re-educated in the real needs of Renascent Africa.²⁵

With spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic emancipation there should follow political resurgence. Ethiopia should provide inspiration to Africans to rise once again. The new leadership must not be like the old leadership of corrupt, timid and cringing Africans.

Turn to Nigeria. The same thing holds true. After struggling to accumulate wealth, those who succeed instead of using the same for the benefit of reconstructing their shattered national heritage, use the same to curry favours,

bowing endlessly to those who are not entitled to the same, morally or otherwise.

The political situation in Nigeria is cyanogenic. Leaders who should be emblem of courage and manhood to youth, cower before some swaggering officials?

Leaders who have been, seem to have lost the pep of continuing the fight, and they themselves go the way of flesh.

Is there any wonder then that in a country of twenty-one million souls less than six thousand non-Africans seem destined to guide and control forever?

As in the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, so too in the Gold Coast. Some leaders, perch on altars defiled with the stench of corruption, chicanery, egocentrism, tribal prejudice, cowardice, get rich quick philosophy, alphabetimania, and the relics of uncle Tomism. ²⁵

To save this situation

The youth of Africa believe that the time is at hand when they should make a re-evaluation of their *raison d'être* on this continent.

Are Africans created to serve as slaves forever or they destined to impress their civilization on the world as they had done in the past?

Renascent Africa regards as youthful all Africans who believe in the cultivation of spiritual balance, the practicalization of social regeneration, the realization of economic determination, and the precipitation of a reverberation which will give them their lost place in the sun.

Renascent Africans, faint not, loose no hope. Although Old African lingers, it is but a passing phase of your new lease of life...

You must prepare for the inevitable so that you may fully appreciate your rendezvous with life. ²⁶

Zik examines imperialism and sees it as a natural condition whereby the strong rule the weak by force until the weak is strong enough to rule himself. At that point the strong should willingly and voluntarily withdraw. In dealing with imperialism Africans must be careful.

Modern industrial society and the educational policy of European powers in Africa make any direct attack, at present suicidal. An African endowed and operated university, in Africa may be a way out, but where there is no spiritual balance, social regeneration, and economic determinism, a university is out of question.

I submit that people who are strangers to one another can not experience mental emancipation, much more economic emancipation. If the New Africa must be realized then, the Old Africa must be destroyed because it is at death-grips with the New Africa, which should guarantee to Renascent Africans the enjoyment of life more abundantly. Sacrifices must be made. I may as well be offered as an oblation to usher the New Africa. ²⁷

It is, therefore, after the African has attained this required spiritual balance, realized that every African is his blood brother (become socially regenerated), acquired economic security (economic

determinism), freed himself from his colonial mis-education and re-educated himself on the real needs of Africa (mental emancipation) that political resurgence becomes imperative. If the Renascent African does not rise up like Horatio and face fearful odds then he would have shown himself incapable of ruling himself. However this can not be.

Zik concludes his *Renascent Africa*, with a section entitled "I am Satisfied."²⁸ Here like a visionary he sees a New Africa come to life. He remains at this plane into the early 1940s after he had left his editorship job in the *Morning Post* of the then Gold Coast (Ghana). a major shift or a turning point was to come later. We turn now to examine that phase.

III

Dr Azikiwe's Ideas and Strategies from 1943 to the 1970s

Since the 1920s till date Zik has not abandoned his concern with dignity of the Blackman and African as well as with democracy and democratic rights. However, about the year, 1943 he became increasingly more pre-occupied with Nigerian nationalism. One can even go further to argue that by the late 1940s especially by 1954 he increasingly became more of an Ibo nationalist than a Nigerian nationalist.²⁹ Notwithstanding the significant shift, a number of the ideas and strategies he had enunciated in, *Renascent Africa*, continued to be adapted to the Nigerian situation.

We shall now examine Zik's ideas and strategies as they pertain to Nigerian nationalism in the sense that we had earlier stated in part I of this chapter (i.e issues of self-government/independence, national unity and national consciousness, common culture and language).

The questions of creation of states and ideology will be subsumed under national unity and consciousness. Consideration of struggles against imperialism and colonialism alone is not equivalent to dealing with nationalist struggles, nor do such struggles automatically build a sense of nationhood.

Zik's views can be found in his numerous speeches, newspaper articles and books.³⁰

In the late 1930s, Zik founded the *West African Pilot* newspaper followed subsequently by his other newspapers. The *West African*

Pilot became the instrument of the political party, the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), which he helped found.³¹ These papers carried out the nationalist and anti-colonial campaigns and propaganda as had never been before in Nigeria. This was envisaged in Zik's earlier book *Renascent Africa*.

The most comprehensive views of Zik, some of which had earlier on appeared in the *Pilot*, are to be found in his book, *Political Blueprint of Nigeria*.³² This was a significant turning point from Zik as an African nationalism exponent to Zik as a Nigerian nationalism crusader. A few years before this shift he had been hostile to one-country nationalism in West Africa.

So long as we think in terms of Nigeria, Gold coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia, and not as a United West Africa, we must be content with Colonial Dictatorship instead of a Government of the people, for the people — namely Democracy.³³

Having decided to join the battle against colonialism in Nigeria he engaged in scathing denunciation of the colonial situation. In the preface of the *Political Blueprint* he observed as follows:

The previous constitutions of Nigeria (1866, 1874, 1906, 1914, 1922) have merely perpetuated our political serfdom. At best they are crumbs of benevolent despotism.

For almost a century, Nigeria has been ruled as an appendage of an alien political entity. At one time it was said to be based on the principle of trusteeship; at another time it was said to be a partnership, and now, it is guardianship. Irrespective of all these vague expressions, the period of our tutelage is indefinite and appears to be only at the pleasure of the political superior.³⁴

Nigerians were then fighting alongside Britain and dying in the war, in the name of freedom, yet it appears as if that freedom was not meant for Nigerians. Zik then asked:

What has the future in store for us? Continued political servitude or political autonomy? We must not delude ourselves in thinking that we shall be free after this holocaust. Mr Winston Churchill has made it clear in his utterances. It is up to us to prepare ground for a national awakening which should be a spearhead of attack against all forces which seek to perpetuate our political bondage.³⁵

He went on to list our human and material resources such as manpower, size of territory, agricultural resources, our annual income, trade figures with Britain, our mineral resources which are enormous yet controlled by foreigners. Nigerians must do something to rectify things.

We appear complacent about this national humiliation because of our proneness to wag our tongues like parrots instead of mobilizing our

intellectual and physical energy for an all-out assault against the rampart of colonialism with its destructive effects on our national character.

Goethe said that 'None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe that they are free.' Because we are protected by the Union jack we think we are free. But are we free? Who controls our economic resources? Who controls our educational system? Who controls our manpower? Who makes, interprets, administers, and executes our laws? Who manages the government of this country? Can we answer these questions and attribute these controls to indigenous population? And yet some of us are living in a fools paradise, thinking that we are free, whilst in reality we are in chains.

That political freedom is the birthright of every human being including the Nigerian; that political freedom has been debased as a privilege and not a right in Nigeria; that the cause of this travesty of human rights is due to our political impotence; that we must gain political power in order to establish a free and autonomous Nigerian State, is the thesis of this brochure.

I hope that Nigerians and students of colonial affairs will find inspiration in the following pages. The future of Nigeria is in our hands. It is up to us to make it a free country. And the privilege is ours to accept political servitude as our destiny. As for me I consider the present political set up in Nigeria as degrading and unworthy of a virile people.

I have expressed my convictions as I see our political problems. I have no apology to offer for having dared to advocate political freedom for Nigeria 36

Since most of these themes and the tone of the message in this book runs in most other statements of Zik, including the NCNC manifestoes, it is appropriate to cite the statements at length.

On the question of self-government and independence for Nigeria Zik demanded:

Two basic stages of political evolution of Nigeria are essential towards the crystallisation of Nigerian autonomy: the Preliminary and Intermediate; (a) The Preliminary Stage should last no more than 10 years, and should start either now or immediately after World War II. During this state there should be conscious Nigerianization in all aspects of our political and administrative life. The economy should be planned in order to adjust and adapt it to conscious process. At this stage, 200 scholarships should be awarded to sons and daughters of Nigeria annually for five years to enable them to proceed abroad for specialised training in all branches of human endeavour; this will cost the country less than £50,000 a year. If Britain means to reduce the period of political servitude, then it should realise that only by this country producing trained men and women in all of human endeavour can political progress be accelerated... The initial cost of the scholarship should be in the neighbourhood... (about what we spent last year in maintaining our prisons)... 37

According to the Political Blueprint the second stage should be when the Nigerianization process should be taking shape making it necessary for non-Nigerian appointees in the civil service to act as advisers and not administrators in all aspects of Nigerian political life. This period should last for five years making the total period of tutelage 15 years.

The period of learning to do by doing should take five years, after which the Mother Country should be prepared voluntarily (not reluctantly or compulsorily) to transfer the sceptre of sovereignty to the Nigerians who should have earned a "pass" and be diplomated. This shall automatically mean recognition of Nigeria as an autonomous community, equal in status and in no way subordinate either to the Dominions or to the Mother Country, in any aspect of our domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance and freely associated as member of the commonwealth of Nations³⁸

In addition there is a proposed constitution in the Blueprint. Zik suggests that Nigeria and the Cameroons should comprise

eight protectorates; (1) Northern (Katsina, Kano, Zaria provinces) (2) North-western (Sokoto, Niger, Ilorin provinces) (3) North-eastern (Bornu, Bauchi, Adamawa provinces) (4) Central (Kabba, Benue, Plateau provinces) (5) Southern (Warri, Benin, Onitsha, Owerri provinces) (6) South-western (Ono, Ijebu, Abeokuta, Oyo, Lagos provinces) (7) South-eastern (Calabar, Ogoja provinces) (8) Cameroons (Southern, Northern provinces). These provinces shall form a commonwealth of Nigeria...³⁹

It is also important to take note of the sentiments of consciousness of common purpose and the role of imperialism and capitalism, in Nigeria and the aspiration to control the essential means of production.

The tribes, nations, and Peoples of Nigeria: Deeply sensible of the solemn duty of every patriot of Nigeria to promote the welfare of Nigeria.

Convinced that factors of capitalism, and imperialism have stultified the normal growth of Nigeria in the community of Nations;...

Believing that Nigeria should now evolve into a full fledged democratic state to enable the communities of Nigeria to own and control the essential means of production, and distribution, and thereby more effectively promote social equality and communal welfare.⁴⁰

Henceforth most of the demands, pledges, exhortation were to permeate the speeches of Zik, his followers and his political party the NCNC. Of note also was the constitutional approach mixed with "spitting of fire." Those who were inspired by Zik's speeches especially his most ardent admirers and believers in his political philosophy were to fallout with him when they took the battle inspiring speeches literally.

Zik was to continue to modify his views on such issues as creation of more states, regionalism, tribalism and national ideology particularly if such modification would bring self-government nearer to Nigeria. Realism or expediency took its toll.⁴¹

Some other noticeable shifts in Zik's ideas and strategies need to be mentioned before we consider the implications of the crisis of his ideas and strategies on the development of Nigerian nationalism. These turning points were on the division of the country into

subordinate political units or creation of states, tribalism and ethnic nationalism, and national ideology.

Between 1943 and 1948 Zik advocated the creation of eight states (protectorates) based on ethnic groups (nationalities) but by August 1951, he was calling for a unitary government.⁴² In the 1970s he again called for the creation of twenty two states with a strong centre.⁴³ Zik was opposed to ethnic politics, saying that Africans everywhere were brothers and sisters, and that such divisions would prolong the servitude of Africans under colonial rule. Further more, no African ethnic groups were superior or inferior to the others. But by 1948, he expressed the view that it appeared that his ethnic group had been specially created to lead the children of Africa out of bondage.⁴⁴ He had one time left the Nigerian Youth Movement in protest against what he called tribal (ethnic) discrimination in the conduct of the Youth Movement election, but by the 1960s he said that "tribalism was" a pragmatic instrument of national unity.⁴⁵

On the issue of national ideology, Zik had moved from an advocate of Socialism to that of Neo-Welfarism.⁴⁶

What are some of the implications of these turning points on the development of Nigerian nationalism? To appreciate some of these implications one must understand the role and stature of Zik in the decolonisation of Africa and Nigeria. According to a number of scholars and observers,

Dating roughly from 1943, nationalism began to exercise a controlling force in Nigerian political thought and activities. Zik was both the original inspiration and the dominant influence on this movement. Thomas Hodgkins confirmed this by stating, 'By common consent Dr Azikiwe has had a more profound influence upon the Nigerian nationalist movement during this stage of its history than any other individual.' Abiodun Aloba expressed an identical view in more positive terms by alleging that for fourteen years Zik 'was almost a star in the political firmament.' There were other important contemporary figures like H.O. Davies, Oba Samuel Akinsanya, Magnus Williams and Ernest Ikoli, but their role was secondary. When they disagreed with Zik they were politically ruined.⁴⁷

Although actions may speak louder than words, words speak. If the words and ideas of Zik, as we have found out inspired people, it is reasonable to believe that they also could have demoralised people. Similarly, what Zik in the forefront of anti-colonial and nationalist struggle, thought and said affected the pattern of development of nationalist movement in Nigeria.

Zik had massive following in the 1940s, across the country and across many ethnic groups in the country, at least, much more than

any other politician at that time. For these followers Zik and his political party held the light. Coleman's study⁴⁸ provides the following evidence.

"Azikiwe's ascendancy during the immediate postwar period was based in part upon support from the following principal groups:

- (1) Organized and unorganized labor. The popular belief that Azikiwe was connected with the general strike, coupled with his consistent championing of workers, grievances, brought him the support of the rank and file...
- (2) Clerks, artisans, and teachers. Azikiwe was the "great leveler;" the *Pilot* became the champion of clerks, artisans, and teachers. All previous newspapers had limited their coverage to the social and political activities of old Lagos families; Azikiwe increasingly directed his columns and editorials to the social and recreational pursuits of the common clerk or artisan, who, flattered to see his name in print or his picture in the paper, was inspired to support Azikiwe politically and to become a habitual reader of his papers.
- (3) Youths. Azikiwe's display of erudition and academic achievement, his genuine efforts to encourage athletics, his heroic Horatio Alger career, his interest in educational development, his vigorous press attacks upon Europeans and their follies, and his strong support for Youth groups won him a large following in the generation that came of age during the war and in the mid-1940's. The main accent of Azikiwe's *Renascent Africa* was upon youth".
- (4) Special-grievance groups. Azikiwe used his press to exploit all the grievances that came to his attention. He became the watchdog of African rights, and any African from the lowliest messenger to the wealthiest trader, resident anywhere in Nigeria, could secure immediate front-page publicity on any complaint against the government or against Europeans...
- (5) Organizational leaders. Azikiwe's newspapers gave full publicity to the activities of all tribal unions, social clubs, and other organizations throughout the provinces. Azikiwe sent agents for his press to the major centres, and for the first time in Nigerian history the thousands of clerks and artisans employed by the government or the firms in the more remote towns of Nigeria... felt as though they were part of the great drama unfolding at Lagos. These groups in the provinces were the first

to organize branches of the NCNC or, if they were radically inclined, of the Zikist Movement.

(6) Non-Yoruba educated elements. Although blind devotion to Azikiwe was more pronounced among the Ibo, he was likewise the idol of many previously inarticulate groups such as Cameroonians, Nupe, Tiv, Igbirra, Birom, and Idoma, and indeed of most of the Middle Belt; and a growing number of Hausa, Fulani, and Kunari youths looked up to him as the national leader.⁴⁹

Although Yoruba chiefs were either hostile or indifferent to Zik and the NCNC, "Yoruba youth were very much attracted by the new nationalist spirit" of Zik.

In 1946,

Azikiwe and the NCNC were at the peak of their power and prestige, atop the crest of the highest wave of postwar nationalism. This was confirmed a few months later by the overwhelming victory of the three NCNC candidates, led by Azikiwe, in the Lagos elections.⁵⁰

With the rise of Zikist Movement Militant nationalism; introduction of post world war II reforms in Nigeria by the colonial government, mostly in line with Zik's *Political Blueprint of Nigeria*; and the heightening of ethnic rivalry in Nigerian politics, particularly, with the emergence of the Action Group AG and the Northern Peoples Congress, NPC, political parties in the then Western and Northern Regions, Zik and the NCNC increasingly became less nationalistic and less popular across the country.⁵¹

Azikiwe had a burning passion to liberate Africa, but circumstances limited his field of operation to Nigeria and the British Cameroons. An important ingredient in his zeal was his great desire to elevate his own people - the Ibo - who were behind other major groups in the race toward modernity. Although he publicly eschewed tribalism, most Ibos looked upon him as the leader not only of the Ibo nationality but also of the Nigerian nation of their dreams, and Ibos were in the front ranks of his pan-Nigerian crusade. These circumstances aroused apprehensions that Azikiwe's crusade was in reality a Pan-Ibo affair. On the other hand, more in the tradition of Burke, Awolowo had always been a Yoruba nationalist first and a Pan-Nigerian nationalist second.⁵²

Due to a number of these circumstances most probably beyond his control, between 1937 and 1960, Zik of Africa moved from Accra to Lagos to become, for all practical purpose, Zik of Nigeria, and from Lagos through Ibadan to Enugu to become almost Zik of the Ibos. When he came back to Lagos to be the President of Senate, and finally, the President of Nigeria, he could no longer unify Nigerians as in the 1940s. A brief account of all these is only what

can be done within this chapter. Fuller accounts can be found in the numerous sources already cited.⁵³

The Youth across the country who had been inspired by Zik's ideas rose in his defence and in the propagating of his ideas by forming the Zikist Movement in early 1946.⁵⁴ In order to boost the image of Zik and the NCNC and to advance the pace of attainment of independence from colonial rule, the Zikist Movement called for "positive action" which would paralyze and bring an end to colonial rule. This led to the clamp down on the movement and of the members as well as the imprisonment of a number of the leaders and sympathisers.⁵⁵ Zik was critical of the Zikists'⁵⁶ conduct and they in turn never forgave Zik for being inconsistent in his attitude towards militant nationalists.⁵⁷ Zik's warning

But we must warn the youngsters, as ever we have done, that hard work and diligent studies will fetch far richer dividends than high-sounding slogans and plans that fizzle out into a nine days wonder.⁵⁸

could not be easily reconciled with his own fire-spitting slogans which inspired the militants in the first place.⁵⁹

In the course of time a number of these militants: joined opposing political parties, were expelled from the NCNC executive organs, and/or were alienated from their political mentor and political idol, Zik.⁶⁰

In 1948, from the high seat of the presidency of the NCNC, the then foremost Nigerian nationalist party, Zik took or accepted, in addition, the presidency of Ibo State Union. In his position as both the leader of the NCNC and the Ibos he made a statement that portrayed him as an Ibo chauvinist. Although he later resigned the presidency of the Ibo State Union, some damage had already been done. The NCNC was being viewed as an agent to impose Ibo domination in Nigeria.⁶¹

We have already referred to Zik's various positions on the creation of states, federalism and unitary government. The point to note is that as Zik shifted his position his ardent followers and the NCNC made corresponding shifts (not without justification).⁶²

When through the machinations of the Action Group, Zik, the leader of NCNC, who had been elected from Lagos into the Western House of Assembly, could not be elected from the House to the Central Legislature in Lagos, he turned to Enugu. The crisis precipitated by Zik's failure to remain in the opposition in the Western House of Assembly and/or to be in the Central Legislature in Lagos and his movement from Lagos through Ibadan to Enugu

adversely affected the pattern of development of Nigerian nationalism. This further depleted the top rank and cross-ethnic following of the NCNC. Among other things, the leader of Government Business in Enugu at that time, a business and political associate of Zik, and a non-Ibo (an Efik), Eyo Ita, and other NCNC Ministers, who failed to obey the leadership directive of NCNC to resign were sacked from the NCNC. Eyo Ita was expelled from the NCNC for life. Part of the expulsion order stated:

Your behaviour on the question of your resignation is a shame to you and your race. It is obvious that no self-respecting party can associate with a person like you. You are hereby expelled from the party with ignominy and for life. ⁶³

Following from this, Dr Udo Udoma, the president of the Ibibio State Union, resigned from the NCNC as did other assemblymen from the then Calabar Province. ⁶⁴

By the end of 1951 Zik and the NCNC were confronted by two other major parties which were determined to prevent Zik and the NCNC from controlling the government of Western and Northern provinces (and later regions). While the Action Group became the dominant political party in the West the Northern Peoples Congress became dominant in the North. These rival political parties and their leaders were professed regionalists and saw regional nationalism as a prelude to Nigerian nationalism. ⁶⁵ Zik and the NCNC eventually also settled for regionalism. ⁶⁶

From 1954 to 1960 when Zik returned to Lagos to become the President of Senate and later on President of Nigeria, the trend of nationalism was more predominantly regionalist than pan-Nigerian. It would appear that every Nigerian politician of this period was agreed on the quest for Nigerian statehood (independence from colonial rule and the attainment of governance of Nigeria by Nigerians). The drive for Nigerian nationhood became a concern of secondary importance.

Nationhood is not just self-government or statehood (which was attained in 1960). A nation of Nigerians which has not yet emerged comes with a sense of belonging among Nigerians often manifested in tolerance and care for one another and some accepted standard of behaviour from all members of the nation.

When colonial rule ended with independence, neither Zik nor any of his political rivals was any longer a rallying point for the growth of the Nigerian nation out of the various nations that reside

in Nigeria. Thus Nigeria has remained a nations-state with the hope that it may one day become a nation-state.

There is no doubt that Zik contributed immensely toward the termination of colonial rule (self-government), which was no mean task. What is left to be done is the development of common and acceptable standards of behaviour among all the nations of the country, Nigeria. Such common and acceptable Nigeria-wide standards of culture will straighten and/or create the bonds of nationhood which anti-colonial struggles started. The challenge of Nigerian nationhood is still with us.

IV

Summary and Conclusion

So far we have tried to show that Zik had ideas and strategies on Nigerian nationalism. We distinguished Nigerian nationalism from Yoruba, Efik, Ibo, Hausa/Fulani, etc, nationalisms in Nigeria. Nigerian nationalism forges one nationalism out of each of these smaller nationalisms in the country. Similarly African nationalism is greater than Nigerian nationalism. Each of these higher nationalisms is not the sum of the smaller ones but a synthesis of the smaller ones into one all-embracing one.

Developing or building nationalism is carrying out a synthesis of culture (construction of a common way of life) which forms the bond of unity. It is distinct from mere self-government from colonial rule. A nation may or may not develop within or without colonial rule. Several forces may be stimuli for the development of a nation.⁶⁷ Nationalism is distinct from mere self-government from colonial rule. Independence or self-government from colonial rule at best automatically confers a domestic state not nationhood. Unity and common culture and a sense of oneness of a people are even more crucial to the attainment of nationhood than self-government.

Zik began his nationalist struggles as an African nationalist before he became a Nigerian nationalist. He fired the imagination and aspiration of Africans and Nigerians. At the Nigerian level, he preached the dignity of black people, the brotherhood of Nigerians, a common destiny of all Nigerians. Nigerians are not inferior to European colonisers, and should not accept permanent colonial servitude. They must rise in unity, brotherhood, with learning and courage to regain their birth right of freedom but as much as possible through non-violent constitutional methods. However,

sometimes it appeared that he gave the impression that violent methods had become inevitable. From about 1948 he began to contradict and/or revise his earlier ideas and strategies. In the course of these shifts and turns he lost the following of those who would and/or could not accept such changes. Nigerian nationalism suffered severe blows in this process. So far it has lost the initial impetus provided by Zik, Nigerian nationalism lost ground to Efik, Ibo, Hausa/Fulani, Nupe, Yoruba, etc, nationalisms.

Nigeria has for long attained self-government (indigenous statehood) but without unity, brotherhood and a significant positive common culture (nationhood). This is how the country stands today. The country is yet to become a nation-state which self-government could have created and can still create. We, therefore, know where Zik and his contemporaries left the task of building a Nigerian nation (nation-state) out of the nations of Nigeria (nations-state). Given his circumstances, Zik must have done his best even if his best may not be good enough for some analysts. The challenge remains.

NOTES

1. (a) Two writers, C. Ebo and M. Okoye have given opposite opinions on the thoughts of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. Ebo argues that Zik's thoughts were consistent while Okoye argues that they were not. See C. Ebo, *The Foundations of Zikism: A Historical Analysis of the Development of the Ideology of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, 1937 - 1960* (New York: University of New York, (1963) and M. Okoye, *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe: A Dissent Remembered* (Enugu: Fourth Dimensions Publishers, 1979).
- 1 (b) There are many and different views and treatments of Nationalism and national movements. See Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A. M.I.T. Press, 1966) paperback edition; Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1977); and Mokwugo Okoye, *The Growth of Nations* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1978). See also the account given in Basil Davidson, *African in Modern History: The Search for a New Society* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1978).
2. *Webster Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Massachusetts; G. & Merriam Co., 1967), p. 197.
3. *The Penguin English Dictionary* (Middlesex, England, 1965), p. 174.
4. *Ibid* p. 375.
5. See H. Seton Watson, *Nations and States*, for a detailed discussion of this term.
6. *The Illustrated Heritage Dictionary and Information Handbook* (Boston and Atlanta: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977) p. 874.
7. H. Seton-Watson, pp. 4 - 5.
8. *ibid*.
9. Liberal and Marxist scholars view the concept state differently. The liberals see the state as the supreme public Power within a sovereign political entity while Marxists see the state as a form of class domination over society. See the *The Illustrated Dictionary and Information Handbook*, p. 1259 and G. Belov, *What is the State?* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1986).
10. For this period see the following: N. Azikiwe, *Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961); and N. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa* (Lagos: The Author, 1937).
11. The Age is calculated on the basis of the date the speeches were made and the date of birth of Zik. See N. Azikiwe, *Zik: A Selection of Speeches* and N. Azikiwe, *My Odyssey: An Autobiography* (London: Hurst & Co., 1970).
12. N. Azikiwe, *Zik: A Selection from Speeches*, p. 1
13. *Ibid*, p. 3
14. *Ibid*.
15. Accounts of this book are given in V.O. Iketuonye, *Zik of New Africa* (London: P.R. Macmillan Ltd, (1961) There was also a speech on Liberia reported in N. Azikiwe, *Zik: A Selection from Speeches*, pp. 2 - 3
16. *Ibid*.
17. N. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*. For an assessment of the ideas of Zik in this book and his approach to politics later on see C. Ebo. *The Foundations of Zikism*.
18. N. Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, pp. 17 - 18.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 15
20. *Ibid.*, p. 18
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 20 - 21
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 120 - 192
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 123 - 124

24. *Ibid.*, p. 134
25. *Ibid.*, p. 163
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 165 - 166.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 17 - 18
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 310 - 313
29. By the late 1940s Zik was both the President of Ibo Union and the President of the NCNC. His role in the Ibo Union cost him and the NCNC much his cross-ethnic following he and his political party had initially enjoyed. for further details see J.s. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to nationalism* (Barkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
30. See N. Azikiwe, *Political Blueprint of Nigeria* (Lagos: African Book Co. Ltd, 1943); N. Azikiwe, *NCNC London Delegation: Statement to the Nation on Aims and Objectives of NCNC*, July 20, 1953; By the same author: *Tribalism: A Pragmatic Instrument for National Unity* (Enugu: Eastern Nigeria Printing Corporation, 1964; *Creation of More States in Nigeria*, Nsukka: Political Science Association of University of Nigeria, 1974; *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism, or Welfarism?* (Lagos: Macmillan, 1980).
31. J.S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, *op cit.*
32. N. Azikiwe, *Political Blueprint of Nigeria*; *op. cit.*
33. West African Pilot, July 21, 1938, cited in C. Ebo, *The Foundation of Zikism* pp. 126 - 127.
34. N. Azikiwe, *Political Blueprint of Nigeria*. p. 2
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 2 - 3.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 10 - 11.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 42 - 43.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
40. *Ibid*
41. One of Zik's former disciples felt worried enough about what he considered Zik's inconsistency that he had to write him an open letter; see M. Okoye, *A letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe.*
42. National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons, *Forward to Freedom and Progress* (National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons, 1951), cited in Okwudiba Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1978), p. 56.
43. N. Azikiwe, *Creation of More States in Nigeria.*
44. J.S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, p. 347.
45. N. Azikiwe, *Tribalism: A Pragmatic Instrument for National Unity.*
46. One can compare Zik's views in the *Political Blueprint of Nigeria* with those expressed in his *Ideology for Nigeria.*
47. C. Ebo, *The Foundation of Zikism*, pp. 126 - 127.
48. J. S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, pp. 288 - 290.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
51. *Ibid.*, and see also the account in Richard Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent Africa Nation* (New York and Enugu: Nok Publishers International, 1983), paperback Edition.
52. J. S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, p. 352.
53. See the Accounts in M. Okoye, *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe* and in Coleman, *Nigeria.*
54. Coleman, *Nigeria*, p. 296.
55. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*, p. 75.
56. *Ibid.*, 76
57. Coleman, *Nigeria*, p. 306.
58. See his *Renascent Africa*, and *Political Blueprint of Nigeria.*

212 *Zik and the African Revolution*

59. See Sklar, *Nigeria Political Parties*, Coleman, *Nigeria*, and Okoye, *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe*.
60. Coleman, *Nigeria*, pp. 305 - 306, and Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*.
61. Coleman, *Nigeria*, p. 347.
62. *Ibid.*, pp. 347 - 348.
63. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*, pp. 122 - 123.
64. *Ibid.*, pp. 115 - 125.
65. For a full account of the formation of the AG and NPC, see Sklar, *Nigeria*, and Obafemi Awolowo, *The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 185 - 212, 244.
66. *Ibid.*
67. Refer to note 1 (b).

NCNC And Nigerian Realities

Ugochukwu B. Uba

Introduction

It is difficult to discuss the development of the Nigerian political economy without devoting a substantial part of the discussion to the role of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). It was the NCNC that gave the Nigerian nationalist movement the impetus it needed to mobilize the people for the independence struggle. Before the formation of the NCNC there has been series of nationalist agitations by various groups in Nigeria like the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), but it was the formation of the NCNC in 1944 that gave the nationalist agitation its revolutionary posture. As James Coleman correctly points out "between 1944 and 1957, the NCNC was the leading all-Nigerian nationalist organization."¹ In effect no political history of Nigeria can be complete without devoting a substantial part of the account to that role of the NCNC in the development of modern Nigeria.

At the time the NCNC was formed the Nigerian social formation was under British colonial domination. NCNC was formed under a very hostile and exploitative environment and therefore was full of contradictions. The NCNC was formed during the period of the postwar boom, which sharpened the contradictions in colonial economies. According to Claude Ake, the postwar boom "... merely raised aspirations which could not be fulfilled, and dramatized the inequalities and the exploitative character of the colonial situation.

Discontent with colonialism grew faster than economic expansion. The period of postwar economic expansion was also the period when anti-colonial protest assumed a decisive militancy."² This happened to be the period when the NCNC as a political party was formed. The contradiction was sharpened by the fact that colonial capitalism was very monopolistic, thereby marginalizing the emerging Nigerian petty bourgeoisie. This emerging class was frustrated by its exclusion from the benefits of and the participation in the colonial political economy.

This emerging class formed various political organizations to ensure its participation in the colonial political economy. In the words of James Coleman,

Modern Nationalism includes sentiments, activities and organizational developments aimed explicitly at the self-government and independence of Nigeria as a nation-state existing on a basis of equality in an international state system. Its distinguishing features are (a) the explicit goal of Nigerian self-government, (b) the concept of Nigerian unity, (c) the predominance of westernized elements in leadership groups, (d) development of permanent political associations to pursue nationalist objectives, and (e) the predominance of modern political values and ideals.³

This observation by Coleman shows that the early period of nationalism in Nigeria was led by western-educated elites, whose objective was the elimination of British colonialism. A colonial system that has excluded them from active participation in the governorship and the exploitation of the resources of the country. This emerging class formed political associations in order to fight colonialism in Nigeria.

The first political party was formed in 1922 by Herbert Macaulay. This party was called the Nigerian National Democratic party (NNDP). This party was based in Lagos. It was formed to contest three of the four seats which were allocated to Nigerians in the Lagos City Council by the 1922 Constitution. The interest of the party was local. The first genuine national organization was formed in 1933. This organization started first as the Lagos Youth Movement and was finally called the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). According to Obafemi Awolowo, "the Nigerian Youth Movement made its principal aim the development of a United Nation out of the conglomeration of peoples who inhabited Nigeria."⁴ This drive for national unity was strengthened in 1937 when Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe returned to Nigeria from the United States of America after brief stay in Ghana where he worked as the editor of the *Morning Post* from 1934 to 1937. The Nigerian Youth

Movement was in the vanguard of the Nigerian independence struggle. NYM was strengthened by Nnamdi Azikiwe's membership and the organization became a potent force in Nigeria's nationalist struggle. *The West African Pilot* which was found by Azikiwe in 1937 was a major asset in the nationalist struggle and it served as a major instrument for raising national consciousness and the mobilization of the people of Nigeria in the nationalist struggle. Azikiwe's speeches and writings were potent instrument for the mobilization of the consciousness of the Nigerian people. With Azikiwe's membership NYM was at the forefront of Nigerian nationalism during this period.

This movement was engulfed in a political crisis in 1941. This crisis led to the split of the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). The split of this movement was significant in Nigerian history. Politicization of ethnicity started at the end of this period. Frederick Schwarz described the crisis in the following words,

In 1941, the NYM was permanently split, and tribalism came to the fore of Nigerian politics. The occasion was a contest within the NYM for a vacant seat on the Legislative Council. The contestants were Ernest Ikoli, who was an Ijaw, and Samuel Akinsanya an Ijebu Yoruba. Ikoli was chosen. Azikiwe and most Ibo's and Akinsanya with some Ijebus left the NYM on the ground that the majority had rejected Akinsanya because he was an Ijebu. The NYM was left with an almost entirely Yoruba membership, and thus began the political tension between Ibo and Yoruba that has plagued Nigerian politics ever since.⁵

With the split of the NYM various attempts were made by Nigerian Youths to form another national organization that would continue the fight for Nigerian independence. This crisis affected the pattern of future politics in Nigeria. Coleman notes that "the Akinsanya crisis was the first major manifestation of tribal tension that affected all subsequent efforts to achieve unity."⁶ Despite this observation subsequent efforts were made towards forming another national association: It was one of these efforts that led to the formation of the NCNC in 1944.

The Formation of the N.C.N.C.

The crisis in the Nigerian Youth Movement affected adversely the strategy of the nationalist struggle. The end of the second world war was followed by militant nationalism. Richard Sklar point out that "the right of self-determination, as proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter, was interpreted by the nationalist of British West Africa as a promise of self-government."⁷ This perception of the declaration of the Atlantic Charter led to the intensification of the nationalist

struggle in Nigeria. But the struggle was weakened by the fact that various movements were in disarray, especially with crisis in the Nigerian Youth Movement. There was, therefore, a need to form a national front in order to ensure a successful prosecution of the struggle for Nigerian independence. The initiative for the formation of a national front was seized by the Nigerian Union of Students (NUS). The action of the students was precipitated by the 1944 King's College Students strike and the draconian manner in which the colonial administration handled the strike. According to Sklar, "this incident aroused both the ire of the Lagos intelligensia and the latent militancy of the NUS."⁸ The students through their activity set the machinery in motion for the formation of a central organization that will coordinate the activities of the various associations engaged in the nationalist struggle.

On June 10, 1944, the NUS convened a mass meeting in the Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos, to consider (1) the King's College strike (2) the possibility of raising funds for a national school and (3) the immediate formation of a representative national committee.⁹

At the meeting it was resolved to form the National Council and the establishment of a national school. At the inaugural meeting of the National Council of Nigeria on August 26, 1944 attended by various associations a resolution was passed to fight with a united front for Nigeria's self-government. Richard Sklar further notes that,

Over forty organizations, including political parties, tribal unions, trade unions, literary associations, professional associations, religious groups, social clubs and women's organizations were represented and a resolution was adopted expressing the determination of the national Council to work in unity for the realization of our ultimate goal of self-government within the British Empire.¹⁰

At the inaugural meeting Herbert Macaulay was elected the President and Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected the Secretary.

By January 1945 the National Council comprised of 87 member unions including three Cameroonian groups for which reason, the Council changed its name to National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC). Under the leadership of Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikiwe NCNC was in the forefront of the struggle for Nigerian independence. At his period in Nigeria's political history the NCNC was the only viable political association in the country. In addition its membership was national in focus and therefore represented the aspirations of Nigerians. When Herbert Macaulay died in 1946, Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected the President of the party.

Azikiwe's leadership of the party encountered the opposition of some members of the party, especially some Yoruba members who resented the domination of the nationalist movement by Azikiwe. As Amoda points out, "between 1946 and 1948 the tribal tensions which had been initiated by the Ikoli-Akinsanya dispute of 1941, coupled with the dissatisfaction of Yoruba elite who felt that the NCNC was dominated by Azikiwe and the Ibos, culminated in the tribal cold war of 1948."¹¹ This opposition notwithstanding the NCNC marched on as the vanguard association in the struggle for Nigerian independence under the leadership of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. NCNC leadership did not allow itself to be diverted in her struggle for Nigerian independence. The NCNC continued to oppose many of the obnoxious policies of the colonial administration especially its various constitutional reforms. We shall return to this later. But suffice it to say that up till 1951 the NCNC was the only viable political organization in the country. 1951 was the beginning of the formation of other political parties which stood in opposition to the NCNC. Specifically this was the period in which the Action Group (AG) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) were formed to challenge the hegemony of the NCNC. These two parties were formed by the ethnic fractions of the emerging Nigerian dominant class to contest elections to the regional assemblies introduced by Macpherson's Constitution of 1951.

When the Macpherson constitution was introduced in 1951, it represented the beginning of a semi-responsible government. As a result of this constitution, the regional assemblies were enlarged and given legislative range of subjects.¹² Election was planned for the whole federation, both to the Federal and regional house of assemblies. These two parties were therefore formed to contest these elections and to prevent the NCNC domination of the country, since at this period, NCNC happened to be the only organized political association in the country with a national following. This saw the beginning of the struggle for the control of the state apparatuses by the ethnic fractions of the emerging dominant class. As Thomas Hodgkin correctly states,

It might indeed be argued that, once the unifying force which opposition to colonial rule generates has exhausted itself, the multiplication of parties is a logical outcome of the idea of self determination which underlies all colonial nationalism, once the principle of self-government is recognised, a number of ethnic "selves" are liable to advance their claims. ¹³

This period witnessed the emergence of political parties in the country. As Kenneth Post points out, :

This was the period when the latent, anti-parties of Yoruba and Ibo of the North and South came to the fore, expressed and manipulated by the Nationalist leaders and others not previously active in the movement as they became rivals for office. 14

As a result of this new constitution writes John Ostheimer, "Azikiwe's opponents were offered a perfect chance to accomplish the task of rallying Yoruba chiefs and their people against the menace of Ibo control. Spearheading the Yoruba mobilization was a group of young elite within the Egbe (a Yoruba cultural Organization formed in 1948) who called themselves Action Group (AG) led by a lawyer Awolowo."¹⁵

The Action Group as a political party was formed in 1951, formed by the elite group within the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. So it was actually a political wing of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. Sklar observes that the purpose of the group, "was to win electoral control of the Western Region in 1951. To that end, professional and educated Yoruba personalities resident in Lagos and Ibadan, who did not accept leadership of Azikiwe would be encouraged to return to their home areas and organize their people to support their candidature to the Western House of Assembly."¹⁶ In the North the Northern People's Congress which was formed in 1949 was converted to a political party. According to Sklar, "on October 7, 1951, it was announced that the Northern People's Congress with 65 branches and over 6,000 members had been converted into a political party."¹⁷ While the AG was formed to stem the perceived Ibo domination, the NPC was formed to contain the threat of southern domination. Beyond these three dominant political parties, there were other minority parties which were formed around the same period. But the big three, the NCNC, AG, and NPC constituted the significant actors in the Nigerian political scene; other minority parties survived by forming alliances with them.

Before this time the NCNC was the only well organized political association with a national base. It was the NCNC that was at the forefront of the struggle of Nigeria's independence. While bases of the support of the NPC and the AG were ethnic right from their inception, that of the NCNC was national. The NCNC as was pointed out earlier was a party of various social organizations. The membership of NCNC is by virtue of the membership of any of the affiliated organizations. Following the increasing threat to NCNC's hegemony by the AG specifically the criteria for membership was substantially revised, "the third annual convention of NCNC in September 1951 adopted fundamental revisions of organization and

policy of the party. Individual membership was instituted although member-unions retained the right of non-voting representation at meetings of the National Council."¹⁸ The institution of individual membership seemed to have broadened the support base of the NCNC. The name of the party later changed to National Council of Nigeria's Citizens, when Cameroon opted out of Nigeria. With the politicization of the ethnicity and the formation of ethnic based political associations NCNC gradually changed from being a party with a national base to a party with an ethnic base. It was gradually reduced to the level of other two major political parties, the AG and the NPC. But in spite of the changing image of the party, it continued its struggle for the independence of Nigeria and to demand other constitutional reforms, which the party felt would facilitate Nigeria's march to independence, which became a reality on October 1, 1960. In all its struggles and contributions the NCNC's moving spirit was in the person of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who remained the President of the party until Nigeria won her independence.

Azikiwe and NCNC

Dr Azikiwe was the moving force in the NCNC. His impact in the Nigerian's nationalist movement was felt when he joined the Nigerian Youth Movement on his return from the United States. When he took over the leadership of the NCNC, the party became a force that could not be ignored by the colonial administration. The party became an instrument of mobilization. The nationalist movement became militant with the NCNC as the vanguard party. As Coleman correctly noted,

Militant nationalism in the post-war period was a child of Azikiwe's journalism and charismatic qualities. The militant nationalist included genuine idealist, communist sympathizers, and political opportunists who were the shock troops of the NCNC during the height of its activity, and who were not impressed by nor content with the reforms of 1948. The enthusiasm and ambition that Azikiwe had aroused in them were too strong, and their impatience was too greatly, for them to wait until the reforms mature.¹⁹

Azikiwe's charismatic leadership of the NCNC endeared him to the heart of Nigerians, he was a legend during this period in Nigeria history. There were many mythologies about him. Azikiwe used his newspapers especially *The West African Pilot*, to give full publicity to the activities of the nationalist movements. This further enhanced the popularity of Azikiwe and hence that of the NCNC. For during this period Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe had become synonymous with the

NCNC. The success of the NCNC was tied with the popularity of Nnamdi Azikiwe. Azikiwe and the NCNC were at the peak of their power and prestige, atop the crest of the highest wave of post-war nationalism. This was confirmed a few months later by the overwhelming victory of the three NCNC candidates led by Azikiwe, in the Lagos elections. The fortune of the NCNC was tied to the faith of Azikiwe. NCNC was seen as a national party because of the nationalist orientation of Nnamdi Azikiwe. It was therefore not surprising that his acceptance of the leadership of Ibo state union adversely affected the national image of the NCNC. In the words of Richard Sklar,

In December 1948, a pan-Ibo conference was held at Port Harcourt to organize the Ibo linguistic-group into a political unit... this conference produced a new association, the Ibo State Union... Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected to the presidency of the Union... In time his occupancy of the top position in the Ibo State Union proved to be a source of acute embarrassment to the NCNC as it was cited by opponents to substantiate the allegation that the NCNC was Ibo dominated.²⁰

The acceptance of the presidency of the Ibo State Union when he was at the same time the President of the NCNC does not appear to be a good judgement on the part of Azikiwe. This move provided ammunition for the opponents of the NCNC to attack and ridicule the party as an Ibo party. This in effect diminished the national posture of the NCNC. Azikiwe should not have accepted the presidency of the Ibo state no matter the amount of pressure from the Ibo leadership since it would not be in the interest of his party. To compound the problem Azikiwe's newspaper *West African Pilot* gave wide coverage to the activities of the Union while at the same time attacking its Yoruba counterpart, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa.

When the Egbe Omo Oduduwa was formed in 1948 the *West African Pilot* started attacking the organization, trying to frustrate its efforts, while at the same time supporting the existence of the Ibo State Union. It gave a lot of publicity to the Ibo Union meetings, and decisions and to the achievement of Ibos in all walks of life. Since Azikiwe, an Ibo, owned this paper, the Yorubas interpreted this as an attempt by the Ibos to frustrate the Yorubas. Eme Awa observes that

for various reasons, the *West African Pilot* had opposed the development of the Egbe into an overall Yoruba cultural organization, some Yorubas therefore felt that Azikiwe was biased in favour of the Ibos because he not only sanctioned the existence of a similar body among Ibos, but served as its head.²¹

This act by Azikiwe and his Newspaper, *The West African Pilot*, dented the national image of his party the NCNC and gave the party

an ethnic bias. Despite this development whatever gain the party made in elections was as a result of Azikiwe's identification with the party. The formation of the regional parties AG and the NPC prevented the electoral success of the NCNC in the West and North because of the perception of the party as an Ibo party and association of the leadership of the Ibo state union with the party. This notwithstanding throughout his political career, Nnamdi Azikiwe fought doggedly for the survival of NCNC as a political party.

Ideology and Ideological Conflict in the NCNC

The NCNC as a political party did not have clearly defined political ideology, the party was principally concerned with the liberation of Nigeria from colonialism. The party raised the national consciousness of Nigerians. The nationalist struggle of the NCNC was guided by the nationalist ideology which was not concerned with the socio-economic transformation of the colonial economy, but it rather called for the inclusion of the Nigerian educated elite in the colonial administration, part of their protest is against racial discrimination by the colonial officials. The characteristics of nationalist ideology are outlined by Claude Ake, as follows: one, the rehabilitation of self-respect of the colonized people. Two, the denigration of colonial rule, three, assertion of self-determination and four, the doctrine of liberal democracy. The nationalist ideology guided the nationalist struggle of the NCNC.

This lack of a clearly defined ideology became manifest when the activities and strategies of the members of the Zikist Movement contradicted with those of NCNC and those of Azikiwe. The Zikist Movement was formed in 1945 to defend Azikiwe against the attacks from his opponents and his critics.

Coleman observes that "the tribal origin of the founders... reflected the multi-tribal character of Azikiwe's youthful following."²² The Zikist movement was guided by the Zikist Philosophy as espoused by Nwafor Orizu in his book *Without Bitterness*

...Zikism is irredentism, it is God-sanctioned plan. It is a rejuvenated universal philosophy; it is no jingoism; it is not racialism, it is not anarchism; it is not monistic; it is not sarcastic, it is not apologetic; it is faith in life, a creative impulse... Zikism must grow and spread on one social myth, namely, African irredentism, which must mean, the redemption of Africa from social wreckage, political servitude and economic impotency... Africa is then to be save from ideological confusion, psychological immaturity, spiritual complacency and mental stagnation.²³

On the basis of the above philosophy the objective of the Zikist Movement was beyond the defence of its idol Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, it also aimed at clearing the ideological confusion in the nationalist movements and the liberation of Nigeria from the clutches of imperialism. The Zikist Movement operated as a Youth Wing of the NCNC. For the brief duration of its existence 1946 - 1950 before it was outlawed by the colonial administration, it served as a militant wing of the NCNC. The Zikist Movement was outlawed because of its increasing militancy and violence. Some of the members of the Zikist Movement have accused Azikiwe of abandoning them, when they needed his support most. Mokwugo Okoye who was the Secretary of the Movement in his book *Letter to Dr Azikiwe*, accused Azikiwe of denying the Movement and strongly expressed his disappointment. Chinweizu, in his book *The West and the Rest of Us* attributed Azikiwe's lukewarm support to the movement to Azikiwe's concern for his personal safety, that is, his fear of going to jail and of losing his life. According to Coleman "Azikiwe tried to avoid open identification with the leadership of Zikist Movement at the height of its militant activity."²⁴

On closer examination it seems that the disagreement between Azikiwe and the Zikist Movement was in the area of strategy. While Azikiwe preferred a gradual dislocation of colonialism, the Zikist Movement was calling for a revolutionary overthrow of colonialism, hence Osita C. Agwuna's public lecture in 1948 entitled "A Call For Revolution" and Mallam H. R. Abdallah president of the Movement's public address entitled "The Age of Positive Action" in which he declared,

I hate the Union Jack with all my heart because it divides the people wherever it goes... It is a symbol of persecution, of domination, a symbol of exploitation... (of) brutality. e have passed the age of petition... the age of resolution, ... the age of diplomacy... This is the age of action - plain blunt and positive action²⁵

The Movement also decided to attack African nationals, semi-nationals and institutions opposed to their objectives.

Given Dr. Azikiwe's belief in the doctrine of liberal democracy, it was not therefore surprising that he would part company with the Zikist Movement in light of their differences on strategy. Azikiwe had cause to caution the militant nationalists in the following words, "But we must warn the youngsters, as ever we have done, that hard work and diligent studies will fetch far richer dividends than high sounding slogans and plans that fizzle out into a nine day's wonder."²⁶

The disagreement was not on the overall objective of the movement but on the strategy for achieving this objective. This is even more so when Azikiwe's newspaper the *West African Pilot* served for sometime as the publicity organ of the movement. The Zikist Movement was formed to defend and immortalize Dr Azikiwe; it is therefore understandable when the members of the movement felt that they were abandoned by Azikiwe. But as we tried to show Azikiwe's belief in the doctrine of liberal democracy was in contradiction to the radical strategy of the Zikist Movement.

This is even more apparent when the new Governor Sir John Macpherson who assumed office in 1948 promised a number of constitutional reforms, in line with some of the demands of the NCNC. Kalu Ezera noted that,

This was, indeed, an unexpected announcement to the country. Yet it was received everywhere, especially from the nationalist camp, with great joy and excitement. In terms of tactical and psychological operation, this proposal of constitutional revision of Richard's Constitution was not only magnanimous but was also a sincere attempt to show that agreement between nationalist demands and official policy was possible. The Governor's statement emphasized that the constitutional review would take place only if it was the wish of the country.²⁷

Not only did he promise constitutional reform, the new Governor also on arrival appointed a special Commission in May 1948 on the Nigerianization of the Nigerian Civil Service. Dr Azikiwe then leader of the NCNC was appointed to serve in this special Commission. On the basis of the above development it will not be difficult to understand why Azikiwe disagreed with the Zikist Movement. The new governor seemed to be applying the doctrine of liberal democracy to which Azikiwe subscribes which contradicts the Movement's strategy. Azikiwe would like to see an end to colonialism, but he liked to achieve this objective through a non-violent means. His belief in playing according to the rule is clearly evident in his book *Renascent Africa* first published in 1937 in which this belief was clearly stated. In the words of Azikiwe,

Critics of the concept of the New Africa have often fallen into a common error of regarding it as advocating ultra-radical and ultra-revolutionary changes in the social order, by all means, fair or foul... There must be changes in order to have a new order. True. There must be radical changes in order to have a new order. True. There must be revolutionary changes in order to have a new order. True. But I have never advocated that these radical and revolutionary changes should be crystallized through foul means... Radicalism and Revolutionism may be identified with changes, but these changes need not be the type usually connected with bloodshed and open disregard for law and order.²⁸

On the other hand, accounting for the disagreement between Azikiwe and the Zikist Movement, Mokwugo Okoye who was an active member of the Movement stated as follows,

We recognized Zik as the leader of the NCNC of which we were members. He had inspired us as young people with his writings, his lectures, and we have access to him occasionally. We believed in socialism. He and his group, including our colleague, Kola Balogun, ... Zik got him, ... and others to fight us, trying to say we are communist.²⁹

On the strategy of the Zikist Movement, Mokwugo pointed out that in 1948, they organized a lecture which they knew was seditious, "call on people not to pay their taxes, telling the British to go to hell with their empire day when they celebrate our enslavement. We knew it was seditious and sure enough the arrest came."³⁰ He further pointed out that Dr Azikiwe described them as "viviparous lieutenants and cantankerous followers." It is obvious from the above statements that their belief and strategy ran contrary to those of Azikiwe, hence Dr Azikiwe distanced himself from the movement, though Mokwugo Okoye believes that he sacrificed them in order to reach a compromise with the British. Whatever the reason there seemed to be a fundamental disagreement in terms of strategy. This was a period of serious ideological crisis in the NCNC. In addition there were other internal party conflicts within the NCNC. We will not allow the discussion of these conflicts to detain us. This period also witnessed the emergence of organized opposition against the vanguard role of Dr Azikiwe and the NCNC.³¹ In spite of these crises the NCNC led by Dr Azikiwe pressed on its demand for the independence of Nigeria. These crises affected to a considerable degree the effectiveness of the party.

NCNC and Nigeria's Social Formation

The NCNC right from its inception in 1944 played a very major role towards the independence of Nigeria. Up till 1951 when other political parties were established the NCNC remained the only major political party in the country. It served as the major mobilizing force in the struggle for independence. Dr Azikiwe's leadership inspired quite a number of the Nigerian Youths. "Between 1944 and 1957 the NCNC was the leading all-Nigerian nationalist organization."³² In its 1945 constitutional convention it outlined some of its major objectives,

- (1) To extend democratic principles and to advance the interest of the people of Nigeria and the Cameroons under British mandate.
- (2) To impart political education to the people of Nigeria with a view to achieving self government.
- (3) To provide NCNC members with medium of expression in order to secure political freedom, economic security, social equality, and religious toleration in Nigeria and the Cameroons under British Commonwealth of Nations.³³

The NCNC had a national following and its rallies provided political education for the people, hence enhancing the consciousness of the people. This was as a result of its vanguard role in Nigeria's struggle for independence. The NCNC played a very major role in the constitutional development of Nigeria.

Its first major political act after its inaugural meeting in 1944 was the opposition to constitutional proposal of Sir Arthur Richards the then Governor General of Nigeria which was submitted to the legislative council for approval. These proposals with few alterations were passed into law on August 2, 1946 and it came into operation on January 1, 1947.³⁴ The provisions of the Richards' Constitution of 1946 are as follows. There was a legislative Council for the whole of Nigeria composed of,

The Governor (as President)
13 Ex-officio and
3 Nominated
28 Unofficial Members in the ratio of:
4 Elected and
24 Nominated or indirectly elected...

It also made provision for the regional councils in the Northern, Western and Eastern provinces.³⁵ The native authorities were to select the bulk of the membership of these regional houses. According Kalu Ezeru, "these Regional Houses were primarily intended to forge a link between the Native Authorities and the Legislative Council."³⁶ This principally alienated the educated elite from the government. In addition these regional Houses had no legislative powers and they also had no power to appropriate revenues. "They were indeed only deliberating and advisory bodies with the right to make recommendations regarding draft legislation."³⁷ Since their function was mainly advisory the Governor was not bound to accept their advice on legislative matters. The

Governors were merely going to use these legislative councils to legitimize their actions and decisions.

This constitution was opposed by the nationalists, the main opposition came from the NCNC who wrote a memorandum criticizing the constitutional provision which it submitted to the Governor. There was a general agreement among the nationalists on their opposition to Richards' Constitution. Leading this opposition was Dr Azikiwe and the NCNC. The NCNC decided to tour the country and arouse the consciousness of the people. Writing about the tour Coleman had to say,

The NCNC tour of the provinces was conducted to raise funds to send a delegation to London in order to protest against the Constitution ... It was an unprecedented venture... it was the first time in the history of Nigeria that large numbers of people were made conscious of Nigerian unity. The tour commenced at the end of April 1946 and led by ... Nnamdi Azikiwe, Herbert Macaulay, Michael Imoudu³⁸.

The NCNC toured the whole country under the leadership of Azikiwe after the death of Macaulay. At the end of the tour the NCNC collected a total of £13,000 and stimulated hundreds of thousands of Nigerians in the interior to the awareness of the nationalist ideals.³⁹ On the tour Kalu Ezera states that,

Nnamdi Azikiwe with his two-year old NCNC was at the peak of his fame. In fact, the Nigerian government was so worried about the effectiveness of the NCNC tour, the Governor Richards himself undertook to tour several of the places visited by NCNC leaders to counteract the propaganda effects of the later.⁴⁰

In June of 1947 Azikiwe led an NCNC delegation to London to submit the party's protest against the Richards' Constitution to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. On their return to Nigeria they were received by a mammoth crowd. The inability of the delegation to exact concessions from the British government led to acrimony within the party and external attacks on the party. This almost crippled the NCNC as political party. Dr Azikiwe's doggedness prevented the collapse of the NCNC and kept the NCNC alive to continue the fight for Nigeria's independence. Coleman notes that during this period the name of NCNC and its objectives were kept alive only in the person and activities of Nnamdi Azikiwe and the pages of his newspapers. This perceived failure of the NCNC delegation, notwithstanding the trip to London, helped to raise the national consciousness of the people and kept the spirit of the struggle for independence alive.

The Constitutional reforms embarked upon by Macpherson who succeeded Sir Arthur Richards in 1948 is a testimony to the effectiveness of the NCNC campaign against the Richards Constitution. This is even more so when it is realized that the constitution was to be reviewed nine years from the date of its effectiveness, that is January 1, 1946. NCNC also enhanced the struggle for Nigeria's independence by giving logistic support to the Zikist Movement for the short period it operated 1946 to 1950 before they parted company over the issue of strategy. "The strategies of civil disobedience advocated by the Zikists, ... were incompatible with the political tactics favoured by Azikiwe, after whom the movement was named."⁴¹ For the period the honeymoon of NCNC and the Zikist Movement lasted the activity of the movement helped the NCNC to advance the struggle for Nigeria's independence. NCNC also under the leadership of Azikiwe played a role in the constitutional conferences that led to the introduction of a new constitution in 1951 by John Macpherson called Macpherson Constitution. This constitution strengthened the regional governments created under Richards Constitution. The NCNC opposed Macpherson's constitution because it had not significantly departed from Richards' Constitution. For example elections to the three Regional Houses of Assembly were by electoral college. The main criticism came from Azikiwe, and this was contained in his minority Reports to the Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council. According to Kalu Ezera "to the NCNC leader, nothing was desirable which fell short of direct elections, separate municipal constituencies, limitation on the power of chiefs, Ministers with full ministerial powers, and strong central government."

The introduction of the Macpherson Constitution gave rise to the formation of other political parties, especially the Action Group (AG) led by Obafemi Awolowo and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) led by Sir Ahmadu Bello which began to challenge the hegemony of the NCNC in the nationalist struggle. These parties were formed to prevent the NCNC from controlling the national and regional legislatures. The formation of these parties led to the politicization of ethnicity in Nigeria. In order to defeat the NCNC which had a national following, the leaders of these parties resorted to manipulating the ethnic consciousness of their followers. Having fractionalized along ethnic lines, and taken control of the political leadership of their various regions, the Nationalist leaders were

converting their personal conflict into inter-communal conflict. Richard Sklar observes that "in their respective regions leaders of these dominant nationality groups controlled the means of access to power and wealth, naturally and justifiably to a degree they tend to equate their private interests with the objective interest of their nationality groups, conversely they exploited the sentiments of their groups to promote their private interest."⁴² The nature of the conflict which started brewing with the formation of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa in 1948 was captured by an editorial of the *West African Pilot* of September 10, 1948.

By now the Egbe has made it clear that its battle is not really against Dr Azikiwe's personality and even against the Ibos as a group, but against the aspiration of the 27 millions backing up the NCNC. Henceforth the cry must be one of battle against Egbe Omo Oduduwa, its leaders at home and abroad, up hill and down dale in the streets of Nigeria and in residence of its advocates. The Egbe Omo Oduduwa is the enemy of Nigeria, it must be crushed to the earth. There is no going back until the fascist organization of Sir Adeyemo Alakija has been dismembered.⁴³

The result of this rivalry and the politicization of ethnicity was the development of ethnic consciousness and the retardation of national consciousness. This affected the national support hitherto enjoyed by the NCNC. The effect of ethnic consciousness was reflected in the subsequent elections in the country. This led to the return of Azikiwe to Eastern Nigeria; this move affected adversely the national following enjoyed by the NCNC.

The politicization of ethnicity reduced the NCNC to a regional party. The party was no longer able to enjoy national support. After reviewing the elections in Nigeria from 1954 to 1960, John Mackintosh concluded that "the results of the local, regional, federal elections over the past six years in Nigeria showed a definite trend towards the control of each region by a single party. The parties are unable to find any secure foothold in other regions except by supporting minority or dissident elements for whom they can do very little in the long term."⁴⁴ This trend has continued in the post-independence elections.⁴⁵ In spite of the setback suffered by the NCNC as a result of the politicization of ethnicity by the AG and the NPC, the NCNC under the leadership of Dr Azikiwe participated actively in the constitutional conferences and the 1957 conference that ushered in the independence of Nigeria in 1960.

Conclusion

NCNC as a political party played a major role in the nationalist struggle, and through its activities aroused the national consciousness of Nigerians. In all the activities of the NCNC the motivating force of the NCNC was Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. His dynamic leadership of the NCNC enabled the party to mobilize the populace for the independence struggle. His writings and speeches inspired the people of Nigeria. Dr Azikiwe became synonymous with the NCNC. In addition his newspapers especially the *West African Pilot* became the publicity organ of the NCNC and other nationalist organizations.

He has often been criticized for abandoning the Zikist movement when it needed him most, but a careful analysis of the events will show that they parted ways not on their major objectives but on the strategies to be adopted in achieving the objectives. In spite of the difference we feel that he should have been more sympathetic to the Zikist movement. His castigation of the movement was unnecessary. Furthermore Dr Azikiwe's acceptance of the presidency of the Ibo State Union in 1948 when he was the President of NCNC affected the image of the party. By that act he provided ammunition for his opponents who accused him of being a tribalist and the NCNC an Ibo party. His return to the East following his election setbacks in the West helped to portray the NCNC as an ethnic party. The above observations cannot contradict the fact that the history of Nigeria's political development cannot be complete without the discussion of the role of the NCNC, more specifically without recognizing the role played by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. At each stage in the struggle for Nigerian independence, he was the dominant and the motivating force. Azikiwe was so influential and popular that

Parents named their babies after him. Azikiwe became a household word even in remote villages... Azikiwe's name became the symbol of African nationalism. It was known both at home and abroad to a degree never before achieved by a Nigerian leader.⁴⁶

Dr Azikiwe during his political career made a number of mistakes but these mistakes cannot distract from his overall contribution in the development of the Nigerian nation and the party he led, the NCNC, was the vanguard organization in the struggle for Nigeria's political emancipation. The NCNC more than any other political association in Nigeria shaped the Nigerian political history. The party was able to do this because of the dynamic leadership of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe.

NOTES

1. James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958) p. 265.
2. Claude Ake, *A Political Economy of Africa*, (London: Longman Group Limited, 1981) p. 71.
3. James Coleman, *op. cit.* pp. 169 - 170
4. Obafemi Awolowo, *Awo: The Autobiography of chief Obafemi Awolowo*, (Ibadan: Cambridge University Press, 1960) p. 120.
5. Frederick A.D. Schwarz, *Nigeria: The Tribes, the Nation, or the Race: The Politics of Independence*, (Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press (1965) p. 61.
6. James Coleman, *op. cit.* p. 226
7. Richard C. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation* (New York: Nork Publishers (Nig) Ltd) p. 55.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 56
9. *Ibid.*, p. 57
10. *Ibid.*, 6p. 57
11. Mayibi Amoda, "Background to the Conflict: A Summary of Nigeria's political History from 1914 to 1964," in Joseph Okpaku, ed., *Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York: Third Press, 1972) p. 19.
12. *Nigeria: The Political and Economic Background* prepared by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1966, p. 45.
13. Thomas Hodgkin, *African Political Parties; An Introductory Guide* (Middlesex, Penguin Books Ltd, 1961), p. 23.
14. Kenneth Post, *The Nigerian Elections of 1959: Politics and Administration in a Developing Political system* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 26.
15. John Ostheimer, *Nigerian Politics*, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1973), p. 128.
16. Richard Sklar, *op. cit.* p. 120
17. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
19. James Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 296.
20. Richard Sklar, *op. cit.* pp. 10 - 71
21. Eme Awa, *Federal Government in Nigeria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 93.
22. James Coleman *op. cit.* p. 296.
23. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 297.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 306
25. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 306.
27. Kalu Ezera, *Constitutional Development in Nigeria*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 88.
28. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascence Africa*, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Limited, 1968), pp. 34 - 37.
29. The Real Heroes: The Untold Story of the Genuine but forgotten men, women who fought Nigeria's independence, *African Concord*, October 3, 1989, p. 30.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
31. 1948 was the period when the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (A Yoruba Cultural Organization) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC), (Northern Cultural Organization) which metamorphosed into a political party in 1951 were formed. A political wing of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the Action Group (AG) was also formed in 1951 with the introduction of Macpherson's constitution which made provision for a semi-responsible government. The Constitution enlarged the regional assemblies and gave them legislative and financial

powers over a specific but considerable range of subject. In addition there were to be elections in the federation, both the Federal House of Assembly and all Regional Assemblies.

32. James Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 265.
33. Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 267.
34. Kalu Ezera, *op. cit.* pp. 67 - 68.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 70
38. James Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 291.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 292
40. Kalu Ezera, *op. cit.*, pp. 79 - 80.
41. Richard L. Sklar and C. S. Whitaker, Jr., "Nigeria," in James Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr., eds., *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa*, (Los Angeles, University of California, Press, 1966), p. 599.
42. Richard Sklar, "Constitutions in the Nigerian Political System," *Journal of Modern Africa Studies*, Vol. 3, August, 1965, p. 203.
43. *West African Pilot*, 10 September, 1948
44. John Mackintosh, "Electoral Trends and Tendency to a one party system in Nigeria" *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, 1 1962, p. 203.
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Regional Premiership: A Test Of Political Leadership

Sam O. Mbakwe

It all began as a fall-out from party indiscipline. The official NCNC stand was not to give Macpherson Constitution of 1952 a trial. There was a division of opinion in the party. NCNC Central Ministers won the fight at the Port Harcourt Convention to give the Constitution a trial. They were supported by the Regional Ministers. At a reassembled Convention at Jos, all the Ministers refused to turn up. They were expelled except Dr Endeley of the Cameroons who was not affected. They should have obeyed their party. This was one crisis for the party. Earlier on, Dr Azikiwe had suffered betrayal and humiliation at Ibadan as a result of disloyalty and indiscipline in his party.

Within the rank and file of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) it was unthinkable that frontline nationalists would be in the legislatures and governments in many parts of Nigeria including Lagos without Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe playing a leading role in the legislature or leading a government in one of the regions. Thus it became imperative that when Chief Awolowo became the leader of Government Business in Ibadan instead of Dr Azikiwe, the Sardauna of Sokoto in Kaduna, Eyo Ita (one of Azikiwe's deputies) in Enugu and Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in Lagos, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe must be found a place, at least, as one NCNC frontliner told me, to show that Azikiwe had a base, a home and a region. The Awolowo-led Action Group deliberately froze out

Dr Azikiwe, member for Lagos, from the centre. The frontliner was referring to what was generally regarded as a betrayal of Azikiwe by tribal minded Yoruba NCNC members.

Dr Azikiwe was the central figure in the Eastern Nigerian political crisis of 1953 on which much had been written. The man had been accused of spearheading the crisis which gave rise to political resistance of some powerful politicians of the Eastern Region such as the entire cabinet of Professor Eyo Ita, their supporters such as the late Sir Louis Mbanefo, Alvan Ikoku, A.C. Nwapa, Okoi Arikpo, Jaja Wachukwu, R.I. Uzoma, Eni Njoku and many others. The resistance was total, tense and indeed a most serious political event in our history. The political system in the East was heated and the situation required a political solution.

Nigeria was still a colony of Britain. The crisis in the East came at a time Nigeria had a first taste of the political freedom and participation in their government for which the nationalists had been agitating for so long. The British could not allow the struggle for power in the East to go on for so long thus leaving the region without a government and any direction. The Regional legislature was dissolved and another election was ordered. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's party, the NCNC, was returned in the Eastern Region with overwhelming majority. Dr Azikiwe was asked by the Regional Governor to form a government. Dr Azikiwe became the leader of government business, a nomenclature that was later changed to Regional Premier. Eyo Ita was removed from office together with his ministers derisively called "Sit tight ministers." Those NCNC ministers from the East at the centre were also removed. They too earned the name "Sit tight" ministers because all refused to resign when their party called on them to quit.

Political historians will for a long time to come debate the effect on Eastern Nigeria and the place of the Ibos as a result of the 1953 political crisis.

Would the history of Nigeria have been the same if Azikiwe had remained in the Western House of Assembly albeit where he was betrayed and humiliated and from whence he resigned to return to the East from whence he came? What effect had the 1953 events on the relations between the Efiks/Ibibios and Ibos as a result of the removal of Professor Eyo Ita as the leader of government business in the Eastern House of Assembly? To answer the above questions would require a whole chapter or a book of its own. But suffice it to say here that to many people the answer to the question is in the

negative and the answer to the question is clearly enormous and devastating. The echo reverberates till this day.

Some historians indeed consider not only that the return to the east was a turning point in Azikiwe's public life, but that he was thus forced out of his basic universalist philosophy of unity and coherence of the whole into the acceptance of a fragmentary, piecemeal polity.

Zik was the outstanding individual most affected personally by the shortcomings of the Macpherson Constitution, and his was thus the case that proved most dramatically some of the greatest absurdities of an instrument the people had themselves, this time, helped to fashion. By its effect on Azikiwe in the West, the constitution had excluded from the centres of power (the Central House and the first Council of Ministers) the country's foremost politician and busiest planner. The Macpherson Constitution as regards Dr Azikiwe in this episode was a demonstration of how a constitution can be aborted or frustrated by extraneous and illegitimate factors such as tribal bias.

Dr Azikiwe had become Premier of Eastern Nigeria early in 1954. Before, during and now, Zik was the National President of his party, the NCNC. Now he combines the presidency of his party with the premiership of the East. From the East to the central legislature in Lagos, a position denied him from Ibadan due to tribalism, treachery and disloyalty. It has to be admitted that at this stage of party practice in Nigeria, loyalty to the party machine and even to the leader was not as strong and overbearing as it is today. What happened at Ibadan was a case of party indiscipline to say the least.

Having established himself and his government and settled the central representation of Eastern Nigeria at the Centre, Dr Azikiwe settled down to administer as premier the government and the people of Eastern Region of Nigeria. He came face to face with actual government of the people and their affairs. He faced the East and her poverty at this time. He saw the urge, the desire and the determination of the people to be educated, to be fully and gainfully engaged, to be free politically and economically, to farm and produce abundant food for themselves and for export and to play their full part as citizens for the fight for freedom of a great nation. He at once accepted the challenge. He did not run away abdicating his leadership role. With the new loyal team he had assembled, he provided the much-needed leadership to enable Eastern Region

to march along (and at times ahead) with other parts of Nigeria to political nationhood. He drew his lieutenants from all parts of Eastern Nigeria and introduced in spirit the politics of consensus although there was an opposition party - the National Independence Party (NIP) headed by the deposed Eyo Ita, a philosopher - nationalist with people like Jaja Wachukwu and Dr Udo Udoma supporting the three expelled Central Ministers.

During his premiership of Eastern Region, Dr Azikiwe faced, fought and managed many party and government crises. There were rebellions in the party against his leadership. There were silent but equally serious and dangerous factions in the government. To Azikiwe's credit he skilfully and humanely weathered them all. His party emerged stronger after each crisis. So did his government. NCNC was a party notoriously known as a party of polemics. To lead it, and to manage it, needed a man like Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who could be firm as well as forgiving. When he left the leadership and management of that great nationalistic octopus the story was different. The party nearly disintegrated at its first post-Azikiwe general election of 1964. Chief T.O.S. Benson one of the faithful and powerful leaders of the party and Azikiwe loyalist can readily testify to this assertion.

Some of the crises Azikiwe faced while as Premier as well as the National leader of his party included:-

1. *The Dr Okpara Crisis*

Dr M.I. Okpara was one of the loyal ministers of NCNC in 1953 who obediently resigned when the party called on the whole Eyo Ita Cabinet to resign. He worked closely with Azikiwe when the latter settled down as Premier and became indeed powerful both in the party and in the government. He held the portfolio of Health Minister and later ended up as Minister of Agriculture and Production. While a Minister, he also held the post of the Chairman of the party's Eastern Working Committee. It was in this capacity of party boss in the East that he got into problems with some of the radicals of the party in the East. Dr Okpara used all his skill and powers to get things moving, but he was misrepresented to his boss and was accused of planning to oust Dr Azikiwe's leadership of the party and then the government. Poor Dr Okpara was pushed to the defensive. The more he protested his innocence the more he was attacked in the Government-owned *Nigerian Outlook* newspaper

at Enugu. He was cruelly reminded that he had once been a leper by one of the zealots of the leader. According to Dr Okpara himself to me, Dr Zik would not call a halt to the attacks on him even when he had met him and they had discussed and agreed. Then Bende Divisional leaders moved in to defend their son. According to Dr Okpara, Dr Azikiwe wanted his ministers to concentrate on their ministerial portfolios and to leave party organisation and leadership in the Region to those outside the government. Dr Okpara was to steer clear of the leadership of the party in the region for good after the episode. Observers have since argued that the crisis gave Azikiwe the opportunity to assess Dr Okpara and to know the stuff of which he was made. He must have impressed his leader, hence on relinquishing the government in 1959, he handed over the government of Eastern Region to Dr Okpara. The crisis was resolved to the credit of the two by Dr Okpara not losing his ministerial position which could have been the case elsewhere.

2. *Dr K.O. Mbadiwe Crisis*

This crisis rocked the NCNC party. K.O. Mbadiwe (K.O. to many Nigerians) was a formidable man in the party. He was known to stand by Dr Azikiwe during the "sit tight" episode of 1953. He benefited from that crisis for he became a federal NCNC Minister out of the crisis replacing the late A.C. Nwapa and Eni Njoku from Owerri Province at the Council of Ministers in Lagos. The crisis arose from the dissatisfaction felt in the NCNC party over Dr Azikiwe's leadership. Since the ouster from the government and the death of Mbonu Ojike, a kinsman of K.O., all had not been well with Dr Azikiwe and K.O. A faction in the NCNC party led by Dr Mbadiwe planned a coup to remove Dr Azikiwe from the party leadership; the slogan was "Zik must go." The resolution was signed by many prominent party leaders including the Secretary of the Party, Kola Balogun. Charges were levelled against Dr Azikiwe. The report of Forster Sutton Tribunal was cited as well as the initial failure of the Eastern Region's free education scheme. Zik was said not to support Dr Mbadiwe's bid to be made Deputy Prime Minister. The Leader-Premier was accused of weak leadership of the party and government and that he had lost grip on the men and matters. It was only K. O. Mbadiwe, it was admitted, who could have challenged the great Zik. Dr Azikiwe was on the eve of an overseas trip when the "Zik Must Go" document appeared. At

once the old war horse fought back. Within hours and within a matter of days, many who signed the document had disowned their signatures. The bulk of the party rallied round the leader, Dr Azikiwe. But K.O. fought on, culminating in his founding his own party, DPNC. Even after the 1959 general election in which his party scored no seat ("Bako Yaya"), it took K.O. years to return to the NCNC. By the time he returned to the party, Dr Azikiwe had left the leadership of the party to Dr Okpara. One aspect of the crisis which surprised many people was that Dr Azikiwe was freely accommodating and forgiving. He liked a test of popularity by democratic process. He relied heavily in every crisis on the people's verdict. Dr Mbadiwe's crisis, like Eyo Ita's crisis was resolved by the people in a democratic process, the election of 1959. All those who signed the 'Zik Must Go' document with him and retraced their way to the party returned to the party with no strings attached. K.O. Mbadiwe and Kola Balogun were later readmitted to Lagos at the end of 1959, the party and the government were ever stronger and it could hardly be remembered that this was the party on the verge of disintegration of few years back. Indeed in the general elections of the year into the House of Representative the NCNC scored the highest votes cast in the election followed by the Action Group of Nigeria and the NPC of Sardauna of Sokoto came third. The popular votes cast were as follows: NCNC-NEPU 2,594,577; Action Group 1,992,364; NPC 1,992,179. The NPC won most seats (142) NCNC-NEPU (90) and Action Group (73).¹

3. *Forster Sutton (ACB) Tribunal Crisis*

Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe founded the African Continental Bank Ltd. before he became the Premier of Eastern Region. The charge against Dr Azikiwe in this crisis was that he used his position as Premier of the Region to divert government money into the bank (ACB) whose financial base was low and in terrible shape. The bank was said to be dying at that moment and could have died but for the money pumped into it by the government of which Dr Azikiwe was the leader. Azikiwe's public interest was said to have conflicted with his private interest as the founder and owner of the African Continental Bank. The charge was made and led by a former Government Chief Whip, E.O. Eyo who had parted company with the Government and party. He was the Chairman of several government-owned parastatals and

Government Chief Whip. Eyo was ridiculed by some government supporters and accused of having too much in his hands. In a way people were jealous of him. He then resigned all the posts he held in order, according to him, to test his leader's confidence in him in the face of suspicions and accusations of greed. Dr Azikiwe instead of refusing the resignations accepted them all. Eyo was shattered. He then joined issues and amongst the things he knew he must disclose was the pumping of government money into the ACB to save the bank.

The British Government appointed a high powered commission of enquiry headed by the Chief Justice of the Federation, Sir Forster Sutton. Mr Vincent Savage, the Chief Magistrate of Enugu, was a member of the Commission. The commission took evidence from many leading citizens in and outside Eastern Nigeria. The Action Group of Nigeria led by Obafemi Awolowo saw fit to send lawyers to hold brief for the party and to observe. E.O. Eyo was the accuser's star witness. Mbonu Ojike, Azikiwe's closest aide, who was earlier disgraced out of the government also testified.

The Commission came out with a devastating report finding Dr Azikiwe guilty of conduct incompatible with his high office. The Action Group party called upon Dr Azikiwe to resign. People generally expected the man to resign. But Dr Azikiwe made a brilliant case for his actions and argued that the report was a biased imperialistic document to daunt the nationalist spirit. The bank, he pointed out, was founded to liberalise credit for African businessmen and women and designed to end economic strangulation of the people. He wanted to root out banking monopoly in Eastern Region. The political bedlam in the East at once broke loose. The party and his government rallied round him. The Zikist National Vanguard, Azikiwe's political army, went to war. This incident preceded the K.O. Mbadiwe crisis. NCNC charged the commission of academic and professional dishonesty and said that it was the commission that was guilty and not Dr Azikiwe. K.O. was most prominent and perhaps loudest in the defence of his leader who enjoyed tremendous sympathy in this crisis even in the foreign press.

In the British House of Commons Mr Aneurin Bevan charged the Colonial Secretary, Mr Alan Lennox-Boyd, with racial bias against Dr Azikiwe and criticised the hurry with

which he set up the Forster Sutton Tribunal. Bevan wondered why the Colonial Secretary was silent on allegations of corruption made against the Chief Justice of Seychelles, another British Colony, who was a white man.²

Again, it was for the people to have the last say. Dr Azikiwe and his party supported by the Colonial Office dissolved the Eastern House of Assembly to let the people speak. Dr Azikiwe, the great democrat, has abiding faith in the opinion of the people. He wanted the people to have a say, to give their verdict. When the results of the elections held on the 16th March, 1957 were known, Dr Azikiwe's party the NCNC was returned with an overwhelming majority. He resumed his premiership. E.O. Eyo lost out. The group against Dr Azikiwe dispersed and the man's position was strengthened.

4. *Sir Clement Pleass Crisis*

In 1955 Dr Azikiwe's government and the Lieutenant-Governor of the Region, Sir Clement Pleass came into head-on collision over a civil service matter involving some expatriate posts. Zik, in the pursuit of new Nigerianization policies being put into operation in the country, especially in the southern regions, attempted to void a number of expatriate posts which he said were vacant or only temporarily filled. The idea was that these posts should not be provided for in the new estimates for the coming fiscal year, so that they could be abolished then. Sir Clement saw the matter in an entirely different light, and, when repeatedly denied his request for the unprovided funds, used his reserve powers to certify supplementary estimates for the purpose. In Parliament in London, the Colonial Secretary, Mr Lennox-Boyd, supported the Lieutenant-Governor's action and in addition charged Azikiwe with breaking faith over a mutual agreement about overseas staff. To which Zik replied in kind, charging the Secretary, in turn, with "adding insult to injury" by a false accusation. He angrily added that the Colonial Office was "Impervious to reason when it comes to matters affecting European Civil Servants."

There were many other epochal events during Dr Azikiwe's premiership. Events such as the milk poison scare throughout the Region which made parents withdraw their children from schools to avoid their taking free milk in schools provided by government which mischievous people said was poisonous. The Mbonu Ojike - Non Onitsha Ibo affairs, the Catholic Church

threat and the abandonment of free primary education in the Eastern Region were enough to distract and intimidate any government. Suffice it to say that Dr Azikiwe handled these delicate matters with great dexterity as well as determination. As always he carried everyone with him or at least the greatest majority of people with him. No one particular individual suffered unjustly for his action in any of the crises cited above. Those who stood by or returned to the fold were warmly received and forgiven.

All Dr Azikiwe's life span as Premier of the Eastern Region was not all crisis; the incidents above were cited to show that Zik is an expert in crisis management. He is a man of great strength in crisis. He led the party and government with firmness, courage and fairness. He had been in a most exposed and dangerous position, where one false step - a show of weakness, for instance - could have toppled him from the leadership, perhaps permanently. In all the cited crises and others, when the odds were stacked high against him bold, aggressive action alone saved Zik from imminent disaster.

Dr Azikiwe as premier undertook economic missions to America, United Kingdom, Europe and Israel. He attracted to the Eastern Region investments and projects which improved the general economy of the Region and its finances. It was while in Israel he got to know and see the farm settlements which later were adopted in the Region. The planning and the idea were Azikiwe's but the execution and the setting up of the settlements were Dr Okpara's. In other words, the Agrarian Revolution of Eastern Region was begun by Dr Azikiwe. Dr Okpara saw to its implementation and execution. The farm settlements saw people being allotted parcels of land which they farmed, all the farmers living together in the farm and eking out a living on the land. The government supplied them with inputs such as hoes, matchets, tractors, fertilizers, seedlings etc. The whole idea suited the Jews of Israel who were returning from all parts of Europe at the end of hostilities of the Second World War. It could not work here because it was seen as unnatural for Ibos to leave their homes where they own and have parcels of land and go to live in farm settlements far away from their normal and natural habitat. That is why the scheme could not work well here in the Region. No government, civilian or military, had been known to take up the scheme since those who introduced it left

office even though successive governments since then had hammered on the people's return to the land in all forms such as "Green Revolution," "Back to Land," "Agrarian Revolution," "Operation Feed the Nation" and "School to Land."

Perhaps Dr Azikiwe's premiership of Eastern Region of Nigeria will always be best remembered in terms of leading a people towards general development and social change in the fields of education, particularly higher education. Education as a modernizer received a great boost in Eastern Nigeria with the establishment of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe restored the dignity of man and gave Nigeria her first indigenous full-fledged University. In 1957 Mr Alderton, the Permanent Secretary to the Premier of Eastern Nigeria, Dr Azikiwe, informed Mr Lawrence, the administrative officer, Nsukka about a meeting to be held in Nsukka between Dr Azikiwe the Premier and Mr James Cubbit of the firm of Messrs Cubbit partners (Architects of London). The concluding contents of the letter stated "the Premier regards this visit of the greatest importance to the future progress of this Region."³

The meeting was held and discussed the choice of Nsukka as the proposed site of the University of Nigeria. Between this meeting in November 1957 and October, 1960 when the University opened her doors to its staff and students, there was considerable international and national interest in Nsukka. Construction firms, local and foreign, set up big construction industries that attracted thousands of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour from all parts of Nigeria to Nsukka. Members of the Provisional Council of the University and initial University administration group moved in. A large Police detachment moved into Nsukka, followed by staff and students of the University.

A new modern University town has been created in Nsukka hitherto a rural place with only a divisional office overlooking a hilly and rugged landscape. Dr Azikiwe had created an edifice that has as today turned out thousands of leaders of Nigeria in every sphere of our national life. From the University has been produced great teachers, and education as a great modernizer has changed and continues to change the face of our countryside today.

Dr Azikiwe brought to government in Eastern Nigeria his philosophy of new Africa with five bases namely:-

- (a) The cultivation of spiritual balance which involves one's respect of others' right to their opinions, spirit of tolerant scepticism;

- (b) The rejection of social barriers and prejudices, like racial, tribal, religious, economic, political or ethical prejudices, socially, the option of one Africa for all Africans;
- (c) The realization of economic determinism, that Africa needs some economic stability or self-sufficiency to sustain the society; there is need for economic renaissance and good channelling of trained manpower;
- (d) The creation of mental freedom - no proof yet of the superiority or inferiority of any race, therefore it becomes self-destruction for the African to cultivate inferiority complex for any race; he should appreciate his glorious past and future, his capacity, role - what he is. This will assure his mental emancipation .
- (e) The expectation of political resurgence - a political resurgence must come if the first four fundamental bases are achieved. But we must bear in mind that politics is only a means to an end, an end which is more glorious than politics itself; although the means glorifies the individual, the end secures the social good and right for the people.⁴

Dr Azikiwe also brought into play his Fabian socialism which is still his pet ideology. In his book *Ideology for Nigeria, Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism*⁵ (Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd., 1980)

Dr Azikiwe said he could not help saturating some of his fellow NCNCers with Fabian and pragmatic ideas.⁶ (See pp. 95). And as Premier of Eastern Nigeria he came face to face with the problems posed by the adoption of welfarism as a practical and social system. When he introduced free universal primary education (UPE) in the region came, the easterners from all over rushed their children back to the region to benefit from the scheme for which their government budgeted 40% of their restricted annual budget. The cost of the scheme came to 60% of the budget and the scheme had to be abandoned. The opposition cried foul and accused the government of planlessness. But Dr Azikiwe explained.

"In view of my previous experience in this respect, I am of the considered opinion that, other things being equal, it would be most embarrassing, if not suicidal, to plunge into the pool of welfarism without taking note that it is frailty of human beings to seek to reap where they had not sowed. Any social service which is free is bound to be inundated with dropouts, idlers, adventurers, spivs and their collaborators, apart from the genuine sector of the population concerned."

Conclusion

The period of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe in Eastern Nigeria, 1954 to 1959, was a period when democratic foundations were laid in Eastern Nigeria. The policies and decisions were based on the will of the people and indeed the decisions were mainly those of the people. Dr Azikiwe handed Eastern Nigeria over to Dr Okpara in peace, in progress and orderly manner. He never looked back, neither was there any evidence of dictating to Enugu from Lagos when he left. With the exception of the Professor Eyo Ita episode, no lasting scar of any of the recriminations that took place during Dr Azikiwe's premiership was left after he had left the Region for Lagos. That to many people is a great test of the man's political leadership.

In 1959 Zik bade farewell to the east and returned o Lagos; here he went into the new Upper chamber (the Senate) as one of the twelve members from Eastern Region; he became President of the Chamber. His farewell address was delivered on 17 December, 1959, at Premier's Lodge, Enugu, the eastern capital, where Zik recalled his career and introduced his successor, Dr M.I. Okpara.

In his five years as Premier Zik had pushed the Eastern Region into development as fast as it was physically possible to do so. He had brought in a large measure of educational advancement at the primary and secondary level, and had successfully carried through one of his oldest and dearest wishes, the establishment of the University of Nigeria. The Regional Central Library at Enugu by the Eastern Government in conjunction with UNESCO was a project largely due to Zik's enterprise and drive. He had personally made many visits to Europe, Britain, and the New world introducing his country and seeking economic advantages for the east. In this connexion it was notable that his government had raised the level of Treasury funds from £4 million to £18¹/₂ million during Zik's tenure.

Said Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe on the occasion of his farewell to Eastern Region:

My five years of legislative activities in this region have been very instructive to me and I count them among the best years of my life.⁷

NOTES

1. Azikiwe, N. *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism*. pp. 49
2. House of Commons, Hansard, 25 July 1956, Columns 420-424.
3. Alderton to Lawrence, Premier' Office File No. 0242/M/32/9 of 16 October, 1957. Cited in Ray Ofoegbu "Urban Politics Among the Igbo of Nigeria" Ph. D. Dissertation, June 1977.
4. Azikiwe, N., *Renasant Africa*, pp. 15 - 38
5. Azikiwe, N., *Ideology for Nigeria*, *op. cit.*
6. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
7. Quartey, K. A. B. J., *A Life of Azikiwe*, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., pp. 211 - 212.

Governor-Generalship/Presidency of Nigeria

Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark

Introduction

On December 12, 1959, a general election was held throughout Nigeria. This election was to determine which political party was to form the government and receive the transfer of power from Britain. At the end of the election no party was able to win a simple majority of the 312 seats in the federal legislature to enable it to form the government. It is interesting to note that in later years, Azikiwe in his book *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism* states that the popular votes cast in the 1959 elections were as follows:

NCNC-NEPU 2,594,577; Action Group 1,992,364; NPC 1,992,179. The colonial regime had so adroitly manipulated the electoral constituencies that the most unpopular party (NPC) won the most seats (142); the most popular coalition parties (NCNC-NEPU) won the second highest number of seats (90); whilst the second most popular party (Action Group) won the least number of seats (73). The remaining number of seven seats were shared by independents. ¹

Paden emphatically and categorically stated in his book *Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto*, that the British

used the Emirs in the NPC to counter excessive political demands from the South. Emirs were seen to be the representatives of the north' by the British... The British and the Emirs both pretended they were not in the party, but in fact they were. ²

Thus, it was clear that the British colonial policy of 'divide and rule' had sown the seeds of hatred and deep divisiveness by encouraging

the north against the south. This policy was well established on the eve of independence and was to have serious consequences in the permanent instability in the country.

According to Ezera, after the election, "a week of political manoeuvrings followed during which efforts were made to form a coalition government of two main Southern parties (the NCNC and the AG) in which Dr Azikiwe was to become the Prime Minister.³ But this fell though owing to strong fractional opposition within the NCNC and partly to consideration of national unity as it was rightly feared that the North might secede if the two Southern parties formed the government."⁴ It is a sterile task now to wonder what would have happened if the two southern parties had formed an alliance but suffice it to say for our purposes here that a coalition government was formed of the NPC and the NCNC, with the Action Group as opposition. It was this government that was in power when Nigeria attained independence in 1960.⁵ Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa became the First Prime Minister of a coalition government, while Dr Azikiwe, who was President of NCNC - the junior partner of the coalition, became President of the Senate. Azikiwe later succeeded Sir James Robertson as the First Nigerian Governor-General and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation on October 1, 1962.⁶ The Governor-General had a passive role within the framework of the Independence Constitution. The Governor-General was a representative of the Queen and Azikiwe, having accepted this position, ceased to play party politics, or theoretically, the position placed him above party politics.

The NPC-NCNC coalition was a strange one. According to Schwartz⁷, the coalition brought together the most conservatives (the NPC) and radical party (NCNC) at the Federal level. Most people of Nigeria had expected the AG and NCNC which had the educated elite with similar values and very similar political goals to combine against the NPC.⁸

Awolowo strongly expressed the view that he would rather have a nationalist like Azikiwe lead the country than Balewa, who in 1947 had declared that "Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country" and that "if the British quitted Nigeria now at this stage the northern people could continue their uninterrupted conquest (1814 Jihad) to the sea."⁹ Awolowo also referred to Balewa's response to Azikiwe's motion of 1948 which called for a united Nigerian Outlook. Balewa's response to the motion was that many Nigerians...

decive themselves by thinking Nigeria is one. I am sorry. This presence of unity is artificial and it ends outside this chamber... The Southern tribes who are now pouring into the north in ever increasing numbers... do not mix with the northern people in social matters and we in the North look upon them as invaders. ¹⁰

However, Paden notes that in the 1958 period, relations between the NPC and NCNC were very amicable.¹¹ Ribadu spoke of Azikiwe's "Statesmanship, and his understanding of the respect for the peculiarities of others."¹² Further that Azikiwe had "never spoken anything against the northerners."¹³ By December 1958, according to Paden, the Sardauna had resolved to "sink and swim together" with NCNC in the management of Nigeria's destiny.¹⁴ The AG had consistently attacked the NPC as "feudal, whose function is to perpetuate Fulani Imperialism."¹⁵ Awolowo's intentions did not materialize for a coalition government of the two southern parties.

It is pertinent at this point to review the reasons why it was the NCNC and NPC, so manifestly different in social foundations and policies, which went into partnership in order to understand other factors that may have influenced later decisions. Two salient questions have to be asked in order to examine and determine Azikiwe's role. First, why was it that the NCNC and AG were unsuccessful at forming a coalition against the NPC? Secondly, what factors brought the NPC and NCNC together?

The answer to the first question is that there existed an animosity between the Yorubas and Ibos due to early rivalry in the area of jobs at the federal service and political leadership. This rivalry dates back to the 1940s.

The Yorubas of Western Nigeria were the first to embrace western religion and education because of their early contact with the Europeans. This enabled the Yorubas to consequently acquire majority of jobs in the Nigerian Civil Service and business firms. Similarly, until the beginning of the NCNC in the 1940s, the Yorubas had a near monopoly over modern political activities in Nigeria.¹⁶

Western influence spread to Eastern Region as churches and schools were built. The Ibos, coming to the educational scene late, soon caught up. According to Schwartz, by the late 1930s "there were more Ibos than Yorubas at most of the important Nigerian schools."¹⁷ It followed that the Ibos then competed for jobs that the Yorubas had held exclusively for over three decades. Coleman notes that the Yorubas began to express fear of 'Ibo domination.' They

subsequently felt challenged and responded with tribal nationalism, first, with the formation of the cultural association, Egbe-Omo-Okluduwa and second, by the emergence of the Action Group as a political party.¹⁸ The AG and Awolowo became the first great rival of Azikiwe for national political power. This Yoruba fear of Ibo domination was expressed in 1940 by Chief Awolowo when he stated:

It seemed clear to me that (Azikiwe's) policy was to corrode the self-respect of the Yoruba people as a group; to build up the Ibo as a master race.¹⁹

By 1948, the enmity between the two groups was so great that, according to Coleman, it bordered on the verge of violence. Both groups had prepared by purchasing all available matchets in the local market.²⁰ Matters were not helped much when in 1949, Azikiwe, in his presidential address to the first Ibo State Union Conference, made the following statement:

It would appear that the God of Africa has specially created the Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of the ages... The martial prowess of the Ibo nation and all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of preserver... The Ibo nation cannot shirk its responsibilities from its manifest destiny.²¹

The statement stung Nigerians.

It can thus be seen that the Ibos came into conflict with the Yorubas in two different ways: (1) the spread of Ibos all over Nigeria (especially after rapidly acquiring western education) which challenged the job opportunities and other economic interests of the Yorubas and, (2) the Ibo challenge to the established political interests of the Yorubas.²² It was this contending situation between the Yorubas and the Ibos which led to ethnic hostility and distrust amongst them that made it very difficult eventually for the two parties to form a coalition government at the federal level.

The second question (what factors brought the NCNC and NPC together) can be explained in the common antipathy which the two parties felt towards the AG.²³ Schwartz states that the

animosity that both the NPC and NCNC felt towards the AG was because of its efforts to create new states or regions and stir up minority fears in their home regions.²⁴

Finally and most importantly, it has been indicated that Azikiwe agreed to go into a coalition on the pretext that if the two southern parties had allied themselves in a coalition against the NPC, the NPC and the North would have seceded.²⁵ Nigeria would have ceased to exist as an independent country from the beginning and by

extension of this argument, the colonial government of Britain would have remained to rule defeating all the nationalist struggles, ideas, ideals and intentions that Azikiwe had of a free Nigerian nation.

It must be noted here that Azikiwe had been from the very beginning sensitive to ethnic differences within the country and he accepted the ideal of unity in diversity when he stated:

We should advocate the creation of a true federal form of government in Nigeria so as to strengthen the historical association of our various communities, respect their communal idiosyncrasies, preserve their political unity, and guarantee their national freedom.²⁶

He also, in addition, to accepting diversity though a federal constitution, advocated that this unity should be realized through a strong federal centre when he said:

We should emphasize our belief that the idea of ONE NIGERIA could become a reality, provided each co-ordinate unit of the Federation was allowed ample scope for local autonomy within a framework whose task would be to weld our diverse people into one organic whole by guaranteeing fundamental rights and by establishing common nationality... we should support the creation of a strong central authority in the Federation which would be competent to discharge the task of nation-hood in contemporary world society. To this end, we should urge a definite enumeration of the powers to be exercised by the Federal Government, without prejudice to the rights of the Regional Governments to reserve to themselves the exercise of powers not so explicitly prescribed.²⁷

From the above passage, it can be concluded that Azikiwe already assumed that Nigerian unity had already been achieved. At the same time, he recognized the fact that problems of unity did exist and expressed his ideas of solving it:

We are determined to convince our people that Nigeria is no longer a mere geographical expression but also a historical fact. We shall urge our people to reject the Action group view that Nigeria cannot become a nation because of cultural and linguistic differences. Our stand is that Nigeria is a nation in the emergence and that this political union which has been forged on the anvil of British rule is indissoluble and perpetual. We, therefore, believe in the existence of one strong and united country that is capable of commanding the respect of the family of nations.²⁸

It is quite clear from examining his early works that Azikiwe was emphatic on his thought processes on the following: (a) He wanted a united Nigeria; (b) He accepted a federal constitutional structure within which the major ethnic groups could co-exist; (c) He maintained that each ethnic group could preserve its communal identity and this would help generate political unity.²⁹

Further, Azikiwe's pride in his Ibo State as expressed earlier in the previous page cannot be understood in isolation of his various

statements on the subject matter. It can only be interpreted within his context, that is, that he believed that their future within a political community transcends their own group loyalty. In an address to the Ibos, he admonished that:

There is only one road that I can safely recommend for us to read and it is the road to self-determination for the Ibo within a framework of a federated commonwealth of Nigeria and the Cameroons, leading to a United States of Africa... the Ibo of Africa can join in a progressive march with the other great nations of this country towards a free and independent commonwealth of Nigeria. ³⁰

However, what occupied his mind most then, according to him, was 'what is good for Nigeria?'³¹ It can then be understood how and why Azikiwe initially accepted the passive role of Governor-General. Many questions also arise - if Azikiwe had ambitions of power, would he have accepted a weakened power position? If a coalition solution was not sought, what would be the cost of precipitated national crisis? It seems that Azikiwe did not want to risk a national crisis at the very beginning of independence and further, if he had power ambition, he would have accepted Awolowo's offer of Prime-Minister, of a coalition government of the two southern parties rather than accepting the Governor-Generalship of a coalition government between the NPC/NCNC with hardly any power other than ceremonial, a weakened power position. It follows then also that for a man of such intellectual qualities and exposure, Azikiwe truly believed that Nigeria must be united or remain as one country and here lies the beginning of the role he shaped for himself - that of being a contributory force towards unifying the nation Nigeria. The North and Ahmadu Bello recognized the sacrifice Azikiwe made in 1960 by accepting the Governor-Generalship because when in February 1961 he visited the North, Ahmadu Bello "praised him for his role in promoting Nigerian unity."³² Ahmadu Bello stated:

You Sir, have contributed more to the political liberation of Nigeria than any other single person. You, above all, stand for the unity of Nigeria. It is in the interest of Nigerian unity that you accepted the high office of Governor-General of the Federation and thus placed yourself above party politics. We greatly respect your sincerity in promoting the unity of our great country. Nigerian unity is vital, not only for the peaceful progress of the Federation, but also of the whole continent of Africa... There are, naturally, millions of people both inside and outside Nigeria who still claim that you are the leader of their particular political party. They must learn and believe, however, that you, Sir, are now above party politics... in continuing as you have started, in the office of Governor-General you will prove to them and the world that you are father of all Nigerians and not just some of them. ³³

The scion of the Sokoto Caliphate was very emphatic calling upon Azikiwe to be 'Father of the Nation' while he consciously remained in the North playing ethnic politics.

Early Years of Independence

The early years of independence, from 1960 to early 1963 showed remarkable co-operation between the NPC and NCNC in the coalition government. It was also clear that the Independence Constitution would have to be revised as Nigeria was contemplating being a Republic. Discussions on the various aspects of the constitution were deliberated upon by various personnel especially on the extent of the powers of the Governor-General as President in the proposed revised constitution; should the President have executive powers or should he continue as a constitutional figurehead?

All the major political parties agreed on the republican system of government for Nigeria,³⁴ but there were sharp disagreements in the area of what type of powers the President should have.³⁵ Dr Azikiwe for the establishment of a republican system of government for Nigeria as "this system would help to ease political tension in the country."³⁶ On November 16th, 1961, Dr Azikiwe spoke at a special convocation of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, called to mark his 57th birthday, on the subject of the powers of the Presidency under the new proposed Republican Constitution. It was his opinion that the Head of State (President) should be concerned with the security of state while the Head of Government (Prime Minister) should be concerned with the stability of the government. His intentions were that both the President and Prime Minister would act as checks upon one another in order to "save Nigeria from scourge of revolution and... insulate Nigerians from the lust of power."³⁷ He stated emphatically that:

The powers of the President of Nigeria should be statutory, appointive, prerogative, ceremonial and emergency. The exercise of these powers should be discretionary, consultative, and mandatory. The existence of a Head of State with such defined powers will act as a counter-balance to off-set concentration of powers in any other facets of the executive arm of the State.³⁸

He went on to propose that the President should be elected by "an electoral college consisting of a joint sitting of Parliament whose decision shall be signified by a simple majority."³⁹ Immediately, after this speech, Sir Ahmadu Bello countered Azikiwe by stating that:

When the wishes of the people are sought in this particular issue which amounts to Jihad, I will call upon all Northerners, men and women, to cast their votes. ⁴⁰

Further, Sir Abubakar went on to state that the type of presidency proposed by Azikiwe had to be popularly elected.

It was very obvious that the northern leaders were not prepared to have a change in the power position which favoured them. Rather than perceive this continuous threat as dangerous for Nigeria as a whole, it can be said that Azikiwe and the NCNC leaders were satisfied with maintaining the *status quo* for again it seemed to them that the future of Nigeria and its peaceful coexistence was better preserved in this manner. Others saw this position as acquiescence.⁴¹ On October 1, 1963, the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was promulgated by "our representatives here in Parliament assembled," it did not go beyond what was necessary to remove the vestiges of colonial rule and then establish a republic. What was done was that the name of the Queen was removed from the laws and it was replaced with the name of the President without powers. Every clause was retained pretty much as they were in the Independence Constitution. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was sworn in as the First Nigerian President. Azikiwe saw himself as "a symbol of our national personality" and "an eternal honour that enshrines me in the hearts of men and women of my generation."⁴² The provisions of the constitution as pertaining to the President were that he should be Head of State of the Federation as well as Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation.⁴³ His powers were mainly ceremonial as in the previous Independence Constitution however, he was given the power, upon advice of the Prime Minister, to appoint the country's representative abroad.⁴⁴ He had no executive powers or any other type of power. Let us now examine the major events that took place during Azikiwe's tenure of office and his role.

2. The Major Crisis During Dr Azikiwe's Tenure As Governor-General/President and His Role

A. Western Nigeria Crisis

Nigeria witnessed its first major crisis in Western Nigeria. There was a rift between Chief S. L. Akintola who succeeded Chief Awolowo as Premier of Western Nigeria and Chief Awolowo who was the opposition leader at the centre.⁴⁵

This rift stems from the fact that earlier, Chief Awolowo had called together a group of twelve men to form the "National

Reconstruction Group' in order to study Nigeria's economic and social problems, and to produce policies to solve them.⁴⁶ The main objective was to produce an ideology and they produced an ideological statement on Democratic Socialism.⁴⁷ This was the crux of the problem as Chief Akintola and Chief Rosiji and the Western Executive committee of the party did not accept Democratic Socialism. It was however agreed that it should be on the agenda for discussion at the annual congress to be held in Jos subsequently;⁴⁸ Chief Rosiji (former Federal Secretary of the Action Group) had supported Chief Akintola in attacking the ideology as a sham.⁴⁹ Further, Chief Abiodun Akerele speaking on a motion, on the subject matter at the Western House, stated:

Here is a man, this is his document, he started the Action Group with us, he never earned \$1,000 in the UAC. He is worth half a million pounds in property... he is one of the directors of National Investments and Properties Company... all these Directors now have assigned to Chief Awolowo all their interests... and I think in the interest of the country, the Prime Minister must act immediately to save public funds from going down the drains as they have been going. ⁵⁰

Obviously the dictated ideology was at variance with the practice, and the party members detected this anomaly, hence part of the disagreements.

The rift between these two personnel was very evident of the AG. Congress in Jos in 1962; Chief Akintola was accused of carrying out programmes at variance with that of his party. Chief Akintola held the view that the AG. party had no future at the federal level if they continued to challenge the NPC and NCNC in their regional strongholds. Further, he felt that this position would destroy the party. Akintola felt that since the AG. had consolidated the power of the party in the West, they should 'co-operate' with central power in order to strengthen their parties weak position and possibly have a share in the Federal government. Chief Awolowo was totally opposed to this line of thinking, as he wanted to continue active opposition as an alternate government.⁵¹

Subsequently, a majority of party members petitioned the late Oni of Ife - the Governor of Western Nigeria, accusing the Premier of maladministration.⁵² In response to the request, the governor dismissed Chief Akintola as Premier and appointed the late Alhaji Adegbenro to the premiership. Chief Akintola refused, stating that the House of Assembly had to meet to ratify the decision and the issue of no confidence in his Premiership.⁵³ The House of Assembly met on May 25, 1962 and condition of disorder was

created by Chief Akintola's faction. The Awolowo faction's intention was to approve the appointment of Alhaji Adegbenro. Following the break-down of the Action Group controlled government in the Western Region and because of the crisis within the party, the Prime Minister declared a state of emergency in the region on May 29th 1962. The motion declaring a state of emergency in Western Nigeria was passed by a majority of two-third votes of both Houses of Parliament. The Governor-General, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe gave his assent without hesitation and without delay.⁵⁴ The region was run by Dr A.M.A. Mojekodumi, as sole Administrator for six months. The governor of Western Nigeria, the Ooni of Ife - the late Sir Aderemi, was suspended from office. It was obvious that the coalition powers had found a solution to dealing with Chief Awolowo. At the end of six months, Chief Akintola was asked to continue as Premier - without an election.⁵⁵ (Chief Akintola's faction, the United Peoples Party (U.P.P.) had formed a coalition with the NCNC).

In addition to the above, the Federal Government set up a Commission of Enquiry into six of Western Nigeria Statutory Corporations. Chief Awolowo and some other AG party members were accused of corruption. The Commission exonerated Chief Awolowo but condemned him of his direction of the use of funds.⁵⁶

So after the enquiry, Chief Awolowo and other leading members of his party were arrested and tried for felony charges, found guilty of the offence and sentenced to jail. Schwartz stated that "the trial was the central political event of the Balewa regime and Awolowo's conviction marked the end of effective constitutional opposition."⁵⁷ This was the beginning of real trouble for Nigeria as other crises upon crises were to follow and sharpen the contradictions in Nigeria.

B. *The Nigerian Census Controversy*

The first census after Independence took place in 1962.⁵⁸ Census enumeration had been politicized and it became very difficult to depoliticize. By 1962, every Nigerian knew the implications of a low census count for his or her region or area. The country-wide census was conducted simultaneously. The exercise lasted from May 5 to May 21, 1962 and unfortunately the census figures were not released for six months. This long delay caused speculations about the likelihood of political interference and inflation of the census figures in some areas.

The new figures were also rejected by both parties (NCNC and AG) on the grounds that the figures were inflated. Note that the NPC formed a new alliance with Akintola. (Akintola converted his UPP party into a new party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party - NNDP). There were charges between the northern and southern political leaders, accusing each other of trying to inflate the figures in order to gain control of the central legislature. It was alleged that census counts were still going on in Northern Nigeria six months after the census was supposed to end.

The controversy over the 1962 census led to a great deterioration in the North-South relations, particularly between the NPC and NCNC which formed the coalition government at the centre. The 1962 census figure was not published officially. By February 1962, the Prime Minister nullified the census results. This led to a new count in 1963.⁵⁹ On February 24th, 1964, the federal government released the total statistics of the enumeration to be 55.4 million, distributed in the following manner: Northern Nigeria, 29.7 million; Eastern Nigeria, 12.3 million; Western Region 10.2 million; Mid-Western Region 2.5 million; and the Federal Territory of Lagos 675,000.

Again, like the 1962 census, these figures generated a great deal of inter-party and inter-regional conflicts and controversy. The NCNC-controlled governments of the Eastern and Mid-Western Regions rejected the figures declaring that the North's were inflated in order for them to retain their numerical supremacy in the House of Representatives. Subsequently, the Prime Minister announced the figures as the officially accepted population for the country before any opposition became intensified.⁶⁰ The NCNC and Eastern Region government went to court to challenge the figures; even though it lost, Okpara stated that he did not consider the issue closed.⁶¹ The coalition government continued in formality but was as good as dead. Chief Dennis Osadebay described the census controversy as "the most stupendous joke of our age."⁶² The papers published this tract:

There was complaint about the perpetual menacing threats of the Premier of Northern Nigeria and the leader of the NPC that his fore-bearers had always ruled Nigeria and that they would continue to rule forever. ⁶³

The analysis indicates that both the 1962 and 1963 censuses developed into North-South overtones. The 1963 recount and the crisis that followed the federal government acceptance of the disputed figures developed into Ibo-Hausa dispute - this, despite the

fact that both dominant ethnic groups made up the coalition partners of the federal government. Most Ibos in the regional public service in the north were dismissed and also expelled from their market stalls in Gusau, Funtua and Katsina. Once again the census figures had brought into prominence regional power and loyalty, while the centre was completely immobilized.

Azikiwe had publicly appealed to the political leaders and warned of the 'impending disaster' to the nation. He made no specific mention of the issues and it was assumed that he naturally supported the position of the Eastern Government by other leaders.

C. *The Federal Election Crisis of 1964*

The election was the first federal election since Independence. Before this election, the major political parties had regrouped themselves into two. The NCNC and the AG formed themselves into the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA), while the NPC and the newly formed Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) formed an alliance known as the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). It should be noted that the new NNDP was formed in March 1964 mainly for Yoruba and Western Regional interests. According to Schwartz, it "brought together in the Western House of Assembly Akintola's United People's Party and 14 NCNC members of the assembly who resigned from the NCNC."⁶⁴

The NCNC led by Dr Michael Okpara had felt that the decision made in 1959 to go into coalition at the federal level with the NPC was a mistake. Ironically, the NCNC now turned back to its arch enemy, the AG, to form a coalition. According to Schwartz, the Sardauna of Sokoto, the party leader of the NPC, stated categorically that:

Even if my party fails to get the required majority in the next federal elections, it will definitely not enter into any agreement or coalition with the NCNC... The Ibos have never been true friends of the North and never will be. ⁶⁵

The elections were held and UPGA rejected the results for alleged irregularities.⁶⁶ Tensions reached breaking point, coupled with the hangover of animosity resulting from the census controversy.

Azikiwe announced his determination to prevent the Prime Minister, Sir Tafawa Balewa, from forming a new government. Azikiwe stated that he would rather resign. This situation created a constitutional stalemate. The Prime Minister still retained his office as Prime Minister even though the President refused to appoint him

or another person to form a government. According to Sklar and Whitaker, for six days after the election, the peace and unity of the nation appeared to hang in the balance, waiting to explode, while intensive negotiations were conducted involving the President, the Prime Minister, leaders of the regional governments and other influential persons.⁶⁷ Further, a six point plan was accepted by both the President and the Prime Minister as the only way to save the constitution, avoid deadlock, and prevent bloodshed and disintegration.⁶⁸ Among the six points was the agreement that the President should ask the Prime Minister to form "a broad-based national government," and that elections would be held in those constituencies which had been boycotted. In March 1964, elections were conducted in the previously boycotted constituencies in the East and Lagos. A "national" government was formed by Balewa consisting of the former NPC and NCNC ministers together with a few members from Chief Akintola's party. The Action Group was not included.⁶⁹ By logical conclusion, there was no way this government could be considered to be nationally broad-based. The NCNC had again entered into a coalition with the NPC leaving the AG out in the cold. This uneasy compromise by the two parties temporarily postponed the evil clash that was to ensue. Maybe also that the inter-personal and inter-ethnic conflict and distrust that had emanated in the 1940s was still in the minds of the leaders. However, President Azikiwe was denounced in many quarters, at his 'surrender' to the NPC and his acceptance of Sir Abubakar as Prime Minister. Some party members felt he had betrayed the nationalist principles which had been expressed in terms of his name - Zikism,⁷⁰ and further, that the coalition agreement was a re-imposition of the same elements within the NPC and NCNC. Dudley suggests that:

The President gave way when he realized that there was a move to declare him medically incapable of continuing in office. Under the constitution, a certificate signed by two medically qualified persons is necessary and sufficient to declare a President unfit to continue in office. There was such an attempt to use just such a move to remove the President. Faced with the prospect, the President succumbed.⁷¹

The facts are that the constitution indicated clearly that the President had no powers to act on any issue; the little discretionary power he had was to be acted upon with the advice of the Prime Minister. In the issue of elections, the constitution did stipulate that the President was to invite the person best placed to form the government. However, the person best placed to do so would be

decided by the electoral outcome. The fact of the elections was that the NPC had a majority. It is also true that there were many irregularities in this election that raised questions of ethics bordering on the areas of the validity and legality of the elections. But these issues were not for the President to take a decision; he was not constitutionally empowered to do this. What options did he have? Dudley suggested that he could on moral grounds, considering the facts pertaining to the elections, have resigned; instead, he reached an 'understanding' with the Prime Minister, he compromised and continued in office and this act left many people dissatisfied and questioned the type of leadership and government they had. Dudley stated that "he showed by his actions that he could not distinguish between his role as a *de facto* leader of the NCNC and his status as the ceremonial head of the federation"⁷² Balewa is not absolved of his failures; however, it is not a topic for this chapter. Azikiwe himself saw the challenge to the leadership when he emphatically stated:

We all realize that the emergence of Nigeria as a federal republic is fraught with problems of a social, economic and political nature. They have been intensified by factors of tribalism with their divisive effect on the body politic. The existence of these problems offers a challenge to Nigerian leaders to contain them and thereby facilitate the emergence of Nigeria as one Nation where no man or tribe is oppressed.⁷³

He stressed further that if these leaders have decided to destroy our national unity,

then they should summon a round-table conference to decide how our national assets should be divided before they seal their doom by satisfying their lust for office.⁷⁴

Azikiwe's charge was to deaf ears as the leaders were more concerned with manouevering ethnic sentiments and manipulating the system in whatever way they could regardless of the cost to the nation. Azikiwe himself must have felt overwhelmingly helpless in the realization of the total powerlessness of the office he occupied and the fact that the other leaders were overwhelmingly ethnic chauvinists. The new government emerged as a result of Azikiwe's concessions and compromises over basic issues. At this crucial period, the positive test of political independence and the ability of leadership was tested. It was this realization that Azikiwe conceded with undefined compromise, in the name of unity but it was evident that Nigeria was a ship at sea without a captain.

D. The Western Election Crisis of 1965

The scandal of the federal election of December 1964 had not abated when the country faced another election in the Western Nigerian Parliamentary election of October 1965. This election was "the final, desperate attempt of the Southern alliance to win power by constitutional means."⁷⁵ The elections had been 'rigged' by the NNA which then formed the government. In its bitterness and failure, the UPGA, under Alhaji Adegbenro formed an alternative government in the same Western Region.⁷⁶ Widespread chaos, looting, burning of houses and loss of lives followed. Law and order completely broke down and the Prime Minister refused to declare a state of emergency in the west because his political party alliance was in power in that region. This was not like 1962 when he had declared an emergency at the earliest opportunity. The plain fact was that the majority of the people in the West did not want the government they had. The leaders were concerned with their own problems and what they wanted to do, not what was good for the country - taking into consideration its vast problems. Azikiwe did not publicly call upon the Prime Minister to act in order to solve the impending doom. On the 10th of December, President Azikiwe again issued a warning to Nigerians that the contesting parties should be very careful and cease to continue acting in a lawless fashion otherwise the nation 'would be threatened with disintegration.'⁷⁷ The masses were left at the mercy of chance and the stability of the country at the level of dubitation. He subsequently left the country on grounds of ill health on October 16th, 1965.

It was during this chaotic and explosive state of affairs in the country, particularly in the West, that led directly to the coup d'etat of January 15, 1966. The Prime Minister obviously did not foresee the general calamity that was going to befall his whole regime by his inaction. The government was terminated by the military.

Conclusion

The grounds prepared for the independence of Nigeria by October 1, 1960, did not change any political structures, hence the essential divisiveness of the country remained. As we have seen from the brief expose on the various crises that the country experienced during Azikiwe's tenure in office, it was obvious that the regional political parties could not build a national following because of the absence of common interests on which ties of unity

can be based. Just as the ethnic groups fought one another more than they fought the British during the colonial rule, they continued unabated after independence. In the history of the country, there was nothing that generated the spirit of oneness, of belonging together. This major obstacle made the rule of Nigeria a difficult one.

Azikiwe, like other Nigerian leaders, accepted the federal structure of government imposed on Nigeria by Britain in co-operation with these leaders themselves. Of course, one would readily agree that the prestige and power that a United Nigeria would bring was alluring. However, the fact remained that Nigeria was an unconsolidated nation and that the type of unity achieved was based on truce. Could this be called unity?

At independence, Azikiwe and other leaders were confronted with fundamental decisions between co-operation and conflict. They were all perceived as leaders of their ethnic groups by the people. It is obvious that the type of federal structure Nigeria had in 1960 was doomed to fail because it did not take cognizance of Nigerian realities - the reality of Nigerian heterogeneity, multi-culturalism, and various concepts of power and authority perceived by the leaders. They underestimated the conflicts and the results therefrom. They had difficulty in conceptualizing Nigeria both in content and in form.

The compromise that Azikiwe always sought was always an uneasy and precarious one. By compromising, he postponed temporarily the conflicts that inevitably arose. The stability of the central government was affected by the particularistic nature of the parties and this made them impede the process of national integration. The ethno-regional composition of the leadership constituted an obstacle to any efforts that Azikiwe made and made nonsense of his compromising stance. They expoused pan-regionalism, identified their interest with the survival of their respective regions as a political entity. They were unable to transcend their ethno-regional bases with the result that they failed to reflect national perspectives and interests in the debates and decisions on issues with national consequences. There was no united leadership. This paved the way for a series of conflicts which resulted in major crises and disunity.

Azikiwe as President had to face this problem of unity, he had to continuously grapple with unity between the north and the south, and between a divided south. How could federal ideas and rule be spelt out in a system predicated on the rule of governments in which

one major ethnic group was dominant over other ethnic groups and also over other minority ethnic groups within each region and a rule of the central federal government derived perpetually from a particular set of people from a particular region? Within the structural political framework, with only ceremonial powers, how much could Azikiwe do in a nation that had no sense of unity? Could unity be forced by coalition? Was the price of national unity worth it for him? The answer obviously is No.

Azikiwe could not face the realism of the unworkability of the system, a system he contributed and sacrificed more than anyone to preserve because of his belief in the unity of Nigeria.

Azikiwe refused to deal realistically with the power elements at play that finally destroyed the delicate fabric and structure of the federation.

Azikiwe could not deal with the reality of the non-acceptance by the North of the equality of other ethnic units, as they constantly threatened secession.

Azikiwe could not deal with the realism that there existed in Nigeria ethnic rivalry that sought ethnic domination by one group in order to feel secure with the nation; this factor continuously occurred making other groups bitter, and his Presidency always suspect.

Finally, Azikiwe made the initial mistake of not having the foresight at independence, of realizing that once he accepted the governor-generalship/presidency, he would not be able to contribute effectively in solving these problems on unity. He would have to depend on the 'good nature' of other leadership and in the case of Nigeria, this other leadership consisted of ethnic chauvinists. He then had accepted a position in which he was to appear 'neutral' in all political issues while the ethnic-chauvinists contributed to ruining the nation.

Azikiwe did not face the reality of the nature of the leaders he needed co-operation from; no matter how hard he tried, to either publicly appear neutral in light of his position or to make a suggestive statement, he was helpless to contribute effectively to any lasting solution while he maintained the stance he did or retain his office.

NOTES

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?* Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria, 1980, p. 100.
2. John Paden, *Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto: Values and Leadership in Nigeria*, London: Hodder and Soughton, 1986, pp. 176 - 177.
3. Zik had explained himself in 1959 that while Awolowo was offering him the Prime Ministership, Awolowo also was at the same time making the same offer to the NPC. S.G. Ikoku confirmed Zik's statement that Ayo Rosiji, the general secretary of the Action Group and Chief Akintola, the deputy leader of the Action Group had gone to the Sardauna in Kaduna. However he stated that they were there on their own, which is hard to believe. See *Quality*, Vol. 4, No. 9, Sept 7, 1989, p. 28.
4. Ezera, Kalu, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1964, p. 263.
5. For a Summary see Post, K.W.J., "Forming Government in Nigeria," *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, Vol. 2, No 1, June 1960.
6. Kalu Ezera stated that Dr Azikiwe became the Governor-General in agreement with a secret pact between the leaders of the NPC and NCNC; Ezera, *op. cit.*, p. 264.
7. Schwartz, Frederick A., *Nigeria: The Tribes, The Nation or The Race - The Politics of Independence*, Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1965.
8. See Ikejiani and Ikejiani, O., *Nigeria: Political Imperative: Desiderata for Nationhood and Stability*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1986, pp. 80 - 81.
9. Legislative Council Debates, March 20 to April 2, 1947, Lagos: Government Printer, 1947, p. 212.
10. Legislative Council Debates, March 4, 1948, Lagos: Government Printer, 1948, p. 227.
11. John N. Paden, *Ahmadu Bello and Sardauna of Sokoto: Values and Leadership in Nigeria*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1986, p. 169.
12. *Ibid*
13. *Nigerian Citizen*, Nov. 29, 1958, p. 1, "Amity Between NPC and NCNC is Becoming Solid: as quoted in John Paden, Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, *Ibid*.
14. *Nigerian Citizen*, Dec. 13, 1958, "The NPC/NCNC get together" p. 6, as quoted in Paden, *Ibid*.
15. *Nigerian Citizen*, Dec. 17, 1958, p. 5, as in Paden, *Ibid*
16. See Coleman, J.S., *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960.
17. Schwartz, Frederick A., *op. cit.*, p. 67.
18. Coleman, J. S. *op. cit.* pp. 344 - 346.
19. Quoted in *Nigeria: The Seeds of Disaster*, by John Hatch, Chicago: Henry Regnery company, 1970, p. 242
20. Coleman, J.S., *op. cit.*, p. 346.
21. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *West African Pilot*, July 6, 1949, quoted in Coleman, J.S., *Ibid*, p. 347.
22. Schwartz, *op. cit.*
23. For further information see, Post, K.W.J., 'National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons, the Decisions of December 1959,' in John P. Mackintosh, et.al., *Nigerian Government and Politics*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966.
24. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, pp. 112 - 113.
25. Ezera, Kalu *op. cit.*, pp. 263 - 264.

26. Zik: *A Selection of the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1961, p. 185.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 189 - 190.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 246.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
32. 'North is Proud of You: Sardauna tells H.E., Zik, *Nigerian Citizen*, February 15, 1961, p. 1 quoted in Paden, John N., *Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto: Values and Leadership in Nigeria*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1986, p. 399.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Ezera, Kalu, *op. cit.*, pp. 282 - 283.
35. See Sir Ahmadu Bello's viewpoints on this issue in Paden, John, *op. cit.*, p. 401.
36. Azikiwe, Nnamdi, *Political Tensions in Nigeria*, Aba: International Press, 1962, pp. 18-28.
37. Azikiwe, *Ibid.*, p. 20
38. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Nigerian Citizen*, 2 December, 1961, also *West Africa*, London, December 9, 1961, p. 1366. Sir Ahmadu Bello had threatened to enfranchise northern women (who had no voting rights) in order that the north might have an even more numerical strength and superiority over the south and therefore ensure their power control at the centre.
41. For further details on the All-Party Constitutional Conference and Provisions of the Republican Constitution, See Ezera, *op. cit.*
42. An Inaugural Address delivered by His Excellency Dr Azikiwe on October 1, 1963, Lagos: Government Printer.
43. *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, Lagos: Government Printer, 1963.
44. *Ibid.*
45. For full details of the Western Nigerian Crisis, see Ikejiani O. and Ikejiani O., *Nigeria: Political Imperative, Desiderata for Nationhood and Stability*, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-89.
46. K.W.J. Post Michael Vickers, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, 1960 - 65*, London: Heinemann, 1973, p. 75.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?* *Ibid.*, p. 104.
50. Parliamentary Debates, First Parliament, Third Session 1962 - 63, (House of Representatives, 29 May 1962), 15 - 19, Columns 2192 - 2200 as quoted in Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?* *Ibid.*, p. 105.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
52. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
53. Ikejiani, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
55. Schwartz, *op. cit.*
56. For more details see Ikejiani and Ikejiani, *op. cit.*, pp. 85 - 86, also Report on the Coker Commission of Enquiry, Ibadan: government Printer, 1962.
57. Schwartz *op. cit.* p. 128.
58. Ikejiani and Ikejiani, *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 99.
59. For full details on the census controversy see *Ibid.*

264 *Zik and the African Revolution*

60. Dr Michael Okpara's controlled NCNC and the eastern regional government asked the Supreme Court for an injunction in an attempt to stop the federal government from using the census figures as the basis for policy-making. The case was lost. See Supreme Court Judgement, per Brett, I.S.C. 29/6/64 in the Attorney-General Eastern Nigeria vs. the Attorney-General of the Federation.
61. See *Daily Times*, 30 June, 1964.
62. *West African Pilot*, March 11, 1964.
63. *Daily Times*, March 4, 1964, p. 5
64. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 142, see also Ikejiani and Ikejiani, *op. cit.*, pp. 105 - 107.
65. Schwartz, *Ibid.*, p. 164.
66. The Chairman of the Electoral Commission had announced that the NPC had won 166 constituencies in the North; the NNDP had won a majority of the seats in the West, with an NNA overwhelming majority, the Prime Minister expected to be asked to form a new government.
67. Sklar and Whitaker, C.S., "The Federal Republic of Nigeria," *Nationality Unity and Regionalism in Eight African States*, Ed. Guendolyn M. Carter, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966.
68. Okoli, Felix E. *Institutional Structure and Conflict in Nigeria*, Lanham; University Press of America, 1980, p. 121.
69. See Mackintosh, *Government and Politics in Nigeria*, *op. cit.*, pp. 589 - 96.
70. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, *op. cit.*, p. 297.
71. Dudley, *op. cit.*, p. 312.
72. Dudley, *Ibid.*, p. 71.
73. Azikiwe, Nnamdi, *Tribalism, A Pragmatic Instrument for National Unity*, speech delivered on 15th May 1964 to the Political Science Association of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
74. *Daily Times*, 11 December, 1964.
75. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 128.
76. For full details see Ikejiani and Ikejiani, *op. cit.*, pp. 109 - 111.
77. Nigeria, State House, Sixteen days of Political Crisis... The Statement of Nigerian President, Dr N. Azikiwe, on The 1964 Election Crisis, Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1965.

Azikiwe and the Nigerian Civil War

Lambert Ejiofor

The Nigerian civil war is contemporary history. While the combat emotions have mellowed, there is still need to take a hard look at many critical aspects of the war both for the actors who are very much around to contest or correct, and to help posterity have a better hind view of the tragedy in the context of Nigeria's growth and development as a nation, and even to simply pay tribute to truth. One such critical issue is the posture of Nnamdi Azikiwe in the civil war: first in Biafra an ambassador at large who earned the recognition of Biafra from five countries, 'supplied' the words of the short-lived Biafran National Anthem, and gave moral boost to the Biafran 10 Battalion (the army recruits in training); then later in 1969, in the tottering months of Biafra, withdrew identification from Biafra and identified himself with Nigeria. This paradoxical posture raises a number of questions which inform our exposition in this treatise.

- (i) Was Azikiwe really a Biafran even when he was territorially in Biafra?
- (ii) Did he appreciate his stature and the impact of whatever role he played during the war?
- (iii) What did Nigerians of both sides, particularly the Biafrans, perceive him to be?

- (iv) Did he, anyway, rationally acquit himself of charges of betraying the Biafrans under threat of decimation and semblance of "genocide?"
- (v) Finally, how, in our assessment, does Zik emerge from the controversy in our medium-term calculations?

Two key ideas constitute the balancer of our presentation. The first is two-fold: the policy posture of Pope Pius XII, or "the Pope of Peace:" Everything can be gained in peace, but all can be lost in a just war.¹ A follow-up is the author's on-the-spot observation as the battle of Uzuakoli raged:

War history reads with relish and emotional chivalry: wars are fought in the dust and ashes of battle fields; bravery itself comes out of every war with a scathe, yes, never again the same.²

The other balancer is again two-fold: the one side consists of an indictment of Nnamdi Azikiwe and his role in the civil war:

While Zik called for peace and unity, he has not at any moment given a concrete plan for the Gowon Regime in Lagos to build permanent peace and security not only for Biafrans but also for Nigerians. It is alright for Zik and for Lagos to promise the Biafrans that everyone would be secure and rehabilitated if the war was to stop now.³

John de St Torre sounds differently, thus contesting the quote last stated, a reprobatory evaluation:

Having visited Biafra three times, I never ceased to be won over by the spirit and sheer guts of the Ibos as a people. But at times I came round to the view that perhaps it was not enough simply to admire their courage and indulge their emotional antagonisms towards their enemies. One had to face the crucial questions: was it security or sovereignty that was really vital to the justifiable policy when the human cost - principally in Ibo lives - was mounting astronomically and showed no signs of diminishing? In the end I felt that the Biafran leadership had gone too far and was failing in the moral responsibility, inherent in all leadership, to guide its people away from the course of heroic but suicidal sacrifice on which Biafra was set.⁴

The four contrapuntal views and observations contribute the platform on which the leading questions on Nnamdi Azikiwe and the civil war will be examined. Was he in favour, indifferent, or opposed to the Nigeria-Biafra war, 1967 - 1970? One thing is certain: Zik physically left Biafra and went over to Nigeria in 1969. Nnamdi Azikiwe seems to sum up his stance in the following brief statement:

My visit (to Lagos and Nigeria) has made it clear to me that all of us have realised the mistakes we made in the past by fighting one another.⁵

His submission, as stated above, has not laid the problem to rest. Together they sensitise the mind to the immensity of the task before our search.

Azikiwe and Biafra: Indifference or Opposition?

The most controversial action of Nnamdi Azikiwe during the civil war was his abandonment of the much of the Biafran cause he ever espoused, and his deflection to the Nigerian side during the thirty months war. The two features were undivided and one. Undivided because Azikiwe did not leave the Biafran adventure and remain uncommitted in his place of choice, but one because his leaving Biafra found him in Nigeria. It is difficult to estimate the psychological, social and political impact which this single act made on the Biafran cause.

The Biafrans had viewed Nnamdi Azikiwe as a sober father full of reason, charisma, strategy and international acceptability. His profile and *curriculum vitae* qualified him as the world voice of reason in Nigerian affairs. He enjoyed untrammelled respect among the doyens of African Heads of State. Moderate, erudite, Africanist to the core, and peer of the contemporary members of African direction, Biafrans were reserved on his chequered commitment to their struggle and endured his melodrama with hopeful patience. Most people knew that he was not exactly in the compelling sphere of Biafran power and policy, but they at the same time trusted his "magic wand" as their last line of defence.

General Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu was capable, intelligent, charismatic and adulated. People nevertheless seemed convinced that his youth needed remarkable sobering, and his legendary energy was getting strained. He had capable advisers. Nnamdi Azikiwe was still to the optimistic, as he was to despairing Biafrans, "he that is to come" to rescue the Titanic from sinking in the mid-ocean of immense suffering, hardship and mass mortality. The prop of their hopes was his flexibility on the one hand, and his humane feelings on the other. Some, yes, accused him of occasional strong teeth which he was said to set against daggers-drawn opponents.

One thing united the majority in their belief in Zik: it remains his favour for the common man and his ever enduring benignity for the masses. They knew of him that he was generous to those who accepted him, and that he was soaked in the Igbo principle that a father calls his child 'my child' if the latter recognised him as "my

father," but that he was prepared to call him 'this stranger' if the child addressed his father as 'that man.' To most Nigerians, more so to those suffering - the Biafrans were suffering so much - Azikiwe was still 'my father'. If Nnamdi under-rated this fact, he misconstrued his identity and underestimated his father image unardonably.

Finally, he was known for his tenacity to those basic principles he held so dear: transitive paternalism was one of them. These deep sentiments disorganised the Biafrans to their foundations when the news of his 'deflection' was broken.

Socially, Dr Azikiwe had a large following of dedicated friends known and unknown, open and hidden. Their dedication to him has defied explanation. For one thing, his many friends would follow him wherever he went. An unrestrained inspirer even at superficial encounter, his many qualities and unruffled geniality drew many people to him with inextricable magnetism. Zik's demeanour still defies analysis. Even when burdened or overwhelmed with those hazards and reverses that drive melancholy down people's hearts Zik never displaced his problems on the public. His poise, extroversive altruism, and his consciousness of people's expectations of him helped him to humour the least visible in any group.

Zik disarms his critics who usually avoid frontal encounters with him and recurl at his retortions. All these rare attributes of a socialite were expected to draw even the Biafran leadership to his side, somehow, some time.

Externally, he had the confidence to match the best residues of other races, positions and orientations. Biafrans believed that rather than 'capitulate,' Zik was bound to make more proselytes for the cause of Biafrans in their hour of need. They trusted his contacts and his trapping eloquence to do even the impossible. This unique trust could never be broken. Was it then in jeopardy?

Politically, Azikiwe was accepted as well tutored in the science and art of influence and power. He was a strategist, a timer and a negotiator. He knew the great issues at stake and the tactics to adopt in encountering them. Azikiwe's celebrity had become international. After-all, he piloted Nigeria to independence through the rocky antics of the British, easily the most experienced in contemporary world political calculus. He wrested free Nigerians without casualties from an aggressive colonial power who had the weapons and men of war at its disposal, right there in the West African

Frontier Force and even, yet later, in the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Police. Zik's campaign strategies were historic. His political propaganda was final. He had a rare gift: he knew when to strike, when to react, when to halt, when to talk, when to end it all. As he mastered politics in theory and in practice, his international links and acceptability were widespread. Every group in Nigeria revered him. He couldn't be more qualified to rely upon and weave pieces into a stone. That was the belief which most Biafrans harboured about him. Therefore: "has Zik spoken? Has he come in? He must have something up his sleeves," were breaths of hope.

It is crucial to recognise their confidence in him. Some critics say the people are gullible and mesmerized by his surface impressions. The fact was that most Biafrans, if gullible, had engrafted the Zik gullibility to their person and consented by spontaneous reflex to be thus mesmerized. Inwardly they believed him.

This "Moses" of a man left them at the River Nile, taking away the magic wand at the most desperate stage of the civil war. What were his arguments to back this traumatizing decision? We choose to rely on his explanation. Barometres are scarce to measure the impact of Azikiwe's action or to measure the weight of his reason.

The Crux: The Historic Change of Camp

For thirty-five years, I have associated myself with other compatriots in the vanguard of the nationalist struggle for freedom in our country. Thus I have a vested interest in the preservation of the precious lives of our people. I cannot join in destroying our people.⁶

Nnamdi Azikiwe went to London, flew to Lagos and Liberia and made, among others, the above remark. Our methodology at this point would be to first catalogue the critical points in the press conference which he held in London, and then proceed to interpret them as dispassionately as we can in a literature about an episode loaded with sentiments. He visited for six days. Following are the points to be argued:

- 1 He testified to his personal safety and security of the Ibo and non-Ibo people who were then living in Lagos as well as those residing outside of the shrunk territory of Biafra:

It was a thrill to walk once more on the soil of my native land. Only a true patriot can appreciate this feeling.⁷

- 2 He intended "by the grace of God: to return shortly "to my country and help repair the damage done to my people by this illwind which has brought us nothing but disaster".⁸
- 3 He observed "at first hand the complex problems of Nigeria" and appreciated General Gowon's flexible attitude and his willingness to see the other fellow's point of view without compromising on fundamental issues. This quality, he noted, distinguished the true greatness of a leader.
- 4 Gowon was a hope for the re-building of a united country "based on respect for the idiosyncrasies of its components"

I have been strengthened in my faith in 'One Nigeria' as an expression I believe I coined in the halcyon days before the attainment of our independence as a sovereign state. I believe then, as I believe now, in one Nigeria, which is indivisible, indestructible and perpetual, provided adequate security is ensured to all its citizens and inhabitants in their persons and property.⁹

5. "Naturally, no sane person can support a policy which seeks to exterminate the Ibo or any other linguistic group in Nigeria by means of genocide or otherwise."¹⁰
6. Nnamdi Azikiwe had condemned violence in political conflicts:

When our "Young Turks" reacted the way they did early in 1966, I expressed my deep concern at the use of violence to solve our political problems; but I was misunderstood.¹¹

7. He had earlier warned Nigerians of the approaching crisis which ultimately led to war:

It will be remembered that from 1961 to 1965, I sounded warnings of the coming storm, but they were derided, distorted and ignored. I deeply regret all the killings of 1966 from January to October. In spite of any opinion to the contrary, I submit that they constitute an egregious blunder which has defaced our national image. They should never have been committed.¹²

8. He expressed opposition to any attempts to decimate any people. He sounded absolute and courageously resolute.

I would resist to the limit of my mental and physical abilities any concerted attempt to exterminate any linguistic group, whether Ibo or non-Ibo, for any reason.¹³

9. Azikiwe however warned against machinations calculated to sow persecution mania in the Igbo people, and to frustrate their confidence in their destiny to survive:

I cannot be expected to support any policy based on calculated falsehood to deceive the Ibo or the non-Ibo to believe that they are destined to be exterminated, to hoist an unpopular leadership on an impoverished, destitute and unarmed people.¹⁴

10. He was reminiscent of the 1966 killings and thought that long drawn-out hostilities inflicted more anguish on the people. It was his bared mind that it was too heavy on the people:

Accusation of genocide is palpably false, but bearing in mind the widespread killing of 1966 (why then continue to persuade them) when we know that they suffer mental anguish and physical anguish?¹⁵

11. Zik advanced a solution. It was three-phased: ending the war, reintegration, and rehabilitation:

The civil war should be ended as soon as possible... This appears to me to be the most prudent thing for any leader of consequence to advocate and to work for its attainment. Otherwise it means that the sufferings of millions and the deaths of thousands are of no intrinsic value... As far as I have been able to ascertain there is no concerted plot to exterminate the Ibo and non-Ibo in Biafra.¹⁶

12. To convince and empathize with the Biafrans, Azikiwe recognised their efforts and bravery. They were not cowards; they excelled in bravery:

I want them to believe me when I say that the world has taken cognisance of their fortitude in the face of extreme suffering in addition to the valour and gallantry of their soldiers.¹⁷

13. It was typical of him since his acceptance of Aggrey's moral transformation, and of course true to his consistent posture as regards the place of morality in human affairs, that he admitted:

There can be no doubt that they fought and died in the conscientious belief that they and their people were slated to be exterminated.¹⁸

14. On the above premises, he came up with unequivocal and even 'mandatory' order to both sides in the war:

The killings should stop now, Enough is enough... Common sense dictates that discretion is the better part of valour.¹⁹

15. Casualty figures were staggering, and ruins and devastation had marked the one hundred and eleven weeks of the war. The solution should be sought on the conference table, although not any how or in disregard of justice and honour:

Wisdom counsels that all Ibo and non-Ibo who are now adversely affected and are suffering privations as a result of the civil war, should have second thoughts and urge their leaders to go to the conference table and negotiate for a just and honourable peace which shall give them a respectable place in Nigeria as worthy citizens of one united country.²⁰

16. He ends this elegy by resounding his commitment to the Nigeria of his dream, struggles and reality, ideally embodied in a national outlook:

I hope to return to Nigeria in peace, because I cannot persuade myself that I am a tribal leader. I would prefer for history to identify me as a national leader that I have always tried to be.²¹

Azikiwe based his submission on probabilities of peace on agents of "the most unimpeachable international organisations of the world." He was convinced that they had nothing to gain by the shedding of Ibo or non-Ibo blood; and he was "not in a position to decipher why they should tell lies to the world, if such a criminal plot has been hatched."²²

IV. A Contextual Interpretation of Zik's Submission

What would have led Nnamdi Azikiwe to such a dramatic leap "over the wall"? While he alone has the answer, some persuasions are within conjecture if one observed Biafra from within.

His revisited nostalgia for Nigeria was a rationalization of his terminal condition, one might guess. In Biafra, he was surely bottled up in a territory too compact for a figure of his past history. The once Head of State of the most populous black nation in the world and one fifth of all Africa; it was like returning an Olympic-size stadium sportsman to a hind tennis court. He was unseated in the January coup of 1966. A person who drew the attention of the world became thankful to 'little boys' for staying alive. He had worked hard for them to taste military service which had become the leading honour in Nigeria's socio-politics. Zik was double their age, packed with experience, ready to educate and socialize the rank and file in the polity, and, in his earlier days, perhaps more brave and audacious than most of them, although in the ring which demanded forthright prowess in any contender. When later he had exchanges with the erstwhile Administrator of East Central State, he did not restrain his consciousness of status, position and personal history. This awareness, added to his rather early consciousness of age, would ill-dispose him to any sort of bullying by the young: in any event he always cherishes his freedom. He more vehemently rejected "ultra-radical and ultra-revolutionary changes in the social order, by all means, fair or foul."²³

The *nouvelle regime* came about through ultra-radical and ultra-revolutionary changes in Zik's appreciation. It was a wrong conception of the New Africa whose critics "have often fallen into a common error of regarding it as advocating ultra-radical and ultra-revolutionary changes"²⁴. Azikiwe's subconscious self would not

stand the military regime; it would atavistically blush at war and bloodshed.

There must be changes in order to have a new order. True. There must be radical changes in order to have a new order. True. There must be revolutionary changes in order to have a new order. True. But I have never advocated that these radical and revolutionary changes should crystallize through foul means.²⁵

Radicalism and Revolutionism may be identified with changes, but these changes need not be the type usually connected with bloodshed and open disregard for law and order.²⁶

He believed that "violence and bloodshed as revolutionary methods are not worthy of emulation at the present stage of our progress because they tend to fan enmity and to call forth the worst traits in humanity."²⁷ There he was, Azikiwe found himself not only in the midst of bloodshed but really under its threat.

When the storm gathered on Nigeria, he advised against secession with the authority of the father of the nation and the master of the game. He had offered to help the military men out of the *impasse* by early 1967, prior to the civil war, when he advised them to call on some "elder statesmen" to help dispel the cloud of a national disaster. His advice was disregarded and even booed by pedestrian populations in the would-be Biafra.

The psychological, sociological and political stature and reputation which Azikiwe enjoyed among the people was savagely dismantled in public gaze. One remembers the incident at Enugu on May 26, 1967, when the Assembly of Chiefs, Elders and other members of the Consultative Assembly gathered to deliberate on the inevitability of secession. While his arrival was heralded with fanfare, and Television viewers cheered when he alighted from his car in flowing white robes and his characteristic beaming smile, he did not get the respect he expected during the actual session.

This is important for understanding his later stand. For most people he was the *de jure* Chairman for the occasion after Lt. Colonel Ojukwu had addressed the members. He was by-passed and someone else took the chair. There is no doubt that some people suspected he harboured a moderate view on the crisis and its solution. Albeit, when he was recognised to speak, one remembers the uncomplimentary drama that ensued. In Zik's oratorical preamble, he was quoted as saying: "We have now come out of hibernation." The Assembly full of over-charged and embittered 'Biafrans' thundered back: "Go back to hibernation:" indecorous treatment to one who had enjoyed acceptance, respect and protocol

for years. That was the last heard of him. Considering the heat and temper of the time, Zik could have been lynched if, in a speech, he had spoken the language of moderation and lenity. It was not the environment for his typical words such as these:

But we in forgotten and neglected Africa know better. We are so steeped in religiosity and humanitarianism, and are so cultured and civilized that we have often trodden the path of freedom bloodlessly.²⁸

Of course, unmistakably, Colonel Ojukwu would have protected Zik from mob indecorum. If some say the two were never friends, many have held that Ojukwu recognised the weight and might of Zik and respected them. Others would believe more readily that Ojukwu relegated him, or allowed him to be so treated, because he could not cope with the stratagems of this tested, intelligent and versatile politician, Zik. Ojukwu was too youthful to endure enigmatic gradualism. That registered and lingered throughout the civil war. As he remained in his Onuiyi Haven at Nsukka (confined or free?), he must have sulked and ruminated as he counted the contradictions of his life's career and mission. It is not unusual for him to retreat from an impossible situation; after all he admired Fabianus Cunctatus so much in his tactical retreats and eventual victory. "History will vindicate me" is his way of recording rebuttals in critical times of opinion.²⁹

The First Shot

After the collapse of the Aburi Accord which, if slightly edited, could have given Nigeria the unity and longevity all had bargained for, the line of battle was drawn. From the Biafran side, there was a display of 'sophisticated weapons' to the bubbling admiration of the people. Two heavy machine guns, polished and mounted at the entrance of the Army barracks at Enugu, were most powerful "rocket launchers" to the uniformed civilian. Flavoured with whispers of squadrons of fighter - bomber planes in battle array in the underground gangway in the Udi hills, the sight of a company of troops briskly rehearsing with polished rifles and mounted light machine guns on landrover military-colour-jeep vehicles, which moved with purposeful speed to flash survival and hope to a terrified people, the people of Biafra took it for granted that their determination and spirited chauvinism would give them victory if possible on a walk-over plate over Nigeria. The media gave their collective hope the covering fire in its growth and fearlessness. Ojukwu's warlike, charming and exuberant oratory even counted

more. Like Napoleon Bonaparte "his presence in the battle field was worth that of forty-two thousand men."³⁰

There was also Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, the people's Marshal Michael Nay, "the bravest of the brave" in Napoleon's army. As skirmishes occurred at the northern border, reports flowed in that Biafrans were invincible. And so on July 6, 1967, the first shot was fired for the thirty months war. Who fired first? remains a question for the combatants to answer. In the face of fire and brimstone, people, particularly civilians, stand helpless. The elite and status-conscious tremble: they, after all, have so much to lose: eventful life, security, income and social respectability. In this, Nnamdi Azikiwe was no exception. No amount of spirited expectations from an ovation people could confer ascendancy on Zik in the battle field. He was brave and calculated but not as a combatant soldier. Nor did he ever command an army, even a token contingent, in real contact when he was the honorific Commander-in-Chief of Nigeria. How he felt, what he did, what he was up to in the first months of the war, is up to Zik to speak for himself.

It was an anticlimax that towns fell in Biafra like a pack of cards with such electrifying rapidity that people jumped in their skin. "It is not true:" "don't mind them:" "it is propaganda:" "it is the havoc of saboteurs:" were assuaging ejaculations that quietened the surface of a petrified population. Their myth, Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, they believed, was announced dead by the "mendacious" BBC and the nuisance, Nigeria's Radio Television Kaduna. The Biafran command denied his death outright as a year earlier the Eastern Nigerians denied the death of General Aguiyi-Ironsi because it just could never be.

The swing and weight of public opinion was so strong that it would have been dangerous apostasy for anyone in Biafra to pronounce 'caution,' be he who he may. This is important for evaluating Azikiwe and his role at that material time. Being in the Biafran territory, he was every inch a Biafran by *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*. The political and legal implications will be clearer when considered side by side with Nigerian's attacks on him for "writing the words of the Biafran Anthem." As a negotiator and one pathologically averse to bloodshed, nobody should ever blame him for not daring the embattled Biafran population and opinion. The option, if he did, was unsolicited suicide.

A question however arises at this stage. Why was he apparently ignored in Biafra? Was his capacity to conquer more space under-

rated, disregarded, or forgotten? These questions are best answered by both Zik and the Biafran leadership.

A hiatus occurred early in the war. The Biafran troops in a lighting operation took over the Mid-Western Region of Nigeria. Most media the world over acclaimed the brilliance of the Biafra Army. Its ambush strikes were "as precise as the Chinese" and for even the British Broadcasting Corporation and the loud Voice of America, the new conquerors became the "Biafran tigers." The Soviet Union opined that the world should do something either to accept or stop "these Biafrans"; otherwise they would even threaten the entire (white) world.

The period of Biafran occupation of this Nigerian territory, and the life of the Republic of Benin (R.O.B) forced a deadlock, a rethinking, and redeployment. It also shattered once and for ever the presumption that Biafra would be over-run "in forty-eight hours." Here is yet a situation that favoured the typical Azikiwe tackle: it was a chance and persuasion to negotiate honourable peace on an equation of competing strength: For Azikiwe has remained consistent on his principle:

I am a realist but I can dream dreams as well. I have a deep and abiding faith in pragmatism as a useful philosophy to guide the individuals of any nation to accomplish their aims. Reason, experience and practice should guide us to make our dreams come true. ³¹

Nwafor Orizu had reinforced this principle in his work: *Without Bitterness ... Zikism*

The new social myth is accommodative. it must be catholic and uniform, unequivocal and definite, objective and impartial, egalitarian and all embracing. It should project an indivisible and unified ideal in which every rank, status, wealth or tribe, should be able to find a reflection of its own individual aspiration and well-being. ³²

That was the best atmosphere for Azikiwe to feature. Did he feature? Did he fail? Did he refuse to feature? Was he repulsed? are questions which today remain locked in the lithospheric echelon of the undisclosed, the personal, the classified, the private, and the reserved. The situation called for partnership of realism with idealism and a down-to-earth approach was ripe. Ebo indirectly at least would subscribe to this proposition.

Zik consistently bracketed one abstract ideal with its pragmatic opposite: mind with matter, mental reformation with social transformation. this phobia was also responsible for his continuous insistence that his doctrine was nothing more or less than a psychological conception which is rooted in a material environment. ³³

Dr Azikiwe was a man to capitalise on this brazen opportunity to equalize chances and fortune for the warring states. He had the qualities. As a close observer notes:

Zik is intellectual, logical, oratorical, and charismatic as he was pugilistic and imbued with that penchant for controversy. He is a polemicist, energetic agitator, and yet resided with remarkable skill for diplomacy. He struggles unfatigued, but is kite-eyed for openings to negotiate.³⁴

Azikiwe was within reach, either at Onitsha or by then at Adazi Nnukwu in the house of a proprietor and principal of a secondary school. Was he confined? It was clear he was not hiding, for he sent a number of messages to the Biafran Head of State imploring him to permit him go abroad to look for political solutions. Was he under house arrest? for he barely occupied what looked like two small rooms and a lounge or parlour, with a few ordinary chairs perched around a roughly knit carpet. Was he a suspect, untrusted or what? One thing was clear: he was a refugee on flight from the Nigerian Army as it advanced. After all Colonel Joseph Achuzia in his *Requiem Biafra* narrates how he met his entire household property at Okpanda about forty kilometres south of Nsukka, and Zik's library and other items were found intact. This is evidence. For Azikiwe to abandon his library anywhere, and intact for that matter, is a final proof of agitation and trepidity. The rest are details. One point has been made here: that Azikiwe did not feature at a typical juncture for him to negotiate peace. This is a parcel of riddles and questions left for accredited *dramatis personae* to untie. His role in Biafra lingers on until it is further pointedly taken up shortly. Attempted interpretation and evaluation of his reasons for his change as contained in his press statement now follows.

Evaluation of the Historic Change of Camp

1. Azikiwe testified to his personal safety and security of the Ibo and non-Ibo people who were then living in Lagos as well as those residing outside of Biafra. It should be noted that he must have found that safety newsworthy. He was speaking to those whom, he knew, he could never dribble with any form of lexical artistry. The audience understood him. He must have known. Safety is always taken for granted in the free world. What is news is security. To report the safety of himself and at least two ethnic groups conveyed his tacit fear that he would be unsafe in Nigeria, that he must have been a wanted man, a captive bird moving into a cage for a kill or as a curiosity in a zoo. Breathing a sigh of relief in a house, because

one is allowed to sit unmolested is an incontestable pointer to the fact that the guest may be in a house which is definitely not a home. He is at most a welcome stranger and at best a prodigal son come back. But like *Comte d'Everemonde* (?) he is watched, admired, singled out, not because he is exquisite but because he is "a marked man."³⁵

Lagos was not the best sample to test Nigeria's hospitality. Lagos is cosmopolitan. A metropolis too broad for policing by a scanty army, too impersonal to name inhabitants distinctly, and a world enough to harbour the anonymous, Lagos also stood to the gaze of the world whose many embassies and consulates walked freely. Their reports of anti-ethnic hostilities would spell doom to the Nigerian cause.

Lagos is everyman's land and no man's land, because it is all comers land in Nigeria. Moreover, as recent events demonstrated, a few incidents of violence could set Lagos on fire in a lynch war of immeasurable dimension. If anybody wanted to harm Azikiwe and his son, Lagos was not the place for it. For even a more delicate reason, Zik landed in broad daylight, and under the assumed protection and cover of the British who were the most confident pillars of Nigeria's strength. His insecurity would sound the knell to sink Nigeria in travail.

The Igbo should be paraded as safe at least as a propaganda show calculated to debunk the accusation of genocide on the Igbo people which was a point where the entire world, as a group, would have parted ways with Nigeria. Apartheid is condemned but glossed over by some powers: that is outrageous. Genocide, on the other hand, would be unheard of, adversely visited, and given the ignominy and ire of the world. Nigeria would be careful to avoid proving that the 1966 massacres were master-minded by any Nigerian with a policy touch in him. The very fact of it was reprehensible and, if proven, Nigeria would have lost the war. This does not exclude the possibility of scattered cases of individual victimization or even killings by members of either side. If such occurred, they must be covered up. Non-Ibo people in Lagos were not a threat.

The minority consciousness had lingered for long in Eastern Nigeria, and had continued to wax stronger with the backing of other Nigerians particularly from the West. Generally too, many Nigerians living in the Yoruba and Hausa linguistic zones always mastered the language of their place of domicile for commercial and

social reasons. One might cite the late Sam Garba who resided in Jos during the war; he spoke Hausa fluently, looked Hausa but was in fact Sam Okoye of Umunachi in the heart of Igboland.

As for those in the "liberated areas" of Biafra, it would be suicidal for Nigeria troops to embark on wholesale massacre. They could not have fought on two theatres: the one conventional and ferocious, the other guerilla and internecine. Then such inhabitants were more effective soldiers in the war, as they shuttled to and from Biafra and spread tales of nomalcy and prosperity in the areas "behind the enemy line." One therefore sees the point as worthy of credence in the light of the aforementioned explanations, and much more. Many such inhabitants were born in Lagos and similar places, grew up there, and made true friends who alerted and even protected them in times of crisis.

Azikiwe's thrill in his "native fatherland" is an understatement from a man who lived literally for one purpose: to create a new Africa with a base in a united, indivisible and perpetual Nigeria. People do not like to die. But when death is inevitable they want to rest in their home, and for historical figures, on their bed in the scene of action. One understands why, for Zik, his thrill in Lagos was such that "only a true patriot can appreciate this feeling." It is also fair to score him on some bravery in moving into an area where he encountered armed men who felt bitterly that he was unfairly left to go when their back-thought tried to balance the equation of high-level killings, and found him the supreme absentee.

2. "The grace of God" is normal in Zik's thinking. He is religiously conscious and he accepts "the Nazarene" and is in no way an agnostic. His desire to help repair the damage done "to my people" is replete with meaning. "My people" could mean the people of Biafra, but in Zik's context, it means all Nigerians. In this case, however, the greater part of the repair would be in the original Biafran territory, and his audience must have caught that. In this, he reflected the thinking of the most ardent Biafrans and even the Biafran leadership.

If not then, definitely now, most people would agree with him that the war was an "illwind which has brought us nothing but disaster." The Biafran leader, General Odumegwu Ojukwu, in his *Because I am Involved*, admitted implicitly that the war occurred because brothers misunderstood one another. The war was a disaster in many ways: economic, political, social, cultural,

international, developmental, psychological etc. and that disaster was on both sides to the conflict. Nigeria was sent back at least a century, and it is an uphill task restoring trust and belief in a common cause. "A nation is a group of people who agree to answer a nation" (Professor Emerson). Before the war, they more than agreed to answer a nation by name and by deed. Our problem in hand is to translate Nigeria from nomenclature to an accepted and real life; from a legal state entity to a sincere nationhood.

3. This point is more controversial. Nigeria had "complex problems." General Gowon was flexible, yes. He had not choice. He was taking chances. Chances arising from a war in which a mistake, or an act of disloyalty, or even a power tussle for its positive eventualities, could reduce the greatest to a moth. War throws up skulls and Gowon was not insulated. He presided over the powers-that-be in the country. His success was accommodation and flexibility, and they were compulsory for Gowon. He had Bissalla, perhaps Danjuma, Ochefu, Domkat Bali, Obada, Obeya and a handful of higher officers from his minority Middle Belt. But it was not equally clear that his control of Murtala Mohammed, Wushishi, Adekunle, Jemibewon, Adebayo, Oluleye, Ogbumedia, Hassan Katsina, Bako, Haruna, Babangida, to again mention but a few outside his geographical zone, was all that confident and firm. He was leading a band of potential mutineers. He had to be flexible. Then with Obafemi Awolowo who could outwit and surprise him, were it not that the war offered him the chances of his life, Gowon, working in and through the Supreme Military Council and, very decisive, the field General Officers Commanding, had little choice but "see the other fellow's point of view."

Moreover, the vampire bat methods of his protectors and mentors, the British, must have teleguided Gowon to survival and victory.

Zik's acceptance of Gowon's not "compromising on fundamental issues" is best left to Azikiwe to assess. Whose issues were fundamental? Who described them? Were they stable, flexible, circumstantial, efficient, episodic, or effective at all times? Where, in the scheme of affairs, did Gowon place the full-scale war on his "fellow Nigerians" whom he had intended to reassure by "a police-action?" History will continue to question Gowon's role in 1966 when he 'maintained silence' and opted for masterly 'inactivity' when his troops and nationals inflicted untold bloody massacres and atrocities on *bona fide* Nigerians. How unfundamental was his

cynical approach to the Aburi Accord? Even if it needed revision, should he have left it at the mercy of self-interested bureaucrats to twist to the disaster of the whole nation? How un-fundamental was his flimsy commitment to the security of life and property in an integral part of the territory of which he was the Chief Executive? Later events proved that other Nigerians saw through the 'legendary' simplicity and humane posture of General Gowon. Was he an unconscious instrument or an agent of the enemies of Africa? He reserves the right and duty to explain himself. While Azikiwe acclaimed him as a great leader, some political strategists might accuse Zik of reductionism or one-factor analysis, although many others would credit him with a mastery of techniques for making difficult things work and rigging out of a precarious situation. He needed bridge-head acceptability if Gowon was ever to listen to him.

4. We interpret Zik here as employing inverted epithet meaning: based on respect for the idiosyncrasies of the components of Nigeria, Gowon could become a hope for the rebuilding of a united country. Few people would contest the merit of this evaluation although it would equally be postulated that Gowon's indispensability did not arise. Any other person, given his position, could have done so. What, in any event was General Aguiyi Ironsi set on doing when he was removed, with his guest Colonel Adekunle Fajuyi, to an ignominious grave? After Gowon, was General Murtala Mohammed far from achieving the total objective? General Obasanjo was well on the track and in fact did the most creditable act of rebuilding the nation: setting up role boards and returning the country to democratic rule, with some pitfalls, no doubt, but as yet to be outdone in impeccability. Azikiwe here enjoys the reservation of knowing the details that informed his score of General Gowon. One hopes to hear more from him on this all important matter.

5. Nnamdi Azikiwe comes out resolute and heavy on the actors in the Nigerian civil war. He pads his astonishment with the loaded word "naturally." He did not exclude psychological, socio-pathological or mental aberrators. Nobody within his senses would support a policy of extermination. The problem is that nature and senses have developed to become relative these days. There is self-justification even in instances of pre-meditated murder. There are factors internal and external which can reclaim insanity and impose it on men and events. Azikiwe's "observation" is a compulsive

invitation to those prosecuting the war to have their heads examined. Genocide aside, he condemns extermination "otherwise:" mentally, socially, politically, humanly and many other ways of killing people by inches and qualitatively through repression, and denial of their rights to a meaningful life. Zik hits the *apogee* of his responses and the central point at issue here. He couldn't be more adroit or forthright.

6. The "Young Turks" of early in 1966 had in Zik's context reappeared with more cohorts during the civil war. For him, violence is evil and inhuman in any human society. He was bold enough to warn the world and all in Nigeria and Biafra, whoever were the invaders, that "Young Turks" were at large in Nigeria. He followed it up by implicitly warning that if they defied his warning, the chain-reactionary effects would continue to devastate Nigeria all the more.

7. His warnings as contained in his 1961 - 1965 speeches re-echoed this position as stated in No. 6. Both sides were told in clear terms that an "egregious blunder" was on show in the world's largest Black nation. He did not qualify it any further or excuse either side. It was a credit to him that he condemned the chain of events since 1966, and, in the context of the civil war, unreservedly stated that "they should never have been committed."

8. Azikiwe goes even further to commit the limit of his mental and physical abilities to resist any attempt to exterminate any linguistic group in Nigeria, even in actual state of war. He must have meant it. If he did, it was a leading unique show of courage, sincerity and well-informed intractability. This was consistent with his philosophy: that man shall not be a wolf to man, and that he came to fight man's inhumanity to man. He was Biafran, even if not a Biafran.

9. Azikiwe's reputation of the charge of genocide is a critical issue. Was one of the Nigerian Army Commanders on his own when he ordered his men on the southern front to shoot everything "moving or not moving?" Were the revelations at Abagana not weighty evidence that thorough going savagery awaited the Biafran civilian population who escaped the fire power of Murtala Mohammed's "biggest army in Black Africa" in the field? Broken bottles, purportedly loaded as savage razors to shave and "barb" under hemorrhage (with instant or eventual death); the indiscriminate

bombings at Awgu and Atani by pilots who lowered their combat aircraft to visibility: strafing market women and children and laughing away sadonically while solving "the Ibo Question;" the massacre of hundreds of civilians at Asaba who were invited to welcome the Federal troops in November 1967; massive "starvation as a legitimate instrument of warfare," and interception of planes sending relief to war-torn areas: were they pointers to a grand plan which Zik aimed at attenuating by converting a reality through ascription of goodwill and the best of intentions?

Was Azikiwe instrumental in checking the excesses of Nigerian troops, and were their inhumanities perpetrated, as is the case in many other wars, unknown to the central command? Further information from Azikiwe and his successes in this herculean task would boost his consistency, good nature, and broad-based acceptability.

10 and 11. Nnamdi Azikiwe cautioned that atrocities defied description and should be halted, moreso when the people had suffered anguish from 1966 through 1969. He leaned his plea in favour of the underdog. Did he deny accusation of genocide, or even genocidal overtone in order to sound impartial? Impartiality qualified him for intervention.

He prescribed the only practical solution: that is the ending of the war. This generates debate. Is it ending the war by speeding and intensifying operations, or by working for cease-fire and armistice? To those who pre-suggest the first alternative, he counterpoised reintegration and rehabilitation. He emphasized that there was no intention to exterminate the Biafrans. By logic, deductions favour ceasefire and armistice.

He proceeded in Numbers 12 and 13. to dispose the Biafrans by crediting them with acclaimed gallantry, and their conscientious (not reckless) conviction that they were fighting for their survival against extermination. This went for enough to dispose the Biafrans for a peaceful settlement and preservation of lives and property.

"There can be no doubt that they fought and died in the conscientious belief that they and their people were slated to be exterminated."

This vindicates the prosecutors of the Biafran cause from war criminality. Some of their leaders were detained after the war but none, not one, was tried and executed. Even General Ojukwu, who went on self exile (and wisely so), has been a free man since 1982, barely twelve years after the Civil War. Stripped of his rank, he

bows to Military discipline, but one doubts if that rank is *de jure* effectively stripped. He lives next door, literally, to the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Dodan Barracks, and is today recognised as a pundit both because of magnanimity and because, perhaps, there was a second thought on the entire wasted exercise of the war. Azikiwe needs to elaborate on the general amnesty, although, as Ukpabi Asika properly put it, "not amnesia." Some powerful persons and agencies must have worked behind the scene to register this turn in military history. Oral evidence from an officer in the Nigeria Army claims that Zik did most of the work; it is still left to Zik himself to elaborate or expatiate. Some credit must be given to some people? Is he one of them? His sayings and advice did not seem to rule him out from that roll call of honour.

14. Here I appreciate his disguised order on all. It was a forceful order:

The killings should stop now,
Enough is enough... Common sense
dictates that discretion is the
better side of valour.³⁶

By 'now' he meant at the time of speaking. His condemnation of killings since 1966 eliminates all suggestions to the effect that "the ones you killed are enough." In English parlance he was in effect saying "stop the joke" or, if one ever prided himself on the war, "call off the bluff." By appealing to common sense, he urged all to advert to the hierarchy of values in which he has always put human life first. To confrontationists and hard liners he would recommend Aggrey's cooperation:

Always flank it. You can catch more flies with molasses than you can with vinegar.

15. He follows up his persuasion by calling the belligerents to the conference table. It is worthy of note that even in the teeth of bad taste and mortifying antagonism, Azikiwe was still able to prescribe a peace conference where negotiation for a just and honourable peace should be conducted and where the Biafrans should be given a respectable place in Nigeria as worthy citizens. He did not advocate an unconditional surrender.

When Major General Effiong and the Biafran team left for Lagos to "negotiate" an honourable end to the war, they were astonishingly told that there was nothing to negotiate and that it was an unconditional surrender. Here, Zik trusted the Nigerians beyond human credibility. He omitted one provision: that a third party be

present at the negotiation, or that the conference table be provided even by Britain, or any other. The debacle of callous triumphalism with its resistant aftermaths in different parts of Nigeria, for a long time, was a result of the Machiavellian Domino Approach which Gowon chose or consented to adopt in betrayal of his word of honour. To hypocritically talk of "no victor no vanquished" after that was to incense an oppression and tantalize human intelligence.

People reacted vehemently to it, and that was where Azikiwe was caught in the cross-fire. Anarchy could have set in as colonel Achuzia still in uniform at home and flying the Biafran flag of his military vehicle BA.7 (Biafran Army 7), thought of regrouping and arming the available soldiers to resume the war and end it all in the battle field. After all, there at Amichi, Uga, Owerri, Fegge Onitsha, and Awka, the Nigerian Army was already in disarray. Most troops had dropped their guns and run off to celebrate their survival, and most of them, walking in tiny groups, were vulnerable to sporadic attacks. So much for troop location. *The missing link was that the instrument for conference table negotiation, as proposed by Zik, was not used.* Was it provided and later discarded or did he forget to tidy up the arrangements? It is left for Azikiwe to answer.

However, hostilities ended. The people could once again move about, go about their business and return to some parts of Nigeria even reclaiming their property, rents and proceeds from their business. Some public officers were reabsorbed. But vengeance and attrition lingered on: from the £20 level offer for life's savings in banks to random retrenchment, confiscation of abandoned property," subtle punishments of individuals and the collectivity, to non-reconstruction of the war devastated areas and institutions to date.

Some believe the ex-Biafrans could have been better off paying war indemnity levies. Few think the war should have been continued. Others heave a sigh of relief that the war is over after all. All are united in their belief that reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction were considerably betrayed. Was Azikiwe to blame?

He has sounded dissatisfied in his conferences and writings even since. More so during his electioneering campaigns of 1979 and 1983. Sounding so embittered, sometimes, at the inflictions, derelictions, and euphoria in calamity, he has succeeded in demonstrating this much: that his historic change of camp achieved its major objective in a mini-max-game he was bound to play *if there*

would not be a Biafra without Biafrans. How much more he can force any hands remains to be seen.

The theme of his action arose partially out of realism, and partially out of his obsession that "I cannot persuade myself that I am a tribal leader. I would prefer for history to identify me as a national leader that I have always tried to be."

NOTES

1. Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII, Pope from 1939 to 1958 is acclaimed in the history of the Church as the Pope of Peace.
 2. L.U. Ejiofor, on the *Battle of Uzuakoli*. This observation is yet unrecorded. It nevertheless lives vividly in the author's mind.
 3. S.E. Ezedimma, ... *Why Zik is Wrong* ... (London, 65 Mildway Road, No. 1, 1969, p. a.
 4. John de St. Jorre, *The Nigerian Civil War* (London, Holder and Stoughton, 1972), p. a.
 5. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Press Statement, London, 1969.
 6. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Impression of my Visit to Lagos: (A Press Conference (London, August 25, 1969), p. 4.*
 7. *op. cit.* p. 1.
 8. *Ibid.*
 9. *op. cit.* p. 2.
 10. *Ibid.*
 11. *Ibid.*
 12. *Ibid.*
 13. *Ibid.*
 14. *op. cit.* p. 3
 15. *Ibid.*
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. *op. cit.* p. 3
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. *Ibid.*
 20. *op. cit.* p. 4
 21. *op. cit.* p. 5
 22. *op. cit.* p. 1. Azikiwe relied on the reports of an observer team comprising members from the U.N., O.A.U., U.K. Canada, Poland and Sweden.
 23. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa* ... p. 34.
 24. *Ibid.*
 25. *op. cit.* p. 35.
 26. *op. cit.* p. 37.
 27. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *West African Pilot*, April 10, 1943.
 28. Nnamdi Azikiwe *Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe* (Cambridge, at the University Press, 1961), p. 55.
 29. Azikiwe seems to agree with the historical cyclical school of thought: History revolves and repeats itself.
 30. Dennis Richards, *The History of Europe, 1789 - 1939*.
 31. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism* (Lagos, Macmillan Nigeria, 1979), p. 174.
 32. Nwafor Orizu, *Without Bitterness* ..., p. 306.
 33. Chukwumeka Ebo, *The Foundation of Zikism* ..., Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, 1963.
 34. Lambert Ejiofor, personal observation.
 35. Joseph Conrad, *The Four Tales: II Conde*.
 36. Nnamdi Azikiwe, London Press conference. Zik also delivered a public lecture at Oxford University on the Civil War. His view was consistent.
- * Special note: Nnamdi Azikiwe, like many writers used 'Ibo' while the writer has for researched and consistent reasons always preferred "Igbo".

PART FOUR

Dynamics of the African Revolution

African Economies Since Independence: Patterns of Promises and Failures of Foreign Aid

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Introduction

Even before the achievement of political independence the Rt. Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe had conceptualized the image of Africans in great detail as he saw it for them. That image defined their revolutionary role in the total remodelling of African life and the fitting of same into the general universal pattern. Accordingly, there were, from Azikiwe's point of view, the old Africa of yesterday and the new Africa of tomorrow.

Between the two there was the renascent African who existed in a transitional stage. In the old Africa, the society had remained stagnant in spite of immortal contributions made by ancestors. Those static conditions were perpetrated by slave trade and other evils of imperialism which, altogether, offered a challenge to the renascent African. To be able to cope with that challenge, the renascent African needed a philosophy and Azikiwe prescribed the nature and extent of that philosophy in five closely related policies and principles as the prerequisites for the advancement of the African people. Those policy prescriptions later became classic and were popularly called the **Five Zikist Postulates**.

I

Economic Determinism for Afro-Political Independence

The third of the Zikist Postulates which concerned itself with the economic life of Africans stated that *Economic determinism* was required to form the basis of African economic thought because the new Africans would not hope to create a new order without a sound economic foundation. Azikiwe believed that political autonomy proceeded *pari passu* with economic autonomy in the social evolution of people. Both were *sine qua non* of each other. Thus, Azikiwe had recognized at an early stage that with all the political power in the world, no state whose economic structure was in shambles could attain maximum happiness in the commonality of nations.

More succinctly, Azikiwe prescribed that it was necessary to avoid monopoly of wealth by a few, so as to prevent the profit motives from capturing life itself. His anti-monopoly of wealth stance later stimulated the establishment of the African Continental Bank to discourage a banking monopoly by foreign bankers in order to liberalize credit facilities for Nigerian business entrepreneurs and to encourage indigenous banking in order to plan for an eventual establishment of a State Bank.

Wealth means commodities which are capable of satisfying want; thus, an individual's wealth comprises clothes, furniture, homes, motor-car, savings in various forms and so on.

A country's wealth is the total of all personal wealth, after cancelling debts between individuals, plus collective wealth such as state-owned transport, fuel services, mines hospitals, schools and others. Personal wealth, thus, includes claims to the services of collective wealth. It follows, then, that the total wealth of a community includes claims on the wealth of other communities and that the total wealth of the world is the sum of the wealth of individual communities after cancelling claims and debts between them.

The founders of classical economics, Adam Smith and David Ricardo were concerned, mostly, with wealth distribution among what were then the three great social classes namely the capitalist and the landowners. But Azikiwe, obviously, went beyond that in not accepting inequality as a social constant, hence, in its fuller implications, his caution against monopoly of wealth meant that the poor would get relatively richer and the rich relatively poorer as the

economy developed. These policy implications of Azikiwe's third postulate summed up to economists' popular concept of "wealth redistribution."

Since wealth is, mostly, redistributed through payments for productive services, it follows that a given level of gainful employment is a useful indicator of the extent of wealth redistribution which a society enjoys. However, wealth, also, can be redistributed through economic rent and transferred payments.

Economic rent means the earning of a factor of production in excess of the minimum sum necessary to keep it in its existing use thereby preventing it from moving to other uses. This minimum sum will depend on employment opportunities available to the factor elsewhere; hence, it is also described as "opportunity cost" or transfer earning.

Transfer payments, on the other hand, are transfers of money by the government in the form of grants, allowances and pensions from the relatively rich, through taxation, to the relatively poor such as widows, pensioners, sick or unemployed people and others with little or no appreciable level of income.

II

Structure of Economic Development Since Independence

A literary description of African economic development exhibits a three-sector model embracing the village, the town and the township. The village economy is rural and its major activities are agricultural and pastoral. Production takes place, primarily, to meet villagers' food requirements. It has been estimated that over one half of the output of a village may be consumed within the same village while only one-fifth of a village's total production may be considered as surplus that can be exchanged outside the immediate community.¹

A village is not only self-sufficient in foodstuffs production, it also provides its own fire-wood for cooking and heating. Weavers may produce cloth with village raw materials while artisans make basket, earthen wares, footwears, leather goods and fishing nets. Village blacksmiths may shape metal into nails, hooks, blades or cast iron into knives, hoes and other simple tools. To that extent, a cluster of villages may be able to look after most of the simple needs of their combined inhabitants.

In spite of the self-sufficiency status of the village in this wise, villagers must need money for some other purposes. One way of getting some money into the village is to sell surplus food items to town dwellers through local food traders. Another is to send some village labour to the town, as a partial substitute for village produce, to work for money wages and to remit part of the earnings to the village through relatives.

A migrant worker, however, must return to the village eventually, so, he preserves his place and position there by remitting funds to his family and sending advice to the village community. But regular money remittances to the village tend to reduce the amount of surplus produce which villagers can offer in exchange for money. The reason is that village life is comparatively simpler, thus, money costs and real costs are fewer.

In the town, on the other hand, little can be self-produced; most of what people consume must be bought. So, the cost of living in the town is higher because town dwellers use money for everything. By the village standard, however, employment opportunities are numerous in the town and people depend on permanent employment and regular minimum wages to meet the higher costs of living.

There are found in the the town, government offices, schools, banks, factories and movie theatres together with corresponding classes of consumers comprising officials, teachers, merchants and other sorts of business and professional people. The town is thus a centre of market economy and its more closely associated with manufacturing and service industries than with farming.

Migrant labour, obviously, provides an important link between the village and the town. The problem, however, is that the number of villages that send out labour is larger than the number of towns that receive village labour. The imbalance gives rise to various socio-economic difficulties in the towns and these portray the villages as a source of unlimited supplies of labour.

The township is an enclave where foreign corporations are engaged in large-scale and highly capitalistic production in plantations or extractive industries. The foreign-owned and foreign-managed concerns produce almost entirely for export and this provides return transport for imported consumer goods such as canned food, clothes, furniture and other household requirements for use by company staff.

A company-operated township, of course, is laid out and governed according to Western patterns and, in many respects it is

in closer contact with the Western world than with the surrounding country from where it only recruits lowly paid labour. A township, thus, is a small island of an alien world which in no way blend adequately into the economy in which it is located. For one thing township wages are higher than town wages because overseas wage rates constitute a sub-conscious standard for management. Thus, the main impact of the township on the domestic economy is in the form of local payrolls and company income taxes paid to the government in the town.

Each of these three sectors outlined above has its won production function but a generalised form may be a modified Cobb-Douglas formation in which each factor of production is assumed to have a constant supply elasticity of output. These factors are land and labour in the village, money capital and labour in the town and capital in the form of advanced technology in the township.

In both the town and the township labour may be rewarded more closely according to its marginal productivity. But in the village where land may be scarce giving rise to diminishing returns to labour there may be little distinction between income from labour and rent from land. The apparent average wage rates are obtained by dividing aggregate village output by village labour force. Such average wage rates in the village are not particularly an incentive to production. So, poverty and labour migration are a special feature of the village economy

III

Post-Independence Development Plans: Patterns of Promises and Set-Backs

In their effort to cause a change in the three-sector model outlined above, Africans adopted "planning after political independence as a major development strategy thus challenging the conclusion of classical economic theory that, in free competition the working of the profit motive will result in the best possible allocation of resources. Planning, then, means organising the use of factors of production by central direction instead of by the profit motive in a market economy.² Thus development plans provide us with convenient materials for assessing the promises and the failures of African post-independence economies.

(i) Promises

The earliest attempts at planned development began, all over African, in the 1940s through the early 1950s. The core of those colonial plans was to build up the transportation and communication systems to enhance easier exploitation and movement of natural resources from the hinterland to the cities and ports for onward transportation to the countries of western Europe. Attention of course was focussed on export crops while industrialization remained minimal. Thus, planning in pre-independence periods held out little promises for indigenous Africans. Following political independence in the 1960s development plans had as their principle objective, a rapid increase in the standard of living of Africans and their primary goals to achieve were:

- (a) an economic growth rate of 4 per cent or more;
- (b) a rise in annual per capita consumption of about 1 per cent;
- (c) the attainment of self-sustaining growth;
- (d) to achieve a modernised economy consistent with the democratic, political and social aspirations of Africans;
- (e) to enhance the quality of life for the African people by a more equitable distribution of income among people and regions;
- (f) to provide for the creation of jobs in non-agricultural sectors.

In the 1970s development plans promised the people:

- (a) a united, strong and self-reliant society;
- (b) a dynamic and expanding economy beneficial to all;
- (c) a just and egalitarian society;
- (d) a land of opportunity and full-employment;
- (e) a free and democratic society, recognising the cultural values of all ethnic groups.

In the early 1980s African development plans promised increased productivity and the creation of sound economic and social infrastructure, as a result of full utilization of resources.

(ii) Set-Backs

In the 1960s, those African development plans suffered from two major set-backs. First, the planners expected that capital inflow from abroad would finance a large percentage of the planned expenditures. But foreign capital, in some cases, provided less than 10.0 per cent of what was expected from abroad. Second, short-

term loans were an obvious feature of the external debt structure where the loans were obtained.

In the 1970s African development plans were a design of three closely related consequences. First, the experience of the 1960s had taught the lesson that external sources were unreliable for financing African development programmes. Second, experience also had shown that, with respect to debt service charges, long-term loans were preferred to short-term ones. Third, as a result of those experiences, greater emphasis was placed on internal sources of financing than was the case in the 1960s.

In the early 1980s, African development plans, again, were faced with three closely related draw-backs. First, the terms of trade, generally, were deteriorating as, practically, the demand for all African's exportable primary commodities was subject to serious fluctuations in the world market. Second, African development plans, also, were faced with unpopular austerity measures at home in an attempt to cut down on import bills. Third, African development plans suffered from crushing external debt burdens which altogether reduced the credit-worthiness of most African nations.

Under this catalogue of set-backs, the planned promises of socio-economic well-being of Africans, after political independence, became entirely unrealizable.

(iii) Negative Redistribution of Wealth

Owing to the failure of each successive development plan, the structure of African economies since independence, which has been analyzed earlier, remains unchanged. As a consequence of that structure, the pattern of wealth redistribution distinguishes between two broad classes of income earners in the continent namely, the rural peasant who provides most of his basic needs and the urban income earner who buys most of what he consumes. The rural income earner puts up with nature's abundance: he cultivates his own land and engages in petty trade to provide almost all his basic needs. He lives in his own house, enjoys his own heating and lighting with the use of firewood which he collects for himself. He washes in the local stream and draws his drinking water from there; he disposes his human refuse in the nearby bushes.

He does not require foreign exchange to travel or to pay his children's school fees abroad. Thus, the effect of the escalating costs of living which the four-fold increases in the cost of foreign

exchange inflicted on the rest of the population is, comparatively, mild on him although he expects less frequent money remittances from his urban-based relatives.

Urban income earners, on the other hand, are divided into three sub-classes for the purpose of analysis: namely the working class, the self-employed and the urban business tycoons. This last sub-class includes foreign-managed company staff, retired army generals and such top government officials who may not have any recognized business enterprises but whose life-style defines them as business tycoons.

Members of this sub-class can have foreign currencies as they wish and they can engage in all sorts of importation and exportation while the sources of their original wealth remain above investigation. This sub-class is unreachable to other sub-classes of urban earners;

vertical mobility into the sub-class is not possible because the conditions for belonging, are unknown to others.³

For this sub-class, economic hardship is a necessary and sufficient condition for preventing aspirants from reaching the privileged life-style of its members.

The urban working class includes all salary and wage earners, from the permanent secretary to the labourer, who depend mainly on their salaries and wages for a living. Although some members of this sub-class may own small businesses in addition to their regular employment, they hardly earn enough income from all sources to enable them feed their extended families well and also bear the cost of their children's education.

The very lowly paid among them such as the labourers, the security men, messengers, foremen and accounts clerks struggle to counter the uncompromising living conditions by exacting small rewards for services rendered to clients while those in higher positions demand kick-backs for similar reasons. The society, however, mostly depends on this sub-class for regular tax payments through withholding. Unlike the rural income earners and the urban business tycoons, the working class cannot avoid or evade the payment of income taxes which are due from them.

The urban self-employed class falls in-between the two sub-classes and the life-style of its members fluctuates from one extreme to the other. Economic hardships affect members of the self-employed class according to their relative positions from the either

extreme. This patterns of negative wealth redistribution does not obey Azikiwe's advice.

IV

Failures of Foreign Aid

The home government is often reluctant to concentrate its investment funds in a single region or sector when all regions and sectors are badly in need of development and are clamouring for help. Similarly, local private investors may be unable or unwilling to undertake the kind of development projects that lead to dynamic growth. They prefer safe investments in trade, real estate or in satellite industries. The reason is that they know too well about all the interlocking vicious circles and are usually unable to realise that their own action will induce other actions which will lead to a change in a static environment.

Availability of foreign capital helps the government to think in terms of development rather than in terms of formula for the distribution of public funds. Foreign capital can take the blame for any departure from whatever standard of distributive justice that may be considered binding on the government using its own funds. It, thus, serves as a counterforce to reluctance in decision-making by being less inhibiting in picking priorities and in giving one region or sector a temporary advantage over another.

In the private sector, foreign capital induces concentration on innovation types of investment rather than scatter it over the routine types: thus, it helps to break new grounds where local investors shy away from. Hirshchman sums it in stating that "it is the role of foreign capital to enable and embolden a country to set out on the path of unbalanced growth."⁴

Very commonly manufacturing provides the spearhead of economic development because experience in manufacturing opens out a wide field of opportunity. There is greater mobility within various branches of an industry and fresh opportunities of development are constantly arising in new directions because of the greater range of technical knowledge that becomes available from year to year.

The linkages within manufacturing are closer, thus, the growth of one industry is likely to yield external economies by facilitating the development of others which either supply it with materials, components and services or use its products for further processing.

Advantage can be taken of the facilities which manufacturing brings about in the shape of better transport and information services, improved banking arrangements, extensive range of labour skills and managerial experience. Besides, the starting of a new manufacturing enterprise under foreign management can be compatible with a later buying out of the foreign company.⁵

Foreign aids are not able to spearhead economic development in Africa because investments are concentrated in mines and plantations which are foreign enclaves. These enclaves are incapable of transmitting a satisfactory type of economic growth to developing countries because they are concerned with primary production. Myint holds the view that the failure of mines and plantations to become leading sectors in developing economies is due to their cheap labour policy which has perpetuated the pattern of low wages and low productivity.⁶

A system in which indigenous labour is treated and used as mass produced commodity cannot trigger off a meaningful rate of economic growth because of its failure to encourage division of labour among the indigenes. As a result, improvement of skills and dexterity of the people remain unfulfilled. There is a dualism between foreign technology and management in the mines and plantations representing the modern sector and the rest of the economy representing the traditional sector.

Foreign mining and plantation economies do little to raise the technical efficiency of the African people rather their existence creates a regular market for staple food items through a large number of meagre wage earners. Okongwu charges that mines and plantations nullify the need to promote the rise of valid production activities within the economy and therefore there is:

- (a) the absence of any real contribution following from the anomalous absence of any real linkages, to the domestic economy by the enclave.
- (b) the induced over-reliance on fiscal linkages with its inflation distorting effects and the prevalence of economic rents in the rewards system;
- (c) the corrosion by the enclave of the initiative and will of the people to invest and to work;
- (d) the marasmus it occasions even punitive domestic activities through the distorted underlying factor-price-relations as well as through unfair competition with cheap imports which it generously facilitates;

- (e) the induced high domestic propensity to consume and to import merely strengthens the productive base of the advanced economies at the expense of the domestic economy.⁷

The role of foreign enterprise in a developing country does not just lie with the capital they may bring in but also the technical skills and knowledge they may have built up concerning local conditions. Skills and knowledge which can be available in articulated form and fitted into a going economic concern are difficult to replace. If properly organised, their educative effect can be much greater than many of the technical aid programmes which work with fresh groups of technical experts. Foreign investments in mines and plantations are a failure because of their inability or unwillingness to diffuse modern technology and skills to African countries.

The three-sector structure of African economies embracing the village, the town and the township fits rather neatly into Friedmann's centre-periphery model which divides the space economy into a dynamic, rapidly growing central region and its periphery. A chief characteristic of this model is that in the growth process the centre draws economic resources especially labour from its periphery. Paradoxically, therefore, the growth of the former is subsidized by the latter. This relationship has been identified essentially as a colonial one.⁸

Schumacher has described the African village economy as a centre and a source of world unemployment and poverty because it is largely by-passed by aid-and-development as currently practised.⁹ The reason is that the emergence of a polarized structure is accompanied by a series of displacements, from the periphery to the centre, of the principal factors of production: labour, capital, entrepreneurship, foreign exchange and even raw materials in unprocessed forms. Implicitly, then, the marginal productivities of factors at the centre are considerably greater than those obtainable from units of investment on the periphery. Therefore, profit-seeking investments in the form of foreign exchange, modern technologies and technical know-how from abroad are concentrated at the centre to the ultimate impoverishment of the periphery.

Second, since the periphery continues to produce those primary commodities whose terms of trade are worsening in the world market, it follows that the income differentials between the centre and the periphery will continue to widen against the latter.

Third, consequent growing inequalities will become a social constant and a permanent source of social unrest or political instability. The prospect of improved quality of life after political independence will remain an elusion to over 80.0 per cent of the African people. In other words, foreign aid has become an instrument of economic *recolonization* which is worse than a political one.

Zikist Social Postulates to Counter Failures

Long before these events the Rt. Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe had foreseen that foreign aid would not sustain African development to an appreciable extent. He, therefore, had taken an early opportunity to enunciate the following social principles as possible measures to counter failures on the part of foreign aid.

(i) Social Regeneration

In the social front, Azikiwe posited that Africans required social regeneration to enable them change the African society to conform to what was ethical, just, and equitable. That was to say that Africa needed to become democratic in order to consist of Africans and human beings not just Fanti or Ga, Temne or Mende, Yoruba or Igbo, Bantu or Tuarag, Bubi or Hausa, Jollof or Kru.

Social regeneration, thus, suggested a battle against old African and Azikiwe thought it was inevitable as a strategy for the freedom of the continent and its people. However, the encouragement to the young and the implicit attack on the establishment brought Azikiwe into conflict with members and institutions of the old Guard. The reasoning was that if the youth of the continent were taught and educated to disrespect and to show open contempt to their Chiefs and Elders as well as leading public figures, with whose views or persons those teachers were not in agreement or for whom they had an animosity, then there was a real danger in the continent.

The theory of youth was challenged further in contesting that politics was not the right business and aim of youth because it was intricate, perplexing and difficult. For that reason, it suited only those who had experience, appreciated social values and were well acquainted with human living conditions. Politics, therefore, was the business and concern of only those who had assumed the *toga virilis*.

Azikiwe's answer to his critics was his insistence that his social propaganda was directed to the youth because new ideas implied

new minds and, in turn, implied a new order. The corollary, of course, was that old ideas implied old minds and, in turn, implied an old order. That was why he added "Tennyson wrote that the old order must change, yielding place to the new, lest anachronistic customs might corrupt the world."¹⁰

(ii) *Spiritual Balance*

Renascent Africans required spiritual balance in order to cultivate a sense of respect for the views of other people. Although other students of traditional African political and asocial organisations might have held a different view of the matter, the philosophy of spiritual balance seemed to have been predicated upon the assertion that differences of opinion were responsible for widening the gaps among various African communities.

Azikiwe charged that there was something one always forgot when one tended to glorify youth or old age; it was the state of mind of the two. In his analysis, youth and the thinking processes were immortal, so, if the thinking of an individual was in accordance with the times, he was immortal no matter whether he was young or old. Azikiwe, thus, emphasized that youth and old age were not synonymous with the terms "new and old." Some elders, he continued, seemed to be youthful perennially because their thinking was in accordance with the times and that explained the justification of the use of the terms "young-old-man and old-young-man."

(iii) *Mental Emancipation*

Mental emancipation was required to teach the youths of Africa to have faith in themselves and see their position as the mental and physical equals of other races of mankind. Azikiwe postulated that the principle of mental emancipation would rid Africans of mental abnormalities caused by suppressed tendencies. That prescription was predicated upon his belief that in the West African colonies, Africans were still living in a period of suspended animation, politically speaking. They had a form of government which was neither conducive to democracy nor held out for them any distinct promise for political manhood.

Azikiwe wondered why Africans were still the footstool of little Belgium, inconsequential Portugal, fourth-rate Spain, resurgent Italy and down the line. Was it because Africans were lacking in political capacity? It could not be so because the continued existence of Ethiopia as black autocracy after its contemporaries and their

descendants had vanished from political history was an object of Azikiwe's admiration. If the Negro race produced a state which had existed from ages past, it could not be logical to conclude that that race lacked political capacity.

Was it because Africans were lacking in political acumen? Azikiwe thought so and proceeded to blame the lingering shibboleth of the inferiority of the African for social and political capacity on the imbecility of most African leaders. To him, those self-professed leaders of the various sections of West Africa were worthy of one piece of job, that was, to commit *felo de se*.

Azikiwe, thus, emphasized the claim and exercise of political power because same enabled the development of a country to be accelerated without unnecessary brakes caused by political machinations. In that context, Azikiwe became the first journalist in the former British colonies to hold up the European powers in Africa to the light of ridicule to make them small: "Little Belgium, inconsequential Portugal, fourth-rate Spain and resurgent Italy."

(iv) *National Risorgimento*

The realization of new Africa could only be possible if the African cultivated spiritual balance which led to the practicalization of social regeneration, economic determinism and mental emancipation. When all had happened or were caused to happen by renascent Africans, their *national risorgimento*, meaning their revolutionized political status would no longer be in doubt.

In the course of meeting the challenge of economic determinism, Azikiwe foresaw that two groups would emerge: the landowners or bourgeoisie who were the capitalists and the proletariat who were the workers. Having no capital, the latter became a permanent wage-earning class, of whom the erstwhile serfs and slaves were the prototypes.

From the struggle between capital and labour, there would emerge the dictatorship of the proletariat. Workers would have the right of collective bargaining and they would use strikes and boycotts as media to secure higher wages, shorter hours of work, more leisure and social legislation. History had shown, however, that Governments had, at times, aided only the capitalists, and would not protect the workers to achieve economic emancipation.

Upon the young and the young-in-mind depended the success or failure, of the programme of emancipation, so, the struggle had to be on all fronts. In the economic front, renascent Africans had to

make the future secure for their posterity by bringing Africa into line with the economic inter-dependence of the world. To that end African business had to change its nature to learn lessons of efficient business operation. The main reasons for the difference between African and European business administration was the principle of cooperation. Zik emphasized that the two words, linked together, meant *working together*.

The European, by pooling his financial resources together obtained a great capital with which to transact his business. With that capital, he gave employment to thousands. he organized branches of his business, had good backing references and, thus, his business prospects were indicative of success, if not in the immediate, then, in the future. The African, on the other hand, preferred to work alone, spending the greater part of his life in accumulating capital. He proceeded to control his business single-handedly. For a one-man's business, it would work out temporarily but a time would come when that one man would face problems which required many heads to solve.

Summary

The structure of African economies has remained unchanged since political independence. In the rural sector, over 80.0 per cent of the population put up with diminishing returns to labour due to scarcity of land. The resulting low average productivity, in turn, has dampened incentives to work and left the rural sector in a state of poverty and unemployment.

Rural-urban movements of labour appear to provide a temporary solution but the number of rural areas that sent out labour is larger than the number of urban areas that receive them. The imbalance gives rise to a number of socio-economic difficulties ranging from deplorable conditions of living in the urban areas to outright crimes in various forms.

Foreign aid has not ameliorated the problems; rather it has aggravated them. The reason is that foreign investments are concentrated in foreign-operated mines and plantations. Such foreign enclaves are unwilling to transmit a meaningful type of development to African economies. Rather they recruit African labour cheaply and leave the rest of the economy in a peripheral state of affairs.

Azikiwe foresaw all these problems when he conceptualized the image of Africans in great detail. That image defined their revolutionary role in the total remodelling of African life. African revolutionized political status came true in the 1960s when many of the European colonies in Africa achieved political independence. The image of a conflict between the young and the old in the course of social regeneration has also become a reality although a sense of respect for the view of other people imagined under spiritual balance has yet to be adequately cultivated. By and large mental emancipation has been acquired to rid Africans of mental abnormalities caused by colonial suppression. However, political emancipation has not been matched equally with economic emancipation. As a result and in spite of political independence, African nations still suffer from the evils of imperialism through economic re-colonization.

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Neo-Colonialism in Theory and Practice

Nduba Echezona

Introduction

It is quite a challenging task to write on a topic as important as the theoretical and practical implications of neo-colonialism. It becomes much more challenging when the essence of doing so is to place the performance of someone who had been in the forefront of the struggle for Nigerian independence, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe in the neo-colonial context. It is true that the average African has a general understanding of the meaning of neo-colonialism in this day and age. However, every African comes in his own understanding with his perspectives, his nuances and his solutions to the problem. This is the case with Dr Azikiwe.

This chapter will approach the problem in the following manner. First, there will be a theoretical examination of the extent of the meaning of neo-colonialism. Second, there will be an examination of the extent to which Dr Azikiwe's thought processes in the colonial and post colonial periods came to articulate the problems posed by neo-colonialism and the solutions which he proffered especially in the Nigerian case. And finally, there will be an examination of the extent to which Dr Azikiwe as a political operator in Nigeria transcended or became a victim of neo-colonialism. The overall effect of this chapter is to generate a critical discourse of Dr Azikiwe's performance as a politician in Nigeria's colonial and post colonial history. If it succeeds in provoking an intellectual discourse

of these explosive years of Nigeria's history, we would count this endeavour a huge success

An examination of the theory and practical implications of neo-colonialism in this day and age must begin with a look at Lenin's theory of imperialism. As a matter of fact, we may see the theory of neo-colonialism as bringing Lenin's theory of imperialism to bear on the domestic and international politics of the newly liberated countries in the mid to the late twentieth century.

In the view of V.I. Lenin, capitalism underwent important changes at the end of the nineteenth century and free competition capitalism developed into imperialism, the capitalism of the twentieth century. Like free competition capitalism, it retains the fundamental features of private property in the means of production and exploitation of wage labour. However, imperialism is a special stage in the development of capitalism which, when compared with the capitalism of the nineteenth century has some new qualitative features. The most important of these are the following: the growth of the power of monopolies and finance capital, the vast growth in the export of capital, the formation of international monopolies and the economic division of the world between them and finally, the completion of the territorial division of the world.¹ In essence, Lenin's theory of imperialism goes a long way to explain the foreign policy of the major capitalist powers at the turn of the century.

After the protracted struggle of the masses and nationalist leaders in colonial territories against imperialism, some of them were given independence at the end of the Second World War. In 1947, India achieved independence. Because of the intransigence of the metropolitan countries, a group of developing countries in the United Nations together with the socialist states continued hammering on the need to free the remaining colonial territories from colonial tutelage. In addition to other developments in the international arena such as the political collapse of Europe as a result of the Second World War and the surge of socialism world wide, a whole avalanche of African countries starting with Ghana in 1958 gained their independence. By the mid 1960s, a large chunk of the African continent including Nigeria had won off the yoke of colonialism. Going by the theory of imperialism, the law of capitalist development is expansion. To what extent then did the winning of independence mean the shrinking of the area of control of imperialism? In other words, independence for the erstwhile colonial territories would have meant that the new states would now

be able to order their own affairs without any interference from the world of capital or from the erstwhile metropolitan countries who had hitherto been accustomed to carting away surplus value from colonial territories and managing the latter's political affairs. To what extent also did the new territories through domestic legislation and the application of a self-reliant path of development steer a course that would have prevented the emergence of a sophisticated type of exploitation from the metropolitan powers even after independence was won?

What emerged after the winning of independence was that the metropolitan countries continued to exercise suzerainty over the newly independent countries. This led to a re-examination of the type of independence that had been won by the new states. Kwame Nkrumah had christened it neo-colonialism. In his view, it represents "imperialism in its final and perhaps its most dangerous stage." He continues:

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.²

This has become the classical extension of Lenin's theory of imperialism to the relationship between metropolitan capitalist powers and the new free states. In striving to achieve an independent status, nationalist movements in the new states especially in Africa, thought that once independence was won, without first of all dismantling the institutions of the colonial capitalist state, they would be wholly free. This type of independence may have informed the liberation movements in southern Africa, in the 1970s who saw themselves not in the same mould as those in Nigeria or in Kenya but as a national liberation movements which sought to smash the colonial capitalist state.

The struggle for independence in Nigeria had followed the constitutional format i.e. the handing over of power from the British to the Nigerians revolved around a constitutional formula which tallied in all essences on plural democracy which was favourable to the British; the share of power between the federal centre and the regions; the powers of parliament, and the creation of a material base for the emerging bourgeoisie. It did not seek to alter the system of production relations and ownership in the means of production. This situation made it possible for Britain as well as other capitalist countries including international economic regimes whose policy is wedded to free market mechanism and private ownership to continue

to exercise control over the Nigerian economy. Even in Ghana where Kwame Nkrumah would be assumed to have been aware of the nature of the colonial state and the mechanisms of neo-colonialism, Ghana did not fair better. In his programmes of positive action and positive nationalism, Nkrumah had successfully mobilized the Ghanaian people in the crusade against colonialism. But he had misperceived that once the political kingdom was won, the economic kingdom would simply follow suit. In much of Africa, political independence did not translate into economic independence. It meant that both independencies had to be won for independence to be meaningful. In other words, if you inherit the colonial capitalist state, you need to rearrange the institutions of such a state to meet the needs of your people.

The replacement of traditional colonialism by neocolonialism is a concession wrenched from the imperialists by the young nations, but neo-colonialism is also an aggregate of more perfidious and hidden methods of imperialist exploitation and an attempt to keep the developing countries within the world capitalist system. The economic basis of neo-colonialism is monopoly capital and the system of state-monopoly capitalism.³

Neo-colonialism is not just a question of exercising control in newly free states but in tying them to the world capitalist system where they produce raw materials which they are best advantaged to produce and sell at low prices which are set by the capitalist states and to import finished manufactured products from the advanced capitalist states at prices set also by them because the new states are comparatively disadvantaged to manufacture them. Neo-colonialism also means that the leaders in the developing countries have no adequate responses to these global social forces or that in their world view, they have been wired to believe that the neo-colonial situation is the best situation they can obtain for their peoples. Kwame Nkrumah summarizes it all:

--- the rulers of neo-colonialist States derive their authority to govern, not from the will of the people, but from the support which they obtain from their neo-colonial masters. They have therefore little interest in developing education, strengthening the bargaining power of their workers employed by expatriate firms, or indeed of taking any step which would challenge the colonial pattern of commerce and industry, which is the object of neo-colonialism to preserve.⁴

Character of Neo-colonial States

The above discourse raises the question of the nature of the state in the neo-colony. If the concrete dynamics of states in post colonial societies are such that they do not operate the way states in capitalist

societies do, then what is their character and the character of their classes? Hamza Alavi points out that whereas in western societies, the creation of a bourgeois class came in the wake of their ascendancy to power, that is in the revolution of the bourgeoisie, in the Third World such event took place with the imposition of colonial rule by the Western bourgeoisie. The state in post colonial society

is not the instrument of a single class. It is relatively autonomous and it mediates between the competing interests of the three propertied classes, namely the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the indigenous bourgeoisie and the landed classes, while at the same time acting on behalf of them all to preserve the social order in which their interests are embedded, namely the institution of private property and the capitalist mode as the dominant mode of production.⁵

He further points out that if a state has a weak indigenous bourgeoisie at the time of its independence, it will be unable to subordinate the relatively highly developed state apparatus through which the metropolitan bourgeoisie had exercised domination over it.⁶ In a similar discussion of the character of the state in Nigeria, Claude Ake had pointed out that because of its lack of autonomy, the state in Africa nay in Nigeria is bogged down in contradictions. In actual fact, it is also involved in the class struggle. Whereas in the capitalist state in which there is pervasive commodification such that the state appears like a market, in Africa or in Nigeria, "the bulk of socio-economic formation is partially penetrated by capitalism so that the development of commodity production and exchange remains highly limited."⁷ This means that part of the problem of the neo-colonial state is that it defies categorization. It is neither a capitalist state nor a pre-capitalist one. This leaves a lot of room for its utmost exploitation by the metropolitan bourgeoisie.

Some theories have been bandied about as a way of getting the developing countries break out of the quagmire of under-development. The first is the modernization theory which sought to show that the causes of Third World under-development lies in the Third World countries themselves as if they were masters of their destiny. It failed to link the role of imperialism and colonialism to the development of neo-colonialism.⁸ A counter theory, the dependency theory, which, although has diverse interpretations, appropriately exhumes the problems posed by neo-colonialism and proffers solutions. In broad outlines, it notes that the relationship between Third World peoples and others is a special form of domination and subordination. In other words, they are vulnerable

to global social forces and are unable even as a collectively to define their own responses to these forces. Due to stratified global conditions, meaningful choices are severely restricted. The dominant economies in the world expand and are self sustaining while the dependent economies become a reflection of these expansions either positively or negatively. In these countries as in the world as a whole, there is a centre and a periphery. While the former uses advanced technology, the latter uses traditional or primitive technology.⁹ So, in spite of the transfusions of capital into a country like Nigeria, it remains essentially under-developed. Consumption patterns in Nigeria are shaped in such a manner that we consume what we do not produce and produce what we do not consume all to our disadvantage. In the oil boom era, we relapsed to the importation of food to the negligence of our agriculture, kleptocracy was rife and construction boom ensued thus overheating the economy which later burst out into the structural adjustment programme to the utter pauperization of Nigeria.

It is true that the dependency theory had proffered solutions to the traumas of under-development such as self reliance, regional integration, South/South cooperation, dialogue through the instrumentalities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and lastly, delinking from world capitalist system, none of these measures has yielded fruitful results so far. Take the case of delinking from the world capitalist system. Such a strategy poses an alternative route to socialism. In Africa, none of the countries that has taken this route has been given the respite to allow it to work; countries like Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia have been destabilised by world forces opposed to socialism. In July 1989, FRELIMO, the ruling party in Mozambique had had to abandon any reference to Marxism/Leninism in its programme even though it subscribes in general to the socialist path. This is a quiet way of abandoning socialism. In some countries the resource base might be too low to sustain autocentric socialist development. Kwame Nkrumah had had to point out that "--- the existence of the socialist nations makes it impossible to enforce the full rigour of the neo-colonialist system."¹⁰ With the Soviet Union reverting to perestroika which means the introduction of market techniques in its economy and the Chinese engaged in socialist commodification, it would seem that the socialist alternative may not be the viable alternative after all.

However, the fact that the socialist countries are engaged in reforms of their political economies today or that dependency traces its causes to world global forces does not absolve the ruling circles in Africa from much of the crisis of under-development of the region. In Africa today, where is domiciled some of the world's poorest states, twenty eight of them are engaged in structural adjustment programmes thus deepening the recolonization of the African continent. The high degree of kleptocracy in Nigeria has made the concept the state irrelevant in social science discourse. In Nigeria, where the dependent bourgeoisie lack a material base, they submerge all the apparatuses of the state, apparatuses which in the capitalist state would have remained disguisingly neutral into the class struggle. To that extent, the struggle for political power becomes a zerosum game, bankrupt or rather decadent corporations such as the Nigeria Railways or the Nigeria Airways are allowed to exist in the way they do since they afford them an avenue to a material base.

In essence, neo-colonialism also means the state of the mind. It is not only a question of equating development to catching up with the West, acquiring artifacts from the west but also in the application of coercion in the labour process. There is no doubt that the capitalist mode of production is quite a productive socio-economic system. Its problem lies in the social relations in the means of production; that capitalists use capital to commodify the working class and the peasantry. In Nigeria however, the application of coercion in the labour process means that the Nigerian bourgeoisie lack the entrepreneurship and the patience that makes capitalism work. Their methods deepen their inferiority complex and those of the citizenry at large to their counterparts in the advanced industrial capitalist countries.

The Political Thought of Nnamdi Azikiwe and Neo-colonialism

As we have shown with regard to Dr Kwame Nkrumah, he had been aware of the ramifications of colonialism and neo-colonialism either in his political writings or in his practice in expelling the colonial masters. True, Ghana today exemplifies the effects of neo-colonial development, the fact that he had articulated the problems earlier and developed institutions, the residues of which brought forward the phenomenon of Jerry Rawlings commends Kwame Nkrumah.

In Nigeria, it does not seem that in Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's political thinking, he had been fully aware of the future of colonialism when it enters its period of decay. It does not mean that Dr Azikiwe does not understand the meanings of exploitation on a national and on a global scale. As a liberal thinker, Dr Azikiwe had been enamoured with the American way of life and America's liberal institutions which is the way a good number of Third Worlders who had had their education in the United States are accustomed to behave. But those who had had an immersion in the Marxist method of thinking such as Kwame Nkrumah, come away with a different picture of life and a critique of capitalism which is the epitome of American values.

In a major article, Professor Eme Awa had pointed out that Dr Azikiwe was the pioneer leader in advocating Marxian socialism in Nigeria. As far as Awa is concerned, he had shown this in two of his published works in 1943 - *Economic Reconstruction of Nigeria* and *Political Blueprint of Nigeria* in which he asserted "unequivocally that Marxian philosophy with its dynamic analysis should be the basis of a new economic system in the country because based on the sanctity of the human being, it is conducive to the maximum welfare of the masses and in addition, it eradicates depressions, inflation, panic etc., which periodically hamper society under conditions of capitalism."¹¹

But there is no indication in *Political Blueprint* that he had any inclination towards the Marxist perspective on life. In fact, in the *Blueprint*, his fifteen years periodization during which Nigerians would be prepared by the British to take over the administration of things from them meant that he had cherished the colonial capitalist institutions of which the British colonial bureaucracy represented. And it would seem the British took his treatise as a bible towards Nigerian independence because fifteen years after the book was written Nigeria was granted independent status by them.¹² However, the mere fact that someone may have railed against the capitalist system does not make that person a Marxist thinker. As a matter of fact, Dr Azikiwe had exhibited a considerable weakness in economic thought. This is very vividly manifested in his *Africa in Renaissance*. Here, he perceives "economic determinism" as when an African company starts "to manufacture locally." This may have been a great feat at the time he wrote. Can "economic determinism" in this wise be seen also from Marxist political thought? Marx had seen the working class as the repository of the forces of history. It is

when they overthrow the bourgeoisie that they can liberate themselves and society as a whole. Those Africans whom Dr Azikiwe saw in Ghana, owning their own companies were just the emerging African bourgeoisie. From hindsight, the only evidence that emerged that they had assisted the working class and peasantry in fighting colonial rule was that they used the latter to defeat colonialism and to abandon them. If not, why is there a big gap between the African ruling circles and the masses in all former colonial territories where independence came on a "platter of gold?" Moreover, the African companies in Azikiwe's reference were engaged in manufacturing perfumes and confectionery. What Marx had in mind was the control by the state of the commanding heights of the economy such as the mines and big businesses. In the treatise, he betrayed his distrust for Marxism:

Critics of the concept of the New Africa have often fallen into a common error of regarding it as advocating ultra-radical and ultra-revolutionary changes in the social order by all means, fair or foul.

There must be changes in order to have a new order. True. There must be radical changes in order to have a new order. True. But I have never advocated these radical and revolutionary changes should crystallise through foul means.¹³

His example of a revolution is the Spanish experience in the 1930s when fascism sought to destroy the Spanish republic. To the extent that his perception of the Spanish experience may be true, his assessment comes from the American perspective of that turmoil. As far as a Marxist thinker is concerned, the fetters of fascism on the Spanish state were the tumors in the capitalist system itself. That is why socialists fought with other internationalist to smash Spanish fascism.

In Professor Awa's view again, Dr Azikiwe's transformation into the "spokesman for the conservative capitalist group" can be found in his position on the debate on indigenization thus:

as a democratic country state monopoly should not be established because monopoly encourages the deliberate creation of artificial scarcity, unscrupulous hoarding of goods, unrestricted spiralling of prices, the proliferation of smuggling, the evasion of customs duty and the consequent loss of much needed revenue and other social and economic consequences.

The State should only handle law, order, good government while regulating how the population can operate private enterprise within the framework of the law consistent with the aim of the Federal Government to establish an egalitarian society and to encourage the citizens in the pursuit of happiness without undue state interference

Rather than nationalise any private enterprise, we should transform some Government departments into statutory corporations and hand these over to

management agencies to operate for us on the basis of a payment of fees to them.

The State should only pursue a laissez-faire policy in education, health and welfare services. That is the Government, the voluntary agencies and private individuals should own, control and operate schools, hospitals, nursing and maternity centres and pharmaceutical firms.¹⁴

This same thought process is embodied in Dr Azikiwe's book, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism and Welfarism* in which he shows a preference for welfarism as if that is not a back door passage into capitalism.¹⁵ In any case, it is not true that by this position, Dr Azikiwe became transformed into a conservative thinker. As we had earlier pointed out, Dr Azikiwe has always been a conservative thinker. In a speech under the auspices of the alumni of Lincoln University and the African Academy at the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York in 1947, he had welcomed President Truman's Point Four Programme for the developing world, pointing out that the evolving world economy could not be strong if the "weakest link" were weak. According to him, "For the fact that more than half the chain is weak, it follows that the economic mooring of the world is not too secure."¹⁶ Someone who does not know Dr Azikiwe and his perspective on economic affairs may think that he was making the same argument V.I. Lenin made in his theory of imperialism: that Russia being the weakest link in the imperialistic chain was bound to undergo a revolution which would drag the European revolution along with it.

In other words, to the extent that his perspective was right, he was making that case to serve the world capitalist system of which as he had rightly pointed out in that speech, Nigeria was and still remains a periphery selling raw materials and importing finished manufactured products. However and much more importantly, the Point Four Programme was the American answer to the Chinese revolution. By 1947, it was clear that the Chinese communists would triumph over the Kuomintang. When they eventually triumphed, American foreign policy went into a catharsis, the clarion call was who lost China the largest single market in the world. China may become an example to the newly emerging nations of the world. The Point Four Programme became therefore a wedge against the spread of communism in the developing world as much as the Marshal Plan was serving the same purposes in Western Europe. In the same speech Dr Azikiwe showed that he was aware of some undercurrents in capitalism:

--- the general nature of the President's Point Four Programme has elicited different interpretations from different interests. Big business in America for instance sees it as a new avenue for private ventures and from all appearances suggests that the government guarantees security of operation against risk, while on the other hand, the British authorities have interpreted the Point Four Programme as a new device for bridging Britain's dollar gap.¹⁷

One would have expected that such a knowledge of the role of big business in imperialism would have prepared Dr Azikiwe in the struggle against big business at home after independence was achieved. It is also necessary to point out that the Point Four Programme was the policy side of the modernization school. It saw the giving of aid to the developing countries as the avenue to create capitalist institutions and a dependent bourgeoisie in the colonies or neo-colonies. In other words, such aid went to the elites of the Third World whom Tom Farer points out "have for the most part broken all ties to their impoverished masses in the country side." Furthermore, "though many of these native elites have suffered personal humiliation at the hand of western colonialism, their immediate economic aspirations are quite compatible with the existing international economic system."¹⁸ This remark was made in the wake of the turbulence in the international capitalist economy in the 1970s and Farer's strategy is a way of dragging the developing countries which toe the line of the United States into managing the turbulence. The distance between the 1940s and 1970s seems so insignificant.

In categorizing Dr Azikiwe's political and economic thought one may at most call him a humanist. However, the fact that he is a humanist is not enough in the struggle against neo-colonialism. Even those like Kwame Nkrumah who understood the hideous role of neo-colonialism and met it headlong were crushed along the line. His thoughts and his struggles in that wise remain in the sands of time however. From what we can glean from Dr Azikiwe's thinking, he was fully aware of the nature of colonialism and neo-colonialism. However, he seemed convinced that a large country like Nigeria, when independent would successfully fight it off. This is wishful thinking as Nigerians ponder the life in the 1980s in comparison to what it was in the 1970s and even earlier, a situation which had caused a civilian governor in the Second Republic to demand that the British may have to be called back after all to continue governing Nigeria. When Dr Azikiwe in response to the toast at the same dinner in Pennsylvania Hotel lambasted colonialism we thought that he had arrived. He spoke thus:

Economically the colonial peoples have been made to appreciate that colonial possessions constitute "under-developed estates" especially reserved as legacy for exploitation by the Colonial Power in control either through a closed door policy or a system of preferential tariff or as a dumping ground for the unemployed of the "Protecting State." This policy has affected colonial peoples adversely. There exists in colonial territories a regime of monopoly which has a stranglehold on the country's economy.¹⁹

Dr Azikiwe, a victim of neo-colonialism?

A glance at Dr Azikiwe's origins and his political career will impress in someone the image of a man who has been cut out for great deeds in his life time. Having lived in the major zones of Nigeria, he acquired fluency in the three major languages of the country. In the process, he acquired the cultural mores of this diversified Nigerian experiment.²⁰ That is why he commands the followership that spans the length and breadth of Nigeria much more than his peers. In addition, he acquired an invaluable experience as a newspaper editor, in Ghana in the *African Morning Post* and came later in his career to own a chain of newspapers including the famous West African Pilot in Nigeria. So, Dr Azikiwe was very well equipped for the anti-colonial struggle.

One of the most singular feat of Dr Azikiwe is that he used the pages of his newspapers to rouse the anti-colonial aspirations of the Nigerian youth and even to liberate their minds through the "restoration of the dignity of man." Much more importantly, Dr Azikiwe possessed that type of erudition which has the capability of moving mountains. Nigerian youths therefore went in their drones to drink of the cup of his knowledge and prepare themselves for the "revolution" which had become, then, the earmark of his rhetorics as he proclaimed thus in 1948 in *Political Reminiscences, 1938 - 48*:

As NCNCers, we had led the youth of the country to yearn for militant leadership based on a programme of dynamic planning, geared on to the machinery of positive action --- Failure to reconcile our theorizations with practical situations render our professions a mere platitude; but is more serious than that: we create a spirit of bitterness and a sense of frustration in our youth.²¹

The refrain in Dr Azikiwe's early career is on the role of the youth, their pre-eminent place in the fight to dismantle colonialism. In *Africa in Renascence*, he had proclaimed that:

Readers will agree with me that were it not for the old, youths of Africa and youths of Europe would have understood one another better. But the old heads continue to pollute the young minds with their old prejudices, hence the present dilemma.²²

This is his own way of perceiving the continued prevalence of colonial rule. The contradiction in this type of perspective showed itself when youths in the Zikist movement, a group of "angry young men" who sought to push the anti colonial struggle faster than it was moving were detained and jailed by the British colonial authorities. Rather than own them up or at best issue a statement that would be neither here nor there, Dr Azikiwe denied them wholly. Mokwugo Okoye, a frontline Nigerian nationalist and Zikist has made some of the most pungent remarks in this episode in the anti-colonial struggle in his famous treatise, *A Letter to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe*. He states thus:

Of all Nigerian leaders, you only commanded the necessary loyalty, reputation and admiration to mobilize our people for a wholesale war against the forces that enchain them- the forces of feudalism and capitalism-imperialism - but the young men who over the years rushed to the call of your trumpet came away frustrated because you betrayed them.²³

And

As a writer and public speaker, you used the language of democracy to move their slumbering souls and check the audacious incursions of the imperialist monster. Your majestic prose, with phrases borrowed from Jefferson, Rousseau, Marx and Marcus Garvey, with an occasional splash of Stuart Mill and Oswald Spengler, coupled with your ability to throw the clinches of a Winston Churchill or Franklin Roosevelt back at him with vengeance, invested your name with a halo as something to conjure with.²⁴

Mokwugo Okoye even went further to explain why Dr Azikiwe had taken this course of action:

Dr Azikiwe's denial of the Zikists before the cock crow twice was painful but understandable. After preaching revolution for a decade he, a successful businessman and man of pleasure, was terrified when he saw one.²⁵

What the Zikists had done, in denouncing British colonialism by the strongest language either in auditorium or on the pages of newspapers that brought down the wrath of the British on them could not have been a revolution in the real sense of the world although what they did might have further sensitised the youth in their time. However, Dr Azikiwe's denial of them meant that what he envisaged for the emerging Nigerian nation was not a radical overthrow of the British colonial system. Throughout the constitutional processes that spanned the 50s, the emerging propertied class were merely engaged in seeking protection for their wealth and not to brook the type of disorder which the Zikists had sought. That is why in the subsequent meetings of the NCNC, they were denounced and some of them expelled from the party. Henceforth, the party took the shape of a bourgeois party which it

had all along been and started nurturing the emerging neo-colonial capitalist state. Among those Zikists who claimed that they had sought the radical overthrow of the colonial system also emerged "successful businessmen" in the same league as Dr Azikiwe.

Due to the character of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), a party of men of "timber and calibre," it was easy to revert, in the face of the crisis of the 1950s to a regional party, a party representing the Ibo bourgeoisie in their struggle for power with the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba factions. The smashing of the Zikist movement, the reversion of Dr Azikiwe from leader of opposition in the Western House of Assembly to the premier of Eastern Nigeria dealt a big blow to Nigerian nationalism. The moulding of Nigeria as a neo-colonial state took a dramatic turn when in the mid 1950s, the Northern, Eastern and Western regions achieved self-governing status. As E. Wayne Nafziger points out:

In the parliamentary period from 1951 to 1966 the dominant class consisted of high ranking politicians, Emirs and other influential chiefs, senior civil servants and government administrators, and leading businessmen and professionals. This class formed partly during the 1950s, the last decade of the colonial period, when positions, patronage, perquisites and economic benefits were handed over to Nigerians by the British, was most favourably placed to rule after independence in 1960. In the South the older leaders of the nationalist movement were joined by a rising educated new group of influential politicians, civil servants, lawyers, doctors, teachers, businessmen and a few far-sighted chiefs. In the North, power was retained by the traditional Hausa-Fulani ruling oligarchy in the upper North, supported by civil servants, Native Authority employees, district and village heads --- 26

There is not much that one would have expected from such a class than to perpetuate the entrenchment of neo-colonialism. Since they lacked an economic base, they would depend on the metropolitan bourgeoisie through the continued refashioning of the colonial capitalist institutions.

With the dawn of independence, Dr Azikiwe's party which had misperceived itself in the Fabian tradition of the Labour Party in England allied itself with the Northern People's Congress (NPC), a party that represented the feudalists in the North as the first post colonial government. This paved the way towards the installation of Dr Azikiwe as the first Governor General in 1960 and the first president in 1963, all with ceremonial powers. Executive power remained in the hands of the NPC. Why, political pundits have wondered, did a man who had any inclination to radical thinking ally his party with feudal reaction? Why did Dr Azikiwe, a man who had been at the forefront of Nigeria's independence struggle, accept to be a Governor-General, a constitutional monarch? Would it not have

been more honourable to have accepted the leadership of the opposition? Some political pundits are wont to say that he was acting towards the interests of national unity. Is it national unity for the propertied class or national unity in which from that moment, the perception of a good number of some in the Nigerian federation was that the Ibos were domineering. One can trace the remote causes of the bitterness against the Ibos and the Nigerian civil war from this opportunism. Awa had pointed out that in the coalition government, Dr Mbadiwe became effectively the deputy prime Minister and got along well with the prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. We do not know the extent to which this getting on well served to build Mbadiwe's empire and that of his colleagues.²⁷ Writing about the Nigerian propertied class in that era Segun Osoba has pointed out:

Many members of the top power elite were first-generation educated and prosperous men, having emerged from very humble peasant or working class stock and from the most grinding and dehumanizing poverty. Psychologically, therefore, having emerged from such terrible conditions of poverty and squalour, they could not contemplate with equanimity the possibility for themselves or their progenies, of returning to that original condition. In their narrowness of mind, they did not see that the only lasting cure for their psychopathic fear of poverty was a wide ranging exercise in social engineering and economic planning that would banish poverty on a countrywide basis.²⁸

Dr Azikiwe's acceptance of ceremonial functions in a country he had championed its independence meant that he had accepted the colonial capitalist state. The colonial capitalist state had hitherto been more favourable to the ruling circles in Northern Nigeria more than to those in the South. They had shown this in the use of the emirate system as their modicum of administering that region. Second, they had retained the Northern monolith intact until independence thus ensuring that power would remain with the Northern ruling circles. After all Dr Azikiwe's rhetorics about revolution and all that which caused some people to proclaim him a radical, he quietly got himself ensconced into a colonial capitalist institution, the Governor-General, being answerable to the British monarch. What other evidence do we need to prove that Dr Azikiwe had been a conservative all his life? In his speeches in the colonial era, he had wanted the retention of traditional rulers even though the Ibos, the ethnic group to which he belongs except perhaps the Onitsha, Nri and Aros, had no chiefs. Chieftaincy became the avenue for the elongation of feudalism in Eastern Nigeria. The acceptance of

capitalist institutions on the achievement of independence became therefore the revolution of the bourgeoisie.

The alliance between the NCNC and the NPC also served as a framework with which to deal with the Action Group (AG) which was in opposition. The perception of the emergent bourgeoisie was that politics was a zero-sum game. When you lose, you lose all. when you win, you win all. In dislodging the AG, they started first by declaring a state of emergency in its stronghold, the west. Next they created a state, the Mid West State there as if it was only in the West that the minorities were demanding for states. And when the NCNC found itself discomfited in the coalition, it sought a merger with the Action Group to fight the combined strength of the NPC and the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which had now become the governing party in the West. All these while, Dr Azikiwe remained as Governor-General or as President, acting as father of all in the game of the bourgeoisie. As Gavin Williams has shown

The bourgeoisie's ambiguous position within the neo-colonial political economy is expressed in its ideological ambiguity. Its nationalism is the outcome of its desire to appropriate resources back from the foreign expropriator; its commitment to freedom for foreign enterprise is the outcome of its concrete dependence on neo-colonial political economy. National unity and reconciliation express its ambition to act as a hegemonic class, providing leadership at the national level and within the international arena; its particularism is the outcome of its inability to control the crucial productive resources of the economy and hence the competition among the bourgeoisie for favoured access to scarce resources, as well as the need to manipulate particularist interests and sentiments among the poor to maintain its political dominance.²⁹

After the civil war, Dr Azikiwe did not hold political office anymore but stayed at the sidelines, making comments on national issues and twice, in 1979 and 1983, running for the office of the presidency in a presidential system of government. On military-civilian rule, he has preferred what he had referred to as diarchy, civil rule with military vigilance. This is a way of sanctioning the permanent place of the military in Nigerian politics, what he may refer to as pragmatism because since 1966, the military has been in government. In other words, civil rule with the gun behind the civilian in case of misrule or contrarily having smelt the game of the bourgeoisie, the share of the resources of the state by those in political power, the army should be allowed to continue to cut its share. This is a typical example of his conservatism and his preference of efficiency and order over legality. In running for the NPP presidential candidate in 1983, he charged the Shagari

administration with planlessness and squandermania. His perception of Nigeria's socio-economic ills laid in the men in power and not the neo-colonial state which they had all been nurturing since 1960. When former chief of General Staff, Ebitu Ukiwe visited him at Nsukka, he commended the Babangida administration for its human rights stance saying that that is what he had stood for all through his life.

Conclusion

In the score-card of the making of the Nigerian nation, Dr Azikiwe's name will be very highly embellished. He fought for Nigeria's independence even though he did not understand the role of capital and neo-colonialism which is the hidden, perfidious colonialism that ensues after colonial rule is abolished. As we have shown, Nigeria's colonial legacy of her integration into the world capitalist system interfered with her economic and political development. The class structure and power relations got skewed in favour of a dependent bourgeoisie who lacked a material base and sought capital accumulation through the political process. If Dr Azikiwe had understood colonialism and neo-colonialism, he would not have accepted the Governor-Generalship and the presidency which he did immediately after independence was won. He may at best have been in opposition, attacking the decadent system which we inherited and embellishing his name higher in the annals of Nigeria's history. After he had denounced the Zikist movement, it became obvious that he would only be remembered as one of the pioneers of Nigeria's freedom.

NOTES

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15. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism*, Lagos, Macmillan, 1980.
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Military Rule and the African Revolution

Ray Ofoegbu

Introduction

Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe is popularly called Zik of Africa. He was among the early political thinkers of the twentieth century who philosophised at the level of Africa and humanity. Moreover, a principal actor in Nigerian politics, Zik formulated and expressed political thoughts which also focussed specifically on Nigeria. Azikiwe's thoughts on Africa are revolutionary. His thoughts on military rule cover only the role of the military in the short period (a five-year span) of transition from military rule to the full restoration of democracy. It also concentrated on the exercise of veto powers only collectively by the four heads of the armed and security forces in favour, or in defence, or fundamental human rights. In other words, Zik did not propound a theory in favour of military rule. He did not justify military rule in all conditions and under all circumstances. He did not judge, evaluate and award a pass mark to the military pattern of government and administration in Nigeria. He remained basically and fundamentally a democrat, and wanted, for a short five year period of transition from military to civil rule, military presence in support, and in defence, of civil rights and civil liberties in order to prevent a relapse into the senseless conflicts, the intolerances, and the rigidities which prompted the military to seize political authority.

What then are Azikiwe's political thoughts on the African Revolution? What are his views on the place and role of the military in this revolution?

Azikiwe on the African Revolution

Dr Azikiwe devoted three of his written major works to the subject of the African Revolution. These are *The Renascent Africa*;¹ *Respect For Human Dignity*;² and *Ideology For Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism and Welfarism*.³ They all point to the fact that Dr Azikiwe is a passionate believer in democracy, socialism, neo-welfarism and, above all, individual rights and human freedoms. Did Dr Azikiwe waver from, or shake in his belief and commitment to, these ideals? The answer is definitely No. In 1972, Dr Azikiwe recommended

a civilian-based parliamentary democracy invigilated by the heads of the armed and security forces.⁴

This was Zik's proposal for *diarchy* or *praetorianism* in Nigerian politics. What is not generally known is the following:

1. Dr Azikiwe did not abandon his political philosophy for neo-welfarism, democracy and civil liberties;
2. He prescribed "limited" military presence in the transition from military to civil rule in order to ensure that the transition did not go off the rail; and
3. He recommended this military presence as a veto of actions of the transition government which are anti-democratic, anti-fundamental human rights. The veto was to be exercised in defence of democracy and fundamental human rights and not in furtherance of arbitrary military or civilian dictatorship.

The occasion which gave rise to the expression of Dr Azikiwe's thoughts on civilian-military roles in politics was the Samuel Jereton Marriere Inaugural Lecture at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. The venue of the Lecture was the College of Medicine Hall, University of Lagos on 27 October 1972. The topic of Dr Azikiwe's Lecture was "Stability In Nigeria After Military Rule: An Analysis of Political Theory." The lecture generated considerable press comments and criticisms. These elicited press replies from Dr Azikiwe. The Lecture and Dr Azikiwe's press replies to his critics were later published as *Democracy With Military Vigilance* in 1974.

The graveman of Dr Azikiwe's thesis was revealed in these passages which follow:

- (a) "To ensue that there will not be a repeat performance, a military presence is needed for five years, in the exercise of executive and legislative power, by the injection of the four heads of the armed and security forces in the Cabinet as Ministers without Portfolio. They should be *ex-officio* members of Parliament."⁵
- (b) "My view is that there should not be an immediate transfer of power to complete civilian rule; rather, a *modus operandi* should be devised for a combined civil and military government that should rule this country, on a democratic basis, for five years, after which period the continuation of such a regime should be reviewed in the light of experience and reason. In which case, a national referendum should determine the wisdom of continuing this experiment for another period or its complete abrogation."⁶
- (c) "I am of the considered opinion that from a purely political standpoint, until the developing countries of Africa, Asia and South America have had sufficient experience and maturity in handling human problems with reasons and with finesse, and until they have become disciplined in their personal lives, community living, and the exercise of political rights and privileges, and in order to ensure good government, the safest solution to the problem of military revolution in Africa or elsewhere is to consider the advisability of incorporating the military hierarchy on a more active basis in a civilian-based administration, to make it stable."
- (d) "In effect. this would mean that, in addition to the legislature, the executive and the judiciary forming the three arms of the State, the armed and security forces should constitute the fourth arm... it is a fact of life that without the active cooperation of the armed and security forces, neither of the three arms of the State would function effectively in the government of human beings."
- (e) "I suggest that... the heads of the Nigerian Army, the Nigerian Air Force, the Nigerian Navy, the Nigerian Police should become *ex-officio* members of the Council of Ministers, whose Secretary should be a top-ranking civil servant. Provided that in any matter affecting the rule of law, the democratic process, the right of dissent, and the instrument of the veto, if the four heads of the armed and

security forces are unanimous in stating that, in their opinion, any policy in respect of the above subjects, intended to be formulated by the Federal Government, brought before the Council of Ministers for approval, would endanger the stability of Nigeria, then such unanimous opinion shall be deemed to be a vote on such policy, and it shall be withdrawn by the Prime Minister without debate."

- (f) "Provided further that no issue shall be presented to Parliament by any Minister, without the approval of the Council of Ministers, whose members shall be collectively responsible for any issue presented to Parliament by the Council and its approval shall be regarded as its imprimature."
- (g) "Provided also that two out of the four members of the armed and security forces, who are members of the Council of Ministers, shall be included in any number intended to be designated to constitute the quorum of the Council."

None of the basic political philosophies of Dr Azikiwe was compromised by these military thoughts. These basic philosophies were *neo-welfarism, spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic determination, mental emancipation, political resurgence, democracy, and the abundant society*. These political goals are to be pursued under representative government of the people, freely and fairly elected. Why did Dr Azikiwe recommend *limited military intervention* in the short five-year period which follows military disengagement?

In reply to this important question, Azikiwe quoted Charles Maurice Telleyrand (1754 - 1838) who said,

It is difficult for human beings to profit from experiences. They learn nothing and forget nothing.

The short period of military presence will *prevent* post-military rule politicians from "learning nothing" and "forgetting nothing" - they will, therefore, learn something and forget much of their past undesirable ways and conduct. Secondly, military presence, recommended by Dr Azikiwe, was in respect of

any matter initiated by civilians in the Cabinet calculated to adversely affect the basic freedoms and the fundamental human rights particularly the rule of law, the democratic process, individual freedom, the right of dissent, and the instrument of the veto in a system of checks and balances.

The Cabinet initiative must "adversely affect" basic freedoms and fundamental human rights thereby endangering the stability of

Nigeria. The veto action must be unanimously undertaken. On all other issues of government in the economic, social, political, defence, security and foreign spheres,

these four heads of our disciplined forces shall be equal in all respects to their counterparts. Each of them shall have one vote in the Cabinet and one vote in Parliament.

The resultant system of government will, therefore, be

1. government based on laws enacted by popular representation;
2. Government whose acts must be acts approved by the elected representatives of Nigeria, for and on behalf of Nigeria;
3. a system of government which permits and actively promotes the exercise of basic freedoms and fundamental human rights in accordance with due process of law;
4. a system of freedom of thought, freedom of conscience and expression, and a system which permits minority opinion to be heard; and
5. a system which guarantees the right of any arm of State to defer, delay or reuse the formulation or implementation of any policy or the enactment of any law.

Azikiwe denounced lip service to democracy. He condemned leaders who allow their citizens to live in abject poverty: being poorly paid, ill-housed, uncared for by the State, and oppressed by their rulers. He denounced situations in Nigeria, particularly between 1962 and 1966, which were characterized by

1. denial of rights of peaceful assembly;
2. muzzling of public opinion through the newspaper bill of 1964;
3. increases in the pay of Ministers and Members of Parliament while denying the same to workers;
4. clumsy handling of the census in 1962 and 1963;
5. vindictive handling of the Tiv riots using the armed and security forces;
6. childish handling of the Morgan Wages Commission and its strikes;
7. proscription of newspapers;
8. use of thugs as instruments of political warfare;
9. perversion of customary courts; and
10. ineptitude of Parliament as the watchdog of the nation .⁸

Azikiwe thus reaffirmed his beliefs in good government:

I believed, as I still do, that in normal times no man should impose his rule on any people unless he has been duly elected to do so at a free and fair election. It was an article of faith with me that the African citizen should enjoy individual freedom under the law. I valued this freedom so much that I entitled the address I delivered on the occasion of my inauguration as Governor-General of Nigeria, *Respect For Human Dignity*. Without the enjoyment of individual freedom under the law and without the African enjoying respect for human dignity, I cannot appreciate why the African ever struggle against imperialism.⁹

Democracy is tolerant of opposition, by means of dialogue - hence parliamentary democracy appealed to all African states. We need to go back to essentials by seeking the real meaning of parliament and to discover *parlement*. Africans must reorientate their ideas of democracy and must realize that the suspension of constitutional right to personal liberty and other basic freedoms, is always a reflection of incompetence on the part of civilian rulers.¹⁰

Good Government, according to Dr Azikiwe, is an entitlement of the "average citizen." Good Government should assure the average African

1. *Individual freedom* under the law;
2. *economic prosperity* to live above the minimum subsistence level;
3. *social happiness* to ensure healthy living, and education of the head, heart and hand; and
4. *security* from the vagaries of life like unemployment, ill-health, accident, physical disability, and old age.

Azikiwe restated his demands for *good government* in these words:

Until African states accept the challenge to build a nation whose political foundations are based on respect for individuals freedom under the law, and whose economic policy guarantees the citizen a national minimum wage above subsistence level - to enable him to obtain food, shelter, clothing and the amenities of life without distress - and whose social goals are hitched towards a free national health service, a free and compulsory national contributory social security plan, then they have yet to demonstrate their capacity for good government.

In the great press debate which followed Dr Azikiwe's thesis, many Nigerians contributed to the debate. Prominent among them were editorial columnists of leading Nigerian daily and Sunday newspaper; Dr Ayodele Awojobi, Dr Obarogie Ohonbamu and Chief S.G. Ikoku. The core aspects of their criticism were:

1. That combining representative democracy and the undemocratic injection of heads of the armed and security forces was a contradiction;

2. Zik's diarchy amounted to democratic dictatorship; and
3. Zik had given the big four (heads of the armed forces and the security force) supreme power to hold 60 million Nigerians to ransom. He had thereby suggested *oligarchy* which was worse than *stratocracy* (military state).¹⁰

Dr Azikiwe defended himself against these allegations.

1. "My lecture did not advocate continued military rule in Nigeria after 1976; democratic dictatorship by civilians under military surveillance; the imposition of a handful of military and police heads to dominate an elected Nigerian government in the exercise of executive, legislative and judicial powers; the overruling of fifteen or more Federal Ministers by four heads of disciplined forces; and prolonged and indefinite civilian-military diarchy; a recrudescence of the period of emergency; a suspension of any section of the Nigerian Constitution; a derogation of the fundamental human right clauses of the Constitution; interference by the military regime in the exercise of executive, legislative and judicial powers of civilians."¹²
2. "I suggested the experimentation of a temporary civilian-military diarchy for five years, not only to avert another sanguinary experience but also to check civilians from excesses. In this connection, I suggested that Federal Ministers with portfolio should exercise executive powers with four members of the disciplined forces as Ministers without portfolio. In matters relating to fundamental rights, which I defined, the latter should have reserved powers in the form of a veto should the former introduce any policy, which in the unanimous opinion of the latter, derogates from the fundamental rights of citizens."
3. "I have never suggested that Ministers without portfolio should exercise any preemptive rights over their colleagues with portfolio with respect to matters within their respective jurisdictions, outside of the issue of derogation of fundamental rights... In all other matters before the Cabinet, the majority vote will predominate; so that there can be no likelihood of four members imposing their will upon the duly accredited representatives of the electorate... The veto should be exercised only as a check against imminent infringement of the fundamental rights by Ministerial Order or Act of the State."

4. "The only time (military) veto power can be exercised is when a violation of the fundamental rights of the citizen is imminent."
5. "The injection of the 4 heads of the armed and security forces is intended to act as a check on civilians as far as violation of the basic freedoms and the fundamental human rights are concerned... It is a negation but a stabilization of representative democracy."
6. "I did suggest five years of civilian-military rule after which period the people of Nigerian should determine, in a referendum, whether the diarchy should continue or be abrogated. The injection of the four military and police personnel is intended to check civilians, only if and when they attempt to violate the basic freedoms and the fundamental human rights."

History Vindicates Zik

Nigeria's history (1979 - 1983) vindicated Azikiwe's prescription of democracy with military vigilance for a Nigeria battered by Military *coup de'état* and by a political class which has persisted to "learn nothing forget nothing." The proposal to return Nigerian from military to civilian rule was made in 1972, and was expected to come into force in 1976. It was abandoned by General Gowon; and its abandonment, coupled with other problems within the military establishment and in the society, led to the military overthrow of General Gowon's military government.

The new military government, under General Murtala Mohammed, which succeeded General Gowon's government, tackled a transition programme from military to civil rule. This transition programme (1976 - 1979) was successfully implemented. It provided for the reorganization of local governments; the drafting and adoption of a new constitution; the formation of new political parties; the conduct of new elections; and the formation, in 1979, of a new civilian government. But, it discarded Dr Azikiwe's prescriptions for limited military presence in aid, and in defence, of fundamental human rights and civil freedoms.

There were at least eight instances of arbitrary conduct and behaviour which would have been arrested if a "presence" (Military or civilian) had existed with constitutional power to stop drifts into arbitrariness and bad government.

First, the Constitution was violated at its introduction. It provided for what the nation should do in all cases of inconclusive Presidential Elections namely to convene the National Assembly (the Senate and House of Representatives); turn it into an electoral college; and require it to choose between the front runner and the second best candidate. This was not done, rather the front runner was declared the winner. The judiciary upheld the declaration thereby providing legal justification for an act which violated the basic law of the country.

Second, there was much corruption in the formation and legitimization of the Federal Government of President Shehu Shagari. Because President Shagari's political party, the NPN, lacked a working majority both in the Senate and the House of Representatives, the party went out desperately in search of a working legislative majority - corrupting persons; hawking positions and projects; destabilizing other political parties, and finally reaching a working accord with the NPP (another political party). This accord lacked programmatic understanding and ideological underpinnings.

Third, there were clear cases of brutal denial of fundamental human rights. The most outstanding was that of Alhaji Shugaba Abdulrahman, the Majority Leader in the Borno House of Assembly. This State was governed by an opposition political party, the GNPP. Its majority leader in the State House of Assembly was seized and deported to Chad Republic in total disregard of his human rights and parliamentary immunities. The rights of the Governor of Kaduna State, Alhaji Balarabe Musa, to govern his State were violently denied him. Alhaji Musa belonged to another opposition political party, the PRP. Besides these denials, Governor Musa was impeached and removed from Office, and the nation watched, helplessly, as the Kaduna legislature arrogated to itself the power to undertake both legislative and executive responsibilities of government in utter defiance of the fundamental principles of the Nigerian constitution. In addition to these assaults on the Governorship of Kaduna State, President Shagari's federal government worked to undermine the institution of governors in states. It created Presidential Liaison Officers who functioned as parallel governors in non-NPN States. They were funded, empowered and recognized to use the might and resources of the federal government to

(a) thwart, frustrate and challenge State Governors in their States; and

(b) run parallel administrations which violated the concept of *cooperative federalism*, a cardinal principle of Nigeria's federalism.

The Federal Government of the Second Republic in Nigeria enacted a New Public Order Law which required security directives of state Governors to be cleared first with Lagos (the Inspector General of Police or the Minister of Police Affairs) before being acted upon. Yet State Governors had primary constitutional responsibility for security within their States. This new law freed State Police Commissioners from taking directives on law and order matters from State Governors as a matter of routine.

Fourth, opposition of various descriptions was constantly harassed, raided, scattered and hounded. Its leaders were imprisoned on flimsy charges such as the case of PRP opposition in Anambra State and the NPP opposition in Niger State. Generally, there was political intolerance and bad government. There was no mechanism in the system to present the drift into another cataclysm - another military *coup d'état* which gave rise to yet another military *coup d'état*, and yet an aborted or more aborted *coup d'état*. Nigeria was unable to save itself from "cyclical recurrence of revolutions" to use Zik's exact words.¹³

Another major witness of history is the action of President Babangida's military government in arranging its hand-over to a civilian government. It adopted a Constitution in May 1989. In December 1989, its lowest level of Government, the Local Governments, will function freely and constitutionally under Federal and State Governments which are under Military Rule. In 1990, both the Local Governments and the State Governments will be free of military rule; will operate constitutional clauses of the new Nigerian Constitution but will still be under the surveillance of a Federal Military Government at the Federal Centre. It is only in 1992 that total disengagement of the military from effective, full and total conduct of government business occurs.

In duration, President Babangida's 1990-1992, a *three year span* of *civilian-military* rule is shorter than Azikiwe's prescription for a *five year* diarchy. But in content and role, Azikiwe's limited military presence, limited military role in transition, and limiting the role to the furtherance and strengthening of democratic values, civil liberties, and fundamental human rights, are definitely more preferable to what Nigeria has finally accepted.

As a political thinker, Dr Azikiwe remained true to his basic trends in thought even when he suggested brief and limited military presence in government.

1. He wants men to live under laws enacted by their popular representatives.
2. He wants acts of government to be acts approved by elected representatives of the people, for and on behalf of the people.
3. He wants citizens to enjoy and exercise basic freedoms and fundamental human rights in accordance with the due process of law.
4. He guarantees all citizens freedom of thought, conscience, and expression, and the right of minority opinion to be heard.
5. He wants the right of any arm of the State to defer, delay and/or refuse the formulation or implementation of any policy or enactment of any law especially when such an enactment derogates from basic freedoms and fundamental human rights.

NOTES

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, (1937), London, reprinted 1968, pp. 18 - 21.
2. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Respect For Human Dignity*, Federal Government Printer, Lagos, Nigeria, October, 1960.
3. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Ideology For Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism and Welfarism*, Macmillan, Lagos Nigeria, 1980.
4. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Democracy With Military Vigilance*, Nsukka African Book Co. Ltd, 1974, pp. 1 - 104. specifically p. ix.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 4
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 22 - 24
7. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Democracy With Military Vigilance*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 21
11. See Volumes of Nigerian Press 28 October 1972 to 8th December 1972, especially volumes of *Daily Times*, *Sunday Times*, *New Nigerian* (1 November 1972)
12. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Democracy With Military Vigilance*, *op. cit.*, p. 74
13. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Structural Adjustment and the African Reconstruction

Anyaegbunam W. Obi

Introduction

Most countries in Black Africa are currently in the throes of acute economic crisis. With falling production, mounting foreign debts, and worsening balance of payments deficits, some countries may well have fallen below standards attained in the early 1960's, in terms of general living conditions. While Africa's present predicament is largely traceable to the fragile economic structures inherited at independence, and the massive exogenous shocks its economies have been receiving since the 1970's, the nature of the post-colonial state bequeathed by Africa's first generation of statesmen cannot altogether escape mention. (Among the foremost of these leaders is the Rt Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria).

The primary task that faced this class of leaders at independence was the economic, political, and cultural reconstruction of Africa, following the debacle of European colonial conquest and occupation, which was preceded by four centuries of devastating slave trading. This chapter is concerned mainly with the economic dimension of the African reconstruction. The imperative need was to transform the inherited colonial structures of production, consumption and trade, which were designed primarily to serve the interests of metropolitan Europe, in order to create more self-reliant economies better able to serve real African needs. In general this

would entail substantial industrialization based on Africa's abundant and varied resources, and the development of indigenous and adapted technologies.

Nearly three decades since most of the countries of Black Africa gained political independence, this primary task remains largely undone. Indeed, in the prevailing atmosphere of crisis and desperation, some might consider any prospects for eventual African reconstruction to be hopelessly far-fetched. Aside from the immediate and pressing concern to arrest any further declines in living conditions, another factor that contributes to the mood of pessimism is the nature of the "structural adjustment" policies which many African countries have been forced to adopt under the auspices of the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, in order to obtain some relief from their deepening balance of payments crises. While the necessity for adjustment cannot be disputed in respect of economies experiencing fundamental structural disequilibria, as most African economies are, the nature and effects of the IMF type of structural adjustment have been such as to raise genuine fears about the recolonization of Africa through the back-door by the major Western creditor nations who ultimately control the IMF and the World Bank.

This chapter seeks to address the issue of structural adjustment and economic reconstruction in Africa. It is argued that the shorter term problems arising from the prevailing economic crisis, including the need to seek medium-term recovery of economic growth through structural adjustment are no reasons to give up the long-term aspiration for structural transformation and reconstruction; indeed that the redressing of the more immediate problems should be viewed as necessary steps for a renewed drive towards genuine African autonomy. In the remainder of this chapter we shall first briefly outline the nature of the current economic crisis in Africa. Thereafter the issue of adjustment will be taken up, to discuss the meaning of structural adjustment, the problem about the IMF/World Bank approach to it, and the issue of alternative approaches to structural adjustment. Following this a number of requirements for a renewed drive towards economic reconstruction are discussed. The chapter ends with some conclusions on the challenges for African leadership.

Crisis and Delayed Reconstruction

The prevailing international economy, dominated by the industrially advanced capitalist countries of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) has been undergoing a crisis of increasing intensity since the early 1970's. The stagflation, excess liquidity, and materials shortages of the 1970's have given way to the deflation, financial strangulation, and glutted markets of the 1980's. In the more devastating proportions which the crisis has assumed since 1980, the economies of sub-Saharan Africa have taken a particularly hard beating.

According to data from various United Nations agencies¹ the average annual rate of growth of real gross domestic product (GDP), of sub-Saharan Africa, which was 4.3% during 1960-69, fell to -1.1% during 1980-84, as compared to 2.7% during the immediately preceding half decade, i.e. 1975-79. This negative average annual growth rate for 1980-84 compares with a figure of 0.8% for all developing countries and 1.9% for the world as a whole. When account is taken of population growth which is in excess of 3% annually in sub-Saharan Africa, it is not surprising that per capita GDP for the region suffered an overall absolute decline of 7% between 1980 and 1985. For Nigeria, a major oil-exporting country the negative trend in per capita GNP since 1981 has been such that she was in 1988 declassified by the World Bank as a "Middle-Income" country and relegated to the "Low-Income" category.

The great majority of African countries, for whom agricultural commodity production and exports remain the principal economic mainstay, have suffered at least two periods of severe decline in their international commodity terms of trade since the early 1970's. The terms of trade of the low-income African countries have deteriorated by about 30% between 1970 and 1984 while for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, the average loss of the purchasing power of export earnings due to terms of trade changes has been estimated at 2.3% annually between 1981 and 1985. When it is remembered that these countries depend heavily on imports for a wide range of essential consumer goods (including foodstuffs) as well as industrial raw materials, intermediate goods, and capital equipment and spare parts for the operation of the domestic productive system, it becomes easier to imagine the implication of the reduction of the imports of these countries at an average rate estimated at over 2% annually during the decade up to 1983.²

Considering the above figures, it seems almost certain that in terms of real resource availability as measured by real GDP adjusted for terms of trade, a good many African countries are now below levels attained in the early 1970's, if not the early 1960's. Furthermore, it is well to bear in mind that when decoded into human and social terms, the foregoing dismal statistics of national income accounting aggregates reduce, in Africa's present circumstances, to an estimated one quarter of the population suffering from chronic malnutrition, with perhaps hundreds of thousands dying annually from outright starvation; acute shortages of essential drugs and of basic school texts; rural and urban dwellers facing rapidly dwindling opportunities for paid or productive self-employment; etc.

A number of factors combine to explain Africa's current economic predicament. These include the fragile economic structures inherited from the colonial era, especially the weak productive base in both agriculture and industry; the massive exogenous shocks which these fragile economies have been receiving, both from natural disasters and from an increasingly unstable and hostile international environment; and weaknesses in the policy environment traceable to the character of the post-colonial state in Africa. As limitations of space will not allow a detailed and historical documentation of these factors here, only a brief outline of each will be provided.

Weak Productive Base

The upshot of colonial economic policy in Africa was that the newly independent countries were bequeathed with structures that were pathetically incapable of coping with the vagaries of the world capitalist system into which they had been willy-nilly integrated. In place of the mutually supportive balance that should exist between industry and agriculture in any healthy economy, these countries inherited highly skewed systems in which economic activity outside the subsistence sector was predominantly for the purpose of generating raw agricultural or mineral products for external trade.³ In some countries like Nigeria the share of agriculture alone in GDP was as much as 70% in 1960 while manufacturing and crafts accounted for less than 5%.

In the colonial economy in Africa, the only propulsive forces were external, to wit exports of raw agricultural and mineral products, typically from large-scale plantations and mines, and

foreign investment, invariably concentrated in the development of these same export enclaves. Thus being totally bereft of any meaningful internal inter-industry relations or propulsion this type of economy faced utterly bleak growth and development prospects. In the first place, proceeds from primary exports, usually concentrated in a handful of commodities whose prices were determined in the metropolitan centres, were subject to large year-to-year fluctuations which were seriously disruptive of domestic planning and investment, and hence of growth. There was also a long-run tendency for the terms of trade of primary exporters to fall vis-a-vis those of manufactured products.

Also to be noted is that the remote origins of the present "food crisis" which has been afflicting Africa with increasing devastation can be traced to colonial policy which forcibly compelled the diversion of vast amounts of African land and labour to the production of "cash crops" like groundnuts, coffee, rubber, cocoa, etc. to meet the voracious demands of an industrial Europe, at the expense of African food production. It was thus, for instance, that Senegal was able to increase its production of groundnuts from about 50,000 tons per annum in the 1890's to 723,000 tons in 1937.⁴ In the process she became transformed from a situation of self-sufficiency in food production to one of heavy dependence on food imports at independence.⁵ Finally, whatever growth-producing benefits the colonial type economy could have otherwise derived from the real income from foreign investment, much of this tended to be lost through the repatriation, both legal and illegal, of the profits of this investment.

As already stated, the primary task of reconstruction at independence was to transform these inherited economic structures in the direction of greater self-reliance. Many of the newly independent states embarked on this task with varying degrees of vigour, but uniformly through the conventional approach to import-substituting industrialization. Ironically, by the time African economies began to be buffered by various external shocks in the 1970's those that had advanced the farthest in this process had just managed to reach the point where they had become imbued by a heightened form of external dependence: imports of consumer goods had largely given way to the more critical imports of producer goods, thereby rendering the domestic economy much more vulnerable to disruptions in the flow and availability of foreign exchange.⁶

Exogenous Shocks

As already noted, the crisis in the prevailing international economy took a serious turn for the worse in 1980. An important manifestation of this deterioration has been the occurrence of increasingly large and unpredictable gyrations in major economic indicators.⁷ As the industrially advanced countries in the centre of the system are buffeted by these unwholesome events, the repercussions are naturally transmitted to the dependent African and other Third World economies at the periphery. However, it is the case that the centre countries, by virtue of their technological and industrial advancement, possess to a large degree the resilience, flexibility, and capacity to transform in the face of the changes, as well as highly developed social welfare systems to act as shock-absorbers against the human and social consequences of economic adversity. By contrast, the peripheral economies and societies remain more or less defenseless against such dislocations.

Among the external shocks which have been the most prominent for African economies since 1980 have been sharp deteriorations in the terms of trade, fluctuating exchange rates, and high foreign real interest rates. Added to these have been equally severe internal shocks by way of drought, floods, locust plagues, etc.

While the natural disasters have contributed directly to the worsening food crisis, the external shocks have contributed indirectly through the reductions in import capacity. But the most direct effect of the external shocks has been to intensify the balance of payments crisis, including the debt crisis.⁸

The Character of the State

While natural disasters, external shocks arising from the vagaries of the dominant world economic system, as well as underlying weaknesses in inherited productive structures largely account for Africa's current economic predicament, candour and objectivity demand that it be conceded that we as Africans have also contributed to some extent, if not in bringing about the crisis, but at least in failing to prevent it from reaching the proportions it has assumed in some countries.

It is not simply a question of "wrong" or inefficient macro and microeconomic policies, as is much emphasized or implied in a lot of the analyses and prescriptions emanating from certain Western or Western-oriented circles. There have certainly been errors and inefficiencies in the formulation and implementation of policies,

even if, as B. Van Arkadie notes "Much that is identified as policy weakness (e.g. over-valued exchange rates, poor agricultural incentives) was not founded in intellectual error but was the outcome of politically and economically difficult choices between options all of which were unattractive in the face of declining resource availability."⁹ The basic problem rather is that policy errors and inefficiencies have in many countries occurred in a situation in which those who exercise ultimate control over economic policy, that is to say, the political class, whether military or civilian, have failed to create an environment conducive to self-sustained and self-reliant economic growth and development. In an atmosphere of political instability and widespread corruption, great opportunities have often been lost, such as the failure in Nigeria to utilise the enormous financial windfalls from the crude petroleum "rent" of the 1970's to lay a solid foundation for a viable domestic producer goods sector of the economy.

Had the iron and steel and automotive industry projects respectively, for instance, been implemented in accordance with the plans and schedules incorporated explicitly or implicitly in national plans, beginning from the Second National Development Plan (1970-4), there can be no doubt that Nigeria would not have been so pathetically vulnerable as she was to the collapse of the world oil market which commenced in 1981.¹⁰ Even in situations where, as in Malawi, opportunities were not reckoned in terms of vast oil revenues, poor economic performance would certainly have been ameliorated if the leadership had avoided decisions like incurring substantial foreign loans on commercial terms to finance "investment" in "palace building, military installations, an international airport, and an elite private college."¹¹

The failure of the state in most countries in independent Africa to promote autonomous economic development, whether along capitalist or socialist lines, is traceable to the character of the post-colonial state that evolved under the auspices of the particular elite classes that assumed the mantle of governance upon the dismantling at independence of the formal structures of colonial rule. With only a few exceptions, such as in Tanzania under Julius K. Nyerere and in the early years of Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana and Sekou Touré's Guinea, these elite showed less interest in embarking on the task of genuine reconstruction, but were more concerned with consolidating and extending the privileges inherited from the departing colonial masters, e.g. outsized pay-packets and emoluments, subsidized

housing in exclusive areas, and chauffeur-driven cars, etc. for officials of the legislative and executive arms of government. This attitude could not but have a negative demonstration-effect on the rest of the populace in terms of fostering a culture of consumerism and ostentation generally and more specifically a high propensity to consume oriented to foreign type of goods.¹²

In a place like Nigeria, the undisputed monumental personal contributions of individual statesmen like the Late Alhaji Sir Tafawa Balewa, the Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, but above all, the Rt. Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, did not prevent the emergence of a post-colonial ruling class whose behaviour at both the civic and primordial levels of public consciousness¹³ has helped in reducing the country to its current level of a big-for-nothing giant. On the one hand, an alliance of interests between the military who have ruled the country for most of the post independence period, the bureaucrats, and the civilian political class subsumed under the local business community of traders, commission agents, and others engaged in one form of intermediation or the other, has sustained a model of development under state capitalism which has proved to be little better than a convenient instrumentality that has enabled those well placed within it to recklessly exploit the system for their own private benefits, under an elaborate facade of a burgeoning public sector.

On the other hand, this same ruling class has not hesitated, in the context of intra-group squabbles for elite class privileges, to exploit major social cleavages within the polity to advance particularistic interests, even while rhetorically proclaiming an integrative ideology.¹⁴

Crisis and Adjustment

Given the enormity of the economic crisis currently afflicting all of Black Africa, it is understandable that all concern and effort should now be directed at effecting a halt to any further disastrous declines and pushing for a recovery to an acceptable minimum standard of living conditions for the broad masses of African peoples. In practical terms, this would no doubt entail a great deal of rehabilitation, maintenance, or restoration of productive structures or capacities that may have become casualties of the events of the recent past. In the circumstances, it would appear that the longer term task of reconstruction and transformation should stand deferred. However, given that genuine African autonomy is hardly possible

without the desired reconstruction, it would be better to view the more immediate tasks as necessary steps towards establishing the conditions for a renewed drive towards reconstruction after the shortest possible delay. It is in the context of the shorter term objectives of rehabilitation and recovery that the issue of structural adjustment should be examined.

The Meaning of Structural Adjustment

In discussing the problem of structural adjustment, it is necessary right at the outset to avoid the confusion that often arises from failing to distinguish between the principle of "adjustment" as it relates to the idea of action or behaviour in response to some stimuli or change, and the term "structural adjustment" or "structural adjustment programme" (SAP) as it refers to a recognisable set of specific policies usually associated with the World Bank or the IMF. Furthermore, it is to be borne in mind that generally speaking, the term "structural change" or "structural transformation", to the extent that it connotes the idea of altering some deep-seated characteristics of an economy — e.g. the share of industry in total output, the relative importance of the foreign sector, the degree of urbanization, etc — is essentially what economic development is all about.

The narrow sense in which the term structural adjustment is used in relation to IMF and World Bank activities refers to the notion of action taken in response to a sudden, large disturbance or shock, favourable or unfavourable, which disrupts the path that a country is following in the normal pursuit of its growth and development objectives.¹⁵ For a proper understanding of the reasoning behind the structural adjustment policies usually prescribed by the Bretton Woods institutions, it is useful to start with the basic concern of the IMF about financial imbalances in a country's economy, i.e. imbalances in the external balance of payments and in the internal budgetary position of the government, but more fundamentally in the external imbalance which, in a persistent form, is deemed to reflect underlying maladjustments in the economy which call for corrective action.

As a national income accounting identity, it is the case that the difference between on the one hand, domestic output or income, and on the other, domestic absorption (for private and government consumption and for capital accumulation) is equivalent to the difference between the exports and imports of goods and services, which, for simplicity, can be taken to represent the balance of

payments on current account. Thus a current account surplus means that domestic output is greater than domestic absorption while a deficit means that domestic absorption exceeds domestic output. A balance of payments deficit can arise directly from external causes, such as when a recession in the industrialized countries causes a reduction in the demand for the agricultural exports of the home country. Or it can originate internally, such when a drought, by causing a fall in food production, reduces the domestic supply of goods and services relative to demand for domestic absorption, thereby causing domestic inflation which, by reducing the competitive position of exports, worsens the external payments position.

Assuming that a country is no longer able or willing to continue to finance a persisting balance of payments deficit through the drawing down of its reserves of foreign exchange or through foreign borrowing, there has to be an adjustment to restore balance between imports and exports or between domestic absorption and domestic output. Given a period sufficiently short such that not much can be done about domestic output supply, the conventional stabilization programme is concerned with measures to bring aggregate demand or absorption down to the level of supply, to eliminate inflation and the external imbalance. This is the essence of the typical "austerity" package. By comparison, structural adjustment programmes are expected, at least in theory, to be concerned in addition with measures to raise output supply with a view to attaining, over the medium to long-term, a "sustainable level of economic growth", where "sustainable growth" is defined to be one that is consistent with "the achievement of domestic and external financial stability", i.e. low domestic inflation and balance of payments equilibrium.¹⁶

According to the Fund's own categorization, three types of policies are usually involved in structural adjustment programmes supported by the IMF, to wit:¹⁷

- (a) Demand-Side Policies, typically fiscal, monetary and domestic credit measures designed to influence the aggregate level or growth rate of domestic demand and absorption;
- (b) Supply-Side Policies to increase the volume of output supply.

This may involve an increase in current output through "measures to reduce distortions caused by price rigidities, monopolies, taxes,

subsidies, and trade restrictions". Or it may entail raising the long-run growth rate of capacity output through incentives for domestic saving and investment. "Also important are policies designed to increase the inflow of foreign savings, whether in the form of private lending, foreign direct investment, or increased development assistance"; and

- (c) Policies to improve international competitiveness by altering the real exchange rate e.g. through devaluation cum wage restraint.

In technical economic language, the first and the third sets of policies above are often referred to as "expenditure reducing" and "expenditure switching" policies respectively. A certain amount of convenient abstraction is involved in the above categorization of policies. For example, a devaluation, while attempting to bring about expenditure-switching, can have considerable expenditure-reducing effects as well. Ordinarily, in stabilization and adjustment programmes supported by the IMF or the World Bank, the institution would provide "bridging finance" or "programme lending" to ease the recipient country's balance of payments difficulties over the period the adjustment is expected to occur.

While the IMF often maintains that its adjustment policies are tailored to the specific conditions of the individual countries in which it is involved, it is in fact the case, at least regards African countries,¹⁸ that virtually the same features are observable in the "reform policies" which it invariably "advices" for adoption, as a condition for either providing its own financing under "conditionality" or issuing a certificate of "good housekeeping" which would enable the recipient to obtain relief from its creditors, whether through additional loans, or through the rescheduling or refinancing of outstanding debt.¹⁹ These features include: (a) large devaluation of the local currency; (b) trade liberalization, including abolition of exchange and import restrictions; (c) deregulation of interest rates, and reduction of money supply and credit to the domestic economy; and (d) sharp cuts in budgetary deficits, which may entail drastic rationalisation of parastatals, including privatisation and commercialisation, and cuts in various social expenditures, including consumer subsidies. It is easy to place each of these measures into one or the other of the earlier categorization of IMF adjustment policies and the corresponding rationale for it.

The Problem about Structural Adjustment

Space here does not permit a detailed critique of the foregoing elements of the IMF/World Bank structural adjustment policies.²⁰ A number of observations are, however, necessary for the purposes of the present chapter.

Although the principle of adjustment can hardly be disputed in respect of an economy experiencing fundamental structural imbalances, the fact of the matter is that (a) different sets of policies will produce different results with regard to how the burden (i.e. the cost) of adjustment is distributed among the different segments of the society; and (b) the magnitude of this burden is a function of the speed of adjustment, that is to say, the time span over which adjustment is to be attempted. The crux of the criticism of the IMF approach to structural adjustment for Africa, and for other Third World countries for that matter, is that the prescribed policies are designed in such a way that whatever long-term benefits could possibly be derived from them, their short-run costs more often than not prove to be socially prohibitive, thereby rendering the whole programme counter-productive.

The essence of the problem is the attitude of (ideological?) rigidity which disposes the Fund to impose a standard (monetarist) prescription regardless of the peculiar circumstances of individual countries, notwithstanding the Fund's frequent claims to be doing the contrary. A concrete example will be provided to illustrate how this dangerous attitude has been given free rein in the IMF's dealings with sub-Saharan African countries in recent years.

In outlining the objectives of IMF supported adjustment programmes, the publication *Fund-Supported Adjustment Programs and Economic Growth* starts out by noting that the need for an adjustment programme, whether or not supported by the Fund, typically arises "when a country experiences an imbalance between aggregate domestic demand (absorption) and aggregate supply, which is reflected in a worsening of its external payments position." It then immediately adds

While it is true that such external factors as an exogenous deterioration of the terms of trade or an increase in foreign interest rates can be responsible for the basic demand-supply imbalances, *often these imbalances can be traced to inappropriate domestic policies that expand aggregate domestic demand too rapidly relative to the productive potential of the economy* and seriously distort relative prices.²¹ (Emphasis added).

The above statement appears to suggest a recognition on the part of the Fund that in prescribing remedial action for balance of

payments difficulties arising from structural disequilibria, it should make a difference as to what was the underlying cause(s) of the disequilibria. In other words, it should make a difference whether the structural imbalances arose from wrong-headed policies, in which case corrective action should emphasize policy reform, or whether the imbalances were brought about by exogenous factors, in which case a different approach would be indicated. In practice, however, the Fund shows no evidence whatsoever of even being interested in finding out the real cause of economic crises before prescribing solutions. This is reflected in its attempt, in virtually all the stand-by arrangements it has negotiated with African countries after 1979, to impose a uniform set of reform policies which would suggest that wrong policies were the underlying cause of economic crisis in most or even many of the countries, which is far from being the case.

The fact of the matter is that whatever policy errors were committed by African governments during the 1970's and earlier, and there have been some, as already noted, available empirical evidence overwhelmingly points to external shocks as the primary cause of the balance of payments difficulties of virtually all sub-Saharan African countries following the global economic crisis that commenced in 1980.²² Moreover, with the exception of Nigeria and perhaps one or two other countries where there was evidence of overheating of the economy during 1980/81, internal supply-demand imbalances in almost every other case have resulted from *supply shortages* originating from these external shocks (through reductions in importing capacity) as well as from droughts, etc, rather than from excessive growth in domestic demand.²³

It has also to be borne in mind that given the existing structure of the typical African economy which is highly import-dependent, it is the external disequilibrium which once it occurs, usually gives rise to other structural imbalances, e.g. the fiscal (i.e. budgetary) imbalance, the agricultural imbalance, the industrial imbalance, etc. Fundamental external disequilibrium essentially means that the economy is unable at a "normal" exchange rates, to generate sufficient export earnings to pay for the minimum socially desirable volume of imports. Given that public revenues are directly or indirectly derived primarily from taxes on tradeable outputs, reductions in exports and imports which reflect the external imbalance are liable to cause total revenue to fall below the socially desirable level of public expenditures, which is the essence of the

fiscal imbalance. Similarly, inability to import agricultural and industrial inputs to permit domestic productive capacity to operate at a socially desirable level gives rise to the agricultural and industrial imbalances.

One implication of the foregoing incidentally is that whereas an improvement in the external balance should lead to an improvement in the fiscal balance, the reverse is not the case. In other words, there is no reason, given the structure of the economy, to expect that sharp cuts in public expenditures to balance the budget, as the IMF usually insists on, will have any significant effect in improving the balance of payments position.

Notwithstanding the foregoing considerations regarding the structure of the economy and the underlying causes of disequilibria, the IMF invariably insists on imposing the same standard set of reform policies for structural adjustment in African countries, in utter disregard for the inevitable social consequences. One of the most glaring examples of this has been well documented in the details provided by Agit Singh on what the IMF attempted to do in the course of the protracted but eventually unsuccessful negotiations with Tanzania for a stand-by agreement in the early 1980's.²⁴ Tanzania accepted the need for adjustment, in principle. Disagreement with the IMF, however, arose regarding the issues of the pace of adjustment and the pattern of distribution of the burden of adjustment.

In relation to the latter, the government was of the view that removal of food subsidies, cuts in government expenditures, etc, as "recommended" by the IMF would place a disproportionate share of the burden of adjustment on the workers and poorer segments of society; whereas government believed that under its own plan to carry out adjustment through the tax system, the costs would be more evenly spread over all the segments of the populace. More importantly, on the question of the pace of adjustment, the government, out of a concern to proceed at a speed it perceived was compatible with safeguarding the integrity of the country's system and institutions, proposed to raise the real price paid to commodity producers by 5%. The Fund, on the other hand, and no doubt in keeping with a predetermined time-table regarding the period over which adjustment had to be undertaken for a country to be eligible to receive its funds under conditionality insisted on a 40% increase.

Furthermore, the extent of devaluation, along with other measures contained in the IMF proposed package, would have

resulted in an immediate increase in the price of sembe, the basic staple food of the country, from 2.5 to 18 shillings per kilogram. As Singh notes:

Any neutral observer can see that no government in the world — even one such as Pinochet's with all the guns trained on the people — could survive such an enormous increase in the price of the basic staple. In that sense, the IMF programme amounts to saying that they wish to see a rather different government in Tanzania.²⁵ (Emphasis added).

It is evident that if the IMF, wittingly or unwittingly succeeds in generating enough social and political instability in this manner in the African countries with which it deals, the governments of those countries must surely come into the hands of puppet regimes controlled by the Western creditor nations who control the IMF and the World Bank through the size of their funding for those institutions, and at whose pressure the African governments are compelled in the first place to approach the institutions, either for balance of payments support under conditionality, or for a certificate of good house-keeping, as the case may be. Hence the fear about the recolonization of Africa through the back-door is far from being idle.

Alternative Approaches to Structural Adjustment

As already stated, given the limits to the ability of a country to finance a persistent balance of payments disequilibrium, structural adjustment becomes unavoidable for a country facing a fundamental external imbalance. We have also seen that once the principle of adjustment is accepted, there can in theory be an infinite number of possible alternative ways of designing adjustment packages, depending on prior decisions regarding the distribution of the burden of adjustment over time and space. (This being the case, incidentally, the much quoted statement of the present military government in Nigeria to the effect that "there is no alternative to SAP" can at best be regarded as a play on words. What the government must obviously mean is that given that Nigeria had found herself in a situation where adjustment became unavoidable, the present government had no alternative other than to implement the particular SAP package being implemented. It will be recalled that the IMF had to endorse Nigeria's adjustment proposals, as a cross-conditionality imposed by the Paris and London Clubs of creditors, prior to accepting to reschedule outstanding medium and long-term debts and refinance accumulated trade arrears owed by Nigeria).²⁶

Beyond differences in respect of the distribution of the burden of adjustment over time and space, alternative SAP's can also differ as regards the subsidiary objectives they seek to emphasise, even while attempting to eliminate structural disequilibria. Needless to say, SAP's can also differ as regards the instruments they favour for realizing given objectives. Finally, given the trade-off (or complementarity) that could exist between financing and adjustment in dealing with external disequilibria, different SAP packages will have different financial implications.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, based in Addis Ababa, has just released a document called "African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation", (AAF-SAP). At the time of this writing, only excerpts from this document, as carried in the press, are available to this writer.²⁷ These are, however, sufficient to see that it is an attempt to formulate an approach to structural adjustment which differs significantly from the standard IMF/World Bank line in terms of the subsidiary goals emphasized and in terms of policy instruments and measures.

Although IMF documents make much heavy weather about achieving "sustainable growth" and "viable balance of payments position" it is not difficult to see that a major, though seldom expressed concern, is to establish the conditions that would enable the adjusting country to repay its debts to the creditors. Hence, restrictions on payments and transfers for current international transactions or on imports for balance of payments purposes, especially outright import prohibitions, are absolute taboos for the IMF. With all the talk about achieving recovery to high and sustainable growth rates, little is ever said about the content of that growth.

By contrast, the AAF-SAP emphasises goals and instruments which, while attempting to correct structural disequilibria, facilitate long-run structural transformation and diversification of the economy, while at the same time giving priority to the provision of basic needs, enhanced capacity for food production, the protection of vulnerable social groups, etc. Measures like outright bans on the imports of specified consumer luxuries and barter exchanges are encouraged, while explicit attention is given to the need to promote intra-African co-operation in trade, monetary, and financial relations. From all indications, the highly problematic exchange rate instrument is de-emphasized.

As the name implies, the AAF-SAP appears to be only a suggested framework within which individual countries could design their own adjustment programmes, but in such a way as to facilitate the realization of regional goals. It is not, and obviously could not be, an operational document in the sense of stipulating performance targets, tests and criteria. From the excerpts now available, it is not clear what concrete proposals or suggestions, if any, are made in the document about external financing for the SAP's of individual African countries.

Towards Renewed Reconstruction

As earlier indicated, economic conditions in most parts of Africa are currently so desperate that any talk at this time of long-run transformation and reconstruction would appear to be irrelevant pipe-dreaming. This is, however, not so, or should not be so. It is true that every effort now should be made to arrest any further declines in living conditions, to rehabilitate, maintain, or restore impaired structures and capacities, and later to look towards recovery. However, given that recovery would be largely meaningless if not directed to the realization of genuine African autonomy, it is clear that while addressing immediate to medium-term concerns, this should be done in such a way not only not to lose sight of long-term goals but also to create more favourable conditions for realising such goals. From available evidence, this would appear to be what the AAF-SAP document is seeking to promote.

In this section we address, however briefly, three of the issues we consider important for enhancing national capabilities for realising the goal of reconstruction, even while addressing shorter-term concerns, whether or not through formal structural adjustment programmes. These are the need for efficient management of national economies, the question of mass mobilization, and the issue of collective self-reliance.

Efficient Management

The rapidly decreasing availability of real resources to most African countries clearly now places the utmost premium on efficient management of the little that is available. It is recognised that in the social context in which most African governments find themselves, public policy must of necessity respond to and seek to adjudicate between contending group pressures. It is also recognised that given

the "legitimacy crisis" which many of these governments face, political leaders will have to give due consideration to the political requirements of regime and personal survival.²⁸ All the same it should be possible, through bold and imaginative leadership, to drastically reduce the incidence of important investment decisions that are determined on brazenly political criteria. This is all the more so since, ironically, poor economic performance will in the prevailing circumstances become an ever more menacing threat to regime and personal survival for political leaders.

Whether greater reliance should be placed on market mechanisms or on administrative decisions in economic management is a question which we believe should not be determined purely by considerations of ideological dogma. There is no way that free market forces, i.e. the uncoordinated and decentralized decisions of utility — and profit-maximizing individuals and firms, including multinational firms, can be relied upon to properly resolve major questions that determine the pattern of structural transformation of the economy, such as: whether or not basic industries like iron and steel or petrochemicals are to be developed; whether new railway networks are to be constructed as against developing existing inland waterways, etc. On the other hand it must be recognised that real constraints on administrative management are imposed by the fact of an over-stretched administrative machinery and by the fact that in a situation where corruption has been allowed to become widespread, bureaucrats will not feel impelled to push on with development at a pace that appreciably outdistances the morality and dedication of their political masters, civilian or military.

In these circumstances, common sense and pragmatism suggest that in the conduct of public policy the market mechanism and direct administrative intervention in the economy by the state should be assigned to areas in which each has comparative advantage. As a rule of thumb it should be possible to give as much scope as is prudent to market forces in the determination of microeconomic allocative decisions, but within the macro-framework of sectorial and other priorities administratively established and enforced by the state.

Mass Mobilization

For some years now, net foreign capital inflows to sub-Saharan Africa have been on the decline.²⁹ This trend can be expected to continue for the foreseeable future, especially in a situation where

political conservatism continues to hold sway in the major industrialized countries of the West. In these circumstances, African governments must realize that implementing required programmes of structural adjustment and of transformation, will entail increasing costs and hardship for the broad masses of the populace. If this is not to lead to excessive social and political instability, effective programmes of mass mobilization need to be adopted to raise the social capacity of the populace to absorb such costs. The key idea is to get all and sundry to willingly accept the prevailing hardships as necessary and worthy sacrifices that need to be made in pursuit of longer-term goals that are generally understood and accepted.

In this connection the task-force on Mass Mobilization for Self-Reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) inaugurated in 1987 by the Federal Military Government in Nigeria is clearly a step in the right direction. However, it is important to bear in mind that success in mass mobilization for the purpose indicated is critically dependent on the image which the generality of the populace have of those who are trying to mobilize them. That means that efforts at mobilizing the masses of the people are liable to prove counterproductive, i.e. generating increasing cynicism rather than genuine patriotism, where forms of self or group aggrandizement are still allowed to be evident in some high places; where autocratic tendencies and arbitrariness are allowed to progressively undermine the rule of law, presumably in furtherance of regime survival; and where public policies are widely seen to be manipulated to advance particularistic interests, in matters like the location of major industrial projects, the conduct of religious affairs, the formulation of national education programmes and policies, etc.

Collective Self-Reliance

Self-sustained and self-reliant growth is hardly possible without a network of basic industries — iron and steel, chemicals and petrochemicals, fertilisers, automotive components, etc. For many countries in sub-Saharan Africa such a network of industries is realisable only within the context of a co-operative arrangement at the regional or sub-regional level. This fact is well recognised and informs the far-reaching measures adopted for the promotion of "multi-national industries" under article 70 of the Lagos Plan of Action of the Organization of African Unity, as well as the customs union provisions of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Also widely recognised is that co-operation among African countries, indeed among Third World countries generally to promote South-South trade and other relations goes beyond merely providing an enlarged scope for critical minimum size and economies of scale for basic industries. Such co-operation would in addition provide the less developed countries the only realistic framework for achieving at least a partial de-linking of their sources of growth and development from the industrially advanced countries of the North in order to minimize the enormous hazards inherent in the prevailing patterns of North-South trade. It would also enhance opportunities for indigenous efforts at development and for strengthening the resilience of the developing economies in the face of the uncertainties and instabilities of the international environment, as well as generate meaningful counter-vailing power with which to negotiate a new and more equitable world economic order.³⁰

This last point about developing adequate counter-vailing power for international negotiations is particularly pertinent to the issue of the "debt crisis" which even the World Bank and similar organizations now concede is a major factor responsible for the present predicament of African countries.³¹ It is indeed a remarkable irony that in North-South negotiations relative to the international debt crisis the already powerful creditor countries of the North act in a concerted manner through the Paris and London Clubs of creditors, employing the powerful instrumentality of the IMF which they control, as additional leverage, whereas the weak debtor nations of the South have to negotiate on an individual basis for various forms of debt relief. Clearly, only concerted action by African and other Third World debtors can provide a realistic basis for an equitable resolution of the crisis.

While the foregoing benefits realisable from African co-operation are well recognised, past efforts to achieve such co-operation, especially through various forms of economic integration at the sub-regional level, have met with serious difficulties which are by now quite familiar, and which are not unrelated to the complexities attending the distribution of the costs and benefits of integration. Despite these difficulties and past failures, it is necessary to persevere and to intensify the efforts at co-operation. This is not only because co-operation is in the final analysis the only realistic basis for effectively wiping out Africa's current major problem of crushing poverty and achieving autonomous development, but also because the more co-operation is delayed, the

more certain impediments to co-operation tend to consolidate and entrench themselves.³² For example, the more high cost industries continue to be built on the basis of narrow national markets, the more difficult it will later prove to design an integration scheme to accommodate such industries and to overcome the vested interests that would have built up around them from local or foreign multinational producers, distributors, labour unions, etc.

Conclusion: The Challenge for African Leadership

The immediate and pressing need to arrest any further declines in the living conditions of African peoples, the necessity to rehabilitate, maintain, and restore impaired productive structures or capacities, and, through properly designed and implemented programmes of structural adjustment, to push for recovery to socially acceptable rates of economic growth; to do all this as a necessary step for a renewed drive towards African reconstruction and autonomy; poses an enormous challenge for Africa's political leadership. Three specific areas of such challenge have been highlighted, to wit: the need to promote the efficient management of national economies, the necessity for genuine programmes of mass mobilization, and the urgent need to overcome the obstacles to effective African co-operation and collective self-reliance.

Whether the present generation of African political leadership will be able to meet this challenge remains to be seen. While the first generation of Africa's post-colonial leadership is widely recognised to have failed to push purposely for genuine African reconstruction in place of mere decolonization, there were individuals within that class of leaders — individuals like Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania — whose consistent pan-Africanist perspective on the affairs of the continent has helped to inspire and sustain the worthy vision of an Africa that will one day take its proper place as a strong, self-confident, and self-reliant entity in the world community of nations. It is to be hoped that such statesmen among the present generation of leaders will be able to inspire their counterparts elsewhere on the continent to appreciate the desperate urgency of the need for African co-operation for collective self-reliance and reconstruction.

NOTES

1. See UNCTAD *Trade and Development Report*, for 1986 and 1988; IMF *World Economic Outlook*, April 1986; and various issues of World Bank *World Development Report*.
2. Cf. B. Van Arkadie "Some Realities of Adjustment: An Introduction" *Development and Change*, 17:3 (July 1986).
3. It was certainly as a result of deliberate European Policy that the process was arrested which might have led to a normal development of industry and technology in Africa had normal trading relations been allowed to evolve between the latter and Europe. See for example the account of what happened to African traders at Calabar who in the early nineteenth century attempted to buy sugar-making equipment from England, in Chinweizu *The West and the Rest of Us*, New York: Random House, 1975, p. 31.
4. A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, London: Longman, 1973, p. 174.
5. In parts of West Africa, the early stages of this phenomenal expansion of colonial export production occurred without much negative effect on domestic food production, thus providing an illustration of the so-called "vent-for-surplus" theory of trade.
6. In Uganda, for example, the share of machinery and equipment in total imports rose from 25% in 1960 to 44% in 1977. The corresponding figures for Nigeria were 24% and 47%, while for Mali, the change was from 18% to 30%.
7. See e.g. UNCTAD *Trade and Development Report*, 1988, New York: United Nations, 1988, Ch. II.
8. See, among many others, the following: UNCTAD *Trade and Development Report* 1986, P II; A.D. Onattara "Reflections on the Crisis" *Journal of Development Planning*, No. 15 (1985); and A. B. Taylor "The African Debtors: The Decimating Effects of Pro-Cyclical Movements in Concessional and Non-Concessional Flows and the Appropriate Policy Response" *Journal of Development Planning*, No. 16 (1985).
9. B. Van Arkadie, *loc. cit.* p. 376.
10. For further discussion of this point see A.W. Obi "The Capital Goods Sector of Nigeria's Manufacturing Industry" in CODESRIA *Capital Goods, Technological Change and Accumulation in Nigeria*, Dakar, Senegal (Forthcoming); and A.W. Obi "Perspective Planning for Nigeria's Capital Goods Sector" in *Perspective Planning for Nigeria*, Ibadan: Nigerian Economic Society, 1989.
11. J. Kydd with A. Hewitt "Limits to Recovery: Malawi after Six Years of Adjustment, 1980 to 1985" *Development and Change*, 17:3 (July 1986).
12. For various views about the factors which may account for why many post-colonial elites in Africa have failed to move beyond mere decolonization to genuine reconstruction, see e.g. R. Sandbrook "The State and Economic Stagnation in Tropical Africa" *World Development*, 14:3 (1986), and Chinweizu, *op. cit.*, especially ch. 7.
13. For an analysis of how politics in post colonial Africa have been shaped by the dialectics between on the one hand a "civic consciousness" in which ideas and economic interests are salient, and on the other a "primordial consciousness" at which more primordial sentiments are involved, see P. Ekeh "Citizenship and Political Conflict" in J. Okpaku (ed) *Nigeria: The Dilemma of Nationhood*, New York: The Third Press, 1971 and P. Ekeh "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 17:1 (1975).
14. For further characterization of the configuration of interests that has sustained Nigeria's brand of state capitalism since the end of the 1967-70 civil war, see ch. 13 in A. W. Obi *Development Policy in an Open Economy: Essays in International*

- Trade and Development Policy for Nigeria* (in Press) and the literature cited therein.
15. Cf. B. Balassa "Structural Adjustment Policies in Developing Economies" *World Development*, 10:1 (1982), p. 23; and P. Streeten "Structural Adjustment: A Survey of the Issues and Options" *World Development*, 15:12 (1987), p. 1469.
 16. B. Zulu and S. Nsouli *Adjustment Programs in Africa: The Recent Experience*, IMF Occasional Paper No. 34, Washington D.C. April 1985.
 17. See M. Khan and M. Knight. *Fund-Supported Adjustment Programs and Economic Growth*, IMF Occasional Paper No. 41, Washington D.C. November 1985.
 18. Cf. Agit Singh "Tanzania and the IMF: Analytics of Alternative Adjustment Programmes" *Development and Change*, 17:3 (July 1986).
 19. Needless to say, the World Bank also demands the same type of policies as a condition for providing its own "structural adjustment loans", as distinct from its normal project-based lending.
 20. However, for a point-by-point summary of the likely negative effects in the African context of each aspect of the standard IMF/World Bank adjustment package, see excerpts from the recently released *The African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation* by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *West Africa* No. 37:52 (17-23 July 1989) p. 1161. For other powerful critiques of aspects of IMF conditionality programmes in developing countries, see N. Kaldor "Devaluation and Adjustment in Developing Countries" *Finance and Development*, June, 1983, and Agit Singh, *loc. cit.* and the literature cited therein.
 21. Khan and Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
 22. See the sources earlier cited on this.
 23. Cf. R. H. Green "From Deepening Economic Malaise towards Renewed Development" *Journal of Development Planning*, No. 15 (1985) pp. 10-11.
 24. See Agit Singh, *loc. cit.*
 25. *ibid.*, p. 440.
 26. As a member of the Presidential Committee on the IMF Loan set up by President Ibrahim Babangida in 1985/86 to moderate the national debate on the loan issue and thereafter advise the Federal Military Government on the available options for dealing with the prevailing crisis, the present author believes the government was sincere, when it rejected an IMF stand-by agreement in December 1985, in its stated intention to pursue an independent course of adjustment. The broad outlines of such an adjustment package were evident in the 1986 Federal budget announced on the eve of the New Year. It will be recalled, however, that within a matter of days following this announcement, the world oil market suffered complete collapse in January 1986, thereby seriously eroding the country's bargaining strength vis-a-vis her creditors and apparently also the government's resolve to pursue an independent course. It should therefore not have come as a surprise to anybody that following the negotiations for debt rescheduling which commenced later in the year, the adjustment policies which Nigeria subsequently started to implement more or less followed the standard IMF/World Bank line.
 27. See, e.g. *West Africa*, No. 37:52 (17-23 July 1989), pp. 1160-62.
 28. Cf. Sandbrook, *loc. cit.*
 29. See e.g. World Bank *World Development Report* 1986, ch. 3; and UNCTAD *Trade and Development Report* 1988, ch IV.
 30. Cf. A. W. Obi *Development Policy in an Open Economy*, *op. cit.*, ch. 7.
 31. See e.g. World Bank, 1986, *op. cit.* pp. 33-38.
 32. Cf. P. Ndegwa "Co-operation Among Sub-Saharan African Countries: An Engine of Growth?" *Journal of Development Planning*, No. 15 (1985).

Impediments To The African Revolution

Odinchezo M. Ikejiani-Clark

Introduction

Azikiwe categorically stated that Africa could only be emancipated by those who believed in the concept of renescent Africa. The African revolution he envisaged was supposed to be the transformation of the African man who at the end, would be endowed with spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic determinism, mental emancipation and political resurgence.¹ This stage of renescent Africa would experience economic prosperity and in Azikiwe's words:

socially, the end is a guarantee of social security, and a right to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, just as do other peoples.²

Since Azikiwe's postulations, Africa has not been able to redeem or restitute itself from "social wreckage, political servitude and economic impotency ... ideological confusion, psychological immaturity, spiritual complacency and mental stagnation".³ Africa has only been able to achieve political independence with the exception of the Republic of South Africa, where the minority white settler population still rule ruthlessly over the majority Black population and Namibia — a nation administered by South Africa under the League of Nations mandates, as it was then; the United Nations has been trying to establish an acceptable political system, however, South Africa continues to administer the territory. Even though most of the African countries achieved political

independence, the political and basic economic structures were not changed, being dependent oriented and economic strings attached, neo-colonialism had become the order of the day, as Echezona has argued.

African leaders rose to power and African nations to independence on a 'whirlwind' of change. National independence to most Africans, meant the restoration of rights and dignity, an answer to the economic and social discrimination and also a refutation of the "white superiority" preached by colonialists for centuries.

However, as time went on, Africans realized that political independence was just the beginning. It raised more questions than it answered. It was only the beginning of a step towards the goal of growth and progress. Africans wanted and still want more than anything else to be free from poverty, free from sickness and the chance to be educated. Political independence was just the first leap, the problems of economic development became more difficult to tackle, and in turn, certain events questioned the political independence itself.

Economic Development

The African nations did not start on a clear slate. Most of the nations' economic structures were a product of the colonial past and virtually all their operations was and still is in the hands of either the government or foreign concerns. African nations depend on the export economies built by Europeans and their main products are highly dependent on world markets and colonial patterns of trade. The cocoa, coffee and groundnuts grown by African farmers are still sold to Europe and not to Africans. The copper, iron and tin mined in Africa supply raw materials for industries in Europe and America. Today, African countries cannot survive, let alone prosper without trading raw materials and crops for manufactured goods made abroad. Consumption was given priority over productivity. The priorities and even objectives of most African governments were and still is totally questionable and highly dependent.

For consumer goods to be bought, foreign exchange was required. So African 'development techniques' have been mainly to obtain more aid, loans and foreign exchange from payments of exports of raw materials etc. in order to satisfy the 'consumer appetite'. Of course Europe readily obliged because it provided the markets for the purchase of goods and various consumer items from

butter, bacon, sausage and spices down to items like plates, cutlery and cooking pots. The list is ridiculously exhaustive. As African governments and elites needed more imported items (in the conspicuous aping of the living standards and material comforts of the whites), they needed more money. They then turned to the International Monetary Fund for more loans. It is manifest that the IMF role in the African continent has raised many questions and worries. The United Nations briefing paper on Africa's external debt entitled "African Debt" considers the Fund's role in Africa as "one of the several causes of the continents debt burden."⁴ It noted the 'heavy net return flow of funds' from Africa since 1986;

Between 1980 and 1987, the IMF earned about \$3.3 billion as charges on loans to 36 African countries. In 1987 and 1988, a total of \$4.8 billion was due as principal repayment to the Fund from Africa. ⁵

Note must also be made that 'an accord' with the Fund is a precondition for any form of financial assistance. The IMF insists on the implementation of a set of conditionalities dictated by it.

In this way, its macro-economic adjustment programmes have been forced on 'unwilling' leadership in Africa ... It imposes on the Third World its defective economic nostrums of 'structural adjustment'.⁶

The International Monetary Fund required and still requires most African countries to obey its dictates on how to run their economies and usually it meant a reduction in imported consumer items and a host of other conditions that make life intolerable for the citizenry and tend to delegitimize and destabilize African regimes.

Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had described the IMF as neo-colonial and warned against the Fund; however, Tanzania needed money and he could not reach any agreement with the aid donors without accepting IMF conditionalities.

Being in dire need of the promised fund totalling \$800 million, the country (Tanzania) signed the IMF pact apparently to have money rather than implement the policies. ⁷

Zaire is another country in Africa that is heavily indebted to IMF and "the leading rescheduling sovereign debtor in Africa."⁸

Cote d'Ivoire had to enter into a "multi-year" rescheduling agreement with the London and Paris Clubs but "still cannot find sufficient funds to pay due debts."⁹ The Bank and Fund have asked the government to make further cuts in government expenditure. The same request was made for Zaire and a host of other African countries. The problem the Bank has with President Houphouet

Boigny is that he is building a \$100 million Roman Catholic Basilica. The Bank wants realistic fiscal measures. Côte d'Ivoire has the highest per capital debt in the continent today.

In Central African Republic, the World Bank is requiring that there should be subsidy cuts in cotton production, also a reduction in the size of the civil service before the granting of a third year structural adjustment package. The President was promised

rescheduling of all 1989 maturities on concessional terms by the Paris Club without further negotiations if he signs a deal with the IMF. ¹⁰

Those people who opposed the measures were promptly arrested on orders of President Kolingba. Generally, African leaders feel threatened by the discussions on alternative policies to the economy.

Sierra Leone, after an uneventful and unsuccessful 'shopping' among the Gulf states for new money, entered into an agreement with the IMF in order to receive some money. President Momoh promised to implement some basic economic reforms but it is general knowledge that corruption is rife and a major problem.

An article in one of the Nigerian journals captioned its headline "Welcome, Father Christmas: World Bank gives multi-million dollar loans to development projects".¹¹ The article went further to state:

The World Bank has become the dominant benefactor of the Nigerian economy ... It is providing loans for a series of development projects scattered all over the country. Between now and 1991, the bank plans to part-finance a total of 24 projects in the country and provide loans totalling about \$2.43 billion ... World Bank's current commitment in Nigeria apart from the above loans is \$4.001 billion. ¹²

The World Bank representative in Nigeria, Mr. Tariq Hussein, explained that expenditure and subsidy cuts are central to policies of the IMF and World Bank for the simple reason that

if you as a country cannot pay your bills, you have to cut down your expenditures and that is the IMF Programme. ¹³

Of course, it is good to keep in mind that even though the above stated is fact, the other side of the coin is that it took Europe centuries to build and entrench its interests in Africa and they are only too happy to continue this type of dependency attachment and relationship.

Most Africans think of economic progress in terms of smoking factory chimneys, assembly lines that assemble trucks, cars or tractors. However economic progress means the growth of industry and economic development means industrialization. South Africa is the only country south of the Sahara that is industrially developed.¹⁴

Egypt has a few successful textile manufacturing industries amongst others; Libya and Nigeria have been able to develop her oil industry, refine crude oil and produce by-products. Libya has two asphalt plants, a lubricating oil plant and a gas industry.¹⁵ "The most ambitious plans concern the transformation of natural gas locally to produce methanol, ammonia and urea."¹⁶ Also a large iron and steel complex is being built.¹⁷ July 1979 saw the beginnings of an integrated iron and steel industry with the signing of an agreement with the Soviet Corporation Tiajpromexport, for the construction of a N1.2 billion blast furnace steel works at Ajaokuta, in Nigeria. The agreement covered the supply of machinery, the running of the plant for three years and the training of 1,500 Nigerians. Other steel mills were built at Katsina, Jos and Oshogbo; Nigeria spent and continues to spend a lot of money because of problems of political siting of some of these steel mills and mismanagement etc. Nigeria still has not been able to produce flat sheets.

The steel industry faces the problem of lack of linkages. Both rail and water transportation systems, which ought to be forerunners to this heavy industry, are not in place. What is worse the Itakpe iron ore, the raw material that made the Ajaokuta steel industry a wise investment, is yet to be exploited.¹⁸

Is this not incredulous? What benefits does this country derive from that massive investment as is without the necessary linkages in order to make the project really meaningful. It must be noted that the colonial government had asked Powell Duffrin from Scotland to come and investigate the deposits of coal and how it could be developed. At this time, haematite was discovered at Nsude, in Eastern Nigeria. (This mineral is used for making iron.) Powell Duffrin recommended that a steel industry should be established here and Onitsha, a river port not far from Nsude, would be utilized to enable the products to be distributed quickly. Obviously, tribal politics made the East lose out. In most other African countries, there are very few industries.

The facts are that today, Africa is the least developed continent. It contains twenty of the United Nations list of the thirty-one least developed countries.¹⁹ The GNP of Africa adds up to only 2.7 per cent of the world GNP. The average per capita income of about \$365 is the lowest in the world. The mortality rate is higher than any continent, 137 per 1,000. The unemployed account for 45 per cent of the population. There are one doctor to 26,000 people in the rural areas and one doctor to 672 people in the urban areas. Africa's population of 401 million in 1975 is estimated to reach 813 million by the year 2000.²⁰ Most Africans live in absolute poverty. Its rate

of population increase at 2.64 per cent is higher than other areas.²¹ Africa's population has already outpaced the growth of food²² and an estimated 70 million people are undernourished,²³ and there is danger of food shortages in many areas. It is concluded that:

Mass Poverty and Political Instability will continue to plague the black African nations... because of rising food shortages, deteriorating terms of trade, crippling external debt loads, and uncontrollably high inflation rates ... The World Bank estimates that economic growth will not keep pace with population growth, and it predicts a 1% annual decline in real output per person during the 1980's.²⁴

Africa also has the highest number of refugees in the world. Less than 5 per cent of the rural population have access to fresh piped water;²⁵ the availability of public services to support the increasing urban population is almost non-existent or does not meet up to expectations. City people require clinics, schools, proper houses, clean water, lighted streets, cheap public transportation and a host of other improvements which are expensive. The problem is so great and many Africans are demanding these basic conveniences which they regard as due to them. African nations are now pre-occupied with such basic tasks as providing enough food for the people to eat, amongst others. Azikiwe thought of 'economic determinism', where Africans would begin to manufacture locally and build a self-reliant economy. But the formulation of plans do not tend to detract from the path postulated by Azikiwe. However, the implementation and strategies are altogether another matter.

Table 1 below is a statistical compilation of comparative resources for Africa for 1982, and data for developed countries. The following are explanations for terms used:²⁶

The Gross National Product: The economy's total output of goods and services, valued at current market prices paid by the ultimate consumer.

Military: National military expenditures are current and capital expenditures to meet the needs of the armed forces, etc.

It should be stated here that the GNP is not a good index for comparative analysis between the developed and the developing countries. The reason is that resources are well monetized in the former and not in the later. (Many resources do not pass through the market channel, therefore their GNP will be very low.) A better tool would have been to use the GDP for developing countries. However, the other data is suffice for our purposes. Table II shows the country rank on a per capita basis for indicators of economic

and social development. Note that health indicates expenditure by governments for medical care and other health services; infant mortality rates are the death rates of infants under per 1,000 live births and life expectancy is the average number of years of life expected at birth.

The data indicates that the percentage of the population living in the urban area increases with development. The density of population is low in Africa as in most developing countries, because these countries are mainly agricultural where they need a lot of land.

The rate of illiteracy, though rising, shows that the percentage is still low for Africa. The rate of population per physician is still quite high for Africa and very low for developing countries.

Public expenditure per capita is very low for Africa, maximum being \$102 in Gabon — a sign of poverty, and \$590 for the United States, which means that government provides a lot of health and social services, etc.

Infant mortality is also very high; in Nigeria it is 130 per 1,000 infants. In Burkina Faso it is 204, the highest in Africa while in the United States, it is 11 to 1,000 infants.

Finally, life expectancy is high in developed countries, America rating 74 years on the average. In Africa, the life expectancy is low, close to 50 years. This shows that health facilities are still very poor.

The data also records that a high percentage of the population do not have safe water facilities.

Table III are data of specifically, the United States and Canada, for comparative purposes to Table II.

Table 1
COMPARATIVE RESOURCES
1982

	Population				Area % Arable ¹	Density ²	GDP				PUBLIC EXPENDITURES				HUMAN RESOURCES			
	1,000		sq km				Million US\$	% of GNP	Military	Arms Imports Million US\$	Int. Peace- keeping ³ Million US\$	Education Million US\$	Health Million US\$	Foreign Economic Aid Given Million US\$	Armed Forces	Phys. Cians	Teachers	
	1,000	%	1,000	%														Arms Imports Million US\$
AFRICA	451,791	30	28,995	6	16	374,508	14.217	1.8	6,220	457	16,296	3,641	717	1,156	517	735		
Sub-Saharan Africa ⁵	371,165	25	23,021	6	16	192,905	6.201	3.2	1,800	235	8,310	1,996	59	872	281	1,688		
Other Africa ⁶	82,632	51	5,974	6	14	181,603	8,016	4.4	4,330	222	7,986	1,645	179	484	316	557		
Algeria	20,056	52	2,382	3	8	45,345	184	2.0	1,100	0.2	2,110	526	178	168	65	152		
Angola	7,365	28	1,247	3	6	10,381	1,038	9.9	430	0.02	575	114	3	38	5	34		
Benin	3,666	39	112	16	33	1,216	39	2.2	30	0.02	6	18	3	0.02	2	14		
Burkina Faso	968	16	600	2	2	853	39	4.4	0	0.05	68	23	3	3	1	7		
Burundi	6,414	8	274	9	23	1,354	39	2.9	0	0.02	41	15	4	1	1	5		
Cameroon	4,424	7	38	47	158	1,215	51	4.2	30	0.02	31	8	8	5	1	6		
Kenya	9,015	42	475	19	7	1,533	85	1.2	31	14.4	93.3	4.1	7	2	6	18		
Sen. African Rep	2,449	41	623	3	4	704	17	2.2	0	0.12	31	3	2	2	1	5		
Chad	4,779	22	1,264	2	4	358	14	3.9	0	0.02	31	3	3	3	1	5		
Congo	1,644	48	342	2	5	2,336	117	5.0	0	0.02	140	61	61	9	3	6		
Equatorial Guinea	262	60	28	8	9				10	0.01				2		1		
Ethiopia	30,569	15	1,222	11	25	4,846	411	8.8	290	0.07	182	65	7	250	4	55		
Gabon	880	41	268	2	3	3,300	82	2.5	70	0.08	14	10	2	2	3	3		
Gambia	676	21	11	14	81	143			0	0.04	14	6	1	1	3	3		
Ghana	12,943	40	228	12	54	4,160	25	6	10	0.76	100	26	15	17	85	17		
Guinea	5,295	22	246	6	21	1,271	70	4.1	5	0.13	25	10	10	10	1	12		
Ivory Coast	8,324	42	322	12	38	8,217	100	2.0	20	0.07	432	104	5	5	6	45		
Kenya	17,835	16	563	4	30	6,960	299	4.3	70	0.04	460	182	17	23	152	23		
Lesotho	424	6	11	30	47	712			0	0.01	21	7	1	1	7	7		
Liberia	2,024	36	111	4	18	940	41	4.1	0	0.02	61	28	5	5	2	10		
Libya	3,336	64	1,792	1	2	27,120	2,021	8.1	2,900	734	1,006	353	43	65	52	35		
Madagascar	9,130	21	547	5	16	2,985	65	2.8	20	0.02	62	26	21	21	9	25		
Mali	6,436	12	119	20	54	1,359	28	2.1	0	0.03	35	19	5	5	1	16		
Mali	7,229	19	1,263	2	6	1,225	35	2.9	10	0.02	51	11	11	5	3	12		
Mauritania	1,561	35	1,031	0.2	2	808	80	9.5	0	0.02	34	10	1	8	1	3		
Mauritius	764	43	2	59	492	1,225	3	2	0	0.04	58	25	1	6	10	10		
Morocco	22,230	42	447	19	30	17,575	1,544	8	270	0.10	1,258	193	141	13	114	114		
Mozambique	12,702	13	602	4	16	4,653	162	3.8	130	0.02	30	6	22	4	23	23		
Namibia	1,030	53	824	1	1	1,999												
Nigeria	5,990	38	1,297	3	5	1,775	18	9	0	0.02	77	19	2	2	1	8		
Niger	82,399	28	624	37	60	77,217	1,807	2.8	230	704	3,085	463	85	85	597	597		
Rwanda	5,547	5	28	41	214	1,426	26	18	0	0.04	67	30	1	5	5	5		
Senegal	6,138	42	148	27	31	2,923	61	2.1	8	0.04	138	30	1	10	5	16		

Table 1 (Cont'd.)

.Denmark	5,119	63	42	119	63,138	1,614	2.6	210	4	4,357	3,768	415	30	12.8	57	
.France	54,432	73	547	34	627,306	25,229	4.2	100	12	25,177	40,146	4,034	577	113.0	503	
.Germany West	61,638	94	249	34	757,085	25,544	3.4	540	20	38,544	49,210	3,152	490	142.9	508	
.Greece	9,812	70	152	74	40,888	2,750	6.7	410	1	1,537	1,635	-	188	24.7	71	
.Iceland	233	89	100	1	2,829	-	-	0	680	0	124	190	-	5	3	
.Italy	56,590	72	301	41	382,230	10,167	2.7	150	9	23,372	22,928	811	517	202.9	603	
.Luxembourg	365	78	3	25	122	5,206	51	1.0	0	124	356	49	1	6	3	
.Netherlands	14,310	88	37	23	387	154,275	5,054	3.3	560	3	11,925	10,413	1,472	106	28.0	116
.Norway	4,116	71	324	2	13	58,844	1,841	3.1	290	2	3,813	3,825	559	41	8.6	46
.Portugal	9,970	30	92	38	108	24,718	900	3.6	80	103	1,162	1,038	89	21.7	104	
.Turkey	48,105	46	781	35	62	63,148	3,242	5.1	450	220	636	1,389	768	30.3	299	
.United Kingdom	96,004	76	245	38	229	536,725	27,310	5.1	500	53	29,426	20,446	334	94.3	547	
ALL NATO	587,486	74	22,227	14	26	6,156,257	310,867	5.0	4,300	236	330,459	321,082	22,141	5,535	1,215.1	5,587
(Inc. US and Canada)																
Warsaw Pact	380,466	63	23,392	12	16	2,043,560	187,020	0.0	1,905	8	98,320	66,920	2,860	4,819	1,307.1	3,317
.Bulgaria	8,918	85	111	37	80	48,030	1,660	3.6	110	037	2,190	1,750	148	23.1	60	
.Czechoslovakia	15,369	74	128	40	120	85,140	3,460	4.1	250	408	3,900	4,050	196	44.6	101	
.Germany East	16,720	77	108	46	153	117,270	5,130	4.4	450	623	4,970	5,810	166	36.4	101	
.Hungary	10,702	54	18	54	116	55,420	1,340	2.4	70	077	2,760	1,680	106	28.1	88	
.Poland	36,227	58	313	47	116	145,610	4,370	3.0	320	1	4,860	6,070	317	67.0	230	
.Romania	22,478	49	228	44	94	71,080	1,060	1.5	20	049	1,850	1,550	181	36.7	158	
.USSR	270,042	64	22,402	10	12	1,363,000	170,000	10.9	645	0	77,700	40,000	2,327	3,705	1,071.2	2,570

• Developed country

• Other Africa

- none or negligible

- not available

1 Includes permanent cropland and under temporary crops and land temporarily fallow

2 Population per square kilometer of surface area

3 Below agricultural potential, these have been relatively small. They are listed in fractions of millions of dollars in order to show the minimum number of national contributors. National totals are rounded to millions. If they are \$1 million or higher

4 Egypt is shown with the political grouping of Middle East states rather than in Africa

5 Not including South Africa, which is included with "Other Africa"

6 Not including Egypt (see note 4)

Source: Ruth Sward, *World Military and Social Expenditure 1965*, p. 27

TABLE II
RANKING OF COUNTRIES, MILITARY AND SOCIAL INDICATORS
1982

	MILITARY					GNP										EDUCATION						
	Public Expenditure per Capita	Public Expenditure per Labour ¹	Public Expenditure per Sq. Km.	Public Expenditure per Sq. Km.	Strategic Stock ²	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita		
	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	US\$	Rank	
AFRICA	31	10 781	490	830	22	830	22	74	65	24	68	24	68	24	68	24	68	24	68	24	68	24
Sub-Saharan Africa	31	10 781	490	830	22	830	22	74	65	24	68	24	68	24	68	24	68	24	68	24	68	24
Other Africa	136	18 626	1 648	2 014	87	2 014	87	126	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110
Algeria	71	48	101	9 640	86	364	75	53	2 289	96	103	76	53	76	66	73	32	100	45			
Angola	37	140	31	27 105	83	620	87	88	1 610	66	78	103	76	66	65	110	18	124	20			
Benin	116	7	72	8 000	199	241	124	114	320	106	117	117	84	100	68	110	14	124	20			
Burkina Faso	77	30	90	26 007	130	68	84	87	860	70	79	83	54	66	83	34	44	88	50			
Burundi	110	6	87	6 794	120	142	136	120	210	128	8	120	470	136	12	103	22	11	11			
Cameroon	108	12	63	10 702	68	1 824	134	123	270	119	8	126	250	136	17	99	84	120	27			
Central African Rep.	113	10	83	10 226	114	181	101	80	120	101	21	107	82	70	90	124	15	89	52			
Chad	120	3	116	4 887	132	11	142	136	80	136	2	137	200	133	18	137	5	131	22			
Congo	81	71	49	13 200	100	342	87	87	1 428	94	80					128	14	88	82			
Equatorial Guinea						120																
Ethiopia	104	13	131	1 464	101	324	141	128	150	127	6	111	61	74	87	132	10	113	27			
Gabon	83	93	92	41 866	108	308	85	41	3 710	65	107					87	18	68	68			
Gambia	134	2	130	1 847	125	106	113	123	100	360	101	81	103	82	108	36						
Ghana	101	15	84	1 908	108	880	131	114	300	118	16	126	190	133	16	103	22	120	24			
Ivory Coast	110	11	37	10 000	107	311	108	36	920	84	48	88	75	103	42	112	18	114	34			
Kenya	88	17	42	17 888	90	813	99	107	300	93	20	86	84	34	88	96	84	84	84			
Lesotho	85	17	42	17 888	90	813	99	107	300	93	20	86	84	34	88	96	84	84	84			
Liberia	86	20	78	8 200	88	368	108	103	910	104	30	86	66	47	43	29	47	70	70			
Libya	104	26	64	22 827	76	1 284	61	31	8 162	30	282					83	28	88	68			
Madagascar	113	6	117	4 048	118	148	137	114	320	117	6	111	84	88	91	79	34	87	41			
Mali	124	4	99	9 800	110	237	131	130	310	132	8	127	183	112	38	115	18	113	34			
Mauritania	88	81	65	10 001	127	78	130	134	170	124	7	134	223	136	10	130	11	137	18			
Mauritius	138	3	129	3 000	72	1 888	81	83	101	164	131	23										
Morocco	62	70	60	10 800	84	3 484	81	74	1 916	74	89	39	33	42	84	124	18	88	68			
Nicaragua	104	13	87	7 388	111	203	109	104	370	129	8	101	79	109	28	88	20	121	22			
Nigeria	125	3	60	8 800	133	12	138	129	300	109	13	136	270	137	18	139	18	148	18			
Rwanda	83	22	48	12 044	97	1 850	102	82	860	83	36	78	83	74	57	118	18	113	20			
Senegal	111	18	84	6 100	103	311	101	104	480	89	22	120	140	130	37	110	18	126	23			
Sierra Leone	126	3	113	4 800	116	107	108	113	360	109	13	114	83	100	37	118	18	126	26			
Somalia	84	20	120	1 821	113	190	133	111	360	127	6	138	188	152	20	132	10	142	8			
South Africa																						
Sudan	81	90	20	20 818	81	8 483	83	48	2 710	67	104	70	44	76	88	96	54	60	60			
Tanzania	80	10	100	9 115	121	110	110	108	470	101	81	121	112	124	20	87	30	127	20			
Togo	86	10	78	6 125	90	348	113	124	270	100	14	100	81	86	48	108	21	78	70			
Zambia	114	8	100	8 500	86	560	110	111	360	100	18	87	73	64	98	128	14	113	28			
Zimbabwe																						
Tunisia	47	83	82	12 448	64	2 201	70	70	1 300	70	70	80	80	78	84	75	35	84	50			
Uganda	121	3	121	2 231	128	30	117	123	180	129	4	117	60	118	38	123	22	95	51			
Zaire	81	18	77	6 284	118	154	88	88	620	87	36	106	83	86	81	106	20	70	70			
Zimbabwe	30	56	90	6 825	78	1 168	81	88	820	83	72	78	82	107	71	103	23	78	70			

HEALTH										NUTRITION				WATER		
Public Expenditures per Capita		Population per Physician		Population per Hospital Bed		Infant Mortality Rate ⁵		Life Expectancy ⁶		Calories as % of Requirements ⁷		Protein Supply per Capita ⁷		% Population With Safe Water		
Rank	US\$	Rate	Number	Rank	Number	Rate	Rate	Rank	Years	Rate	%	Rate	Grams	Rank	%	
8		7.597		577		118		49		99		55		24		AFRICA
11		11.205		707		129		48		95		60		29		Sub-Saharan Africa
37		3.106		316		98		58		114		77		66		Other Africa
66	28	83	3,100	73	420	103	110	83	57	89	110	72	55	44	78	Algeria
75	18	118	15,580	42	350	123	142	135	43	90	100	114	50	97	32	Angola
102	5	120	18,880	114	890	133	149	108	44	112	83	118	48	114	25	Benin
68	24	163	8,100	73	420	79	79	103	50	78	106	54	76	56	45	Botswana
118	2	138	49,350	136	3,100	141	254	128	44	125	65	81	64	123	14	Burkina Faso
118	2	134	48,220	110	800	108	117	128	44	97	94	84	62	104	26	Burundi
102	5	113	13,780	88	379	95	101	158	48	112	83	108	54	83	50	Cameroon
112	3	128	23,380	99	645	123	145	125	45	123	95	121	42	115	18	Central African Rep.
128	1	141	110,400	128	1,300	128	143	138	42	134	77	91	58	104	26	Chad
57	37	91	8,600	56	310	115	124	108	48	98	111	128	42	122	23	Comoros
		127	23,800			122	137	117	47							Equatorial Guinea
118	2	140	68,620	134	2,670	128	143	140	41	113	80	84	73	126	13	Ethiopia
41	102	84	3,110	31	170	107	118	125	45	89	118	53	79	157	1	Gambia
91	9	106	8,950	119	930	140	193	138	42	112	83	95	57	115	18	Ghana
118	2	99	7,530	107	680	91	98	103	50	131	72	132	41	56	45	Ghana
		138	51,470	91	590	130	158	128	44	131	81	134	40	118	17	Guinea
87	12	116	15,550	118	913	114	122	117	47	99	115	95	57	123	14	Ivory Coast
88	10	102	7,600	91	580	77	77	87	58	122	88	108	54	151	25	Kenya
102	5	119	16,330	78	490	103	110	95	52	86	103	65	73	123	14	Lesotho
81	14	104	8,300	102	650	132	148	93	54	83	94	127	44	93	39	Liberia
39	106	36	640	43	210	89	93	83	57	2	115	29	98	20	97	Libya
95	7	109	9,880	81	810	71	72	118	48	98	111	97	57	109	23	Madagascar
112	3	137	51,310	84	530	127	142	117	47	87	96	74	65	81	51	Mali
118	2	128	26,180	132	2,180	133	149	135	43	136	74	112	52	109	6	Mali
95	8	114	14,340	133	2,810	120	132	128	44	103	75	144	71	109	23	Mauritania
87	25	84	1,730	57	320	48	54	54	66	40	124	82	63	26	95	Mauritius
91	9	121	18,685	114	890	94	100	43	57	70	109	70	88	74	53	Mozambique
128	1	133	33,850	81	910	100	108	108	48	132	80	137	32	128	7	Mozambique
		80	5,720			110	119	98	52	97	96	48	83			Namibia
112	3	135	48,850	126	1,540	123	140	128	44	79	105	68	72	96	33	Niger
88	6	108	9,580	124	1,250	119	130	156	44	82	104	103	55	89	42	Nigeria
118	2	129	29,030	108	870	98	113	117	47	116	91	108	54	68	59	Rwanda
102	5	112	13,240	118	900	126	141	128	44	81	99	71	87	88	43	Senegal
106	4	123	18,050	112	870	139	190	117	47	127	84	130	42	113	21	Sierra Leone
118	2	122	17,970	99	840	131	148	135	43	120	90	78	85	103	27	Somalia
87	12	88	1,800	37	180	85	92	74	81	56	117	58	76	89		South Africa
128	1	105	8,420	123	1,110	109	118	108	48	91	99	76	85	121	42	Sudan
75	16	101	7,475	68	370	118	124	108	48	70	109	75	85	121	15	Tanzania
102	5	132	32,110	116	900	81	84	95	52	82	104	129	42			Togo
95	7	124	18,980	91	590	88	103	108	48	108	94	120	87	99	31	Togo
58	33	86	3,700	78	480	88	93	76	80	54	115	54	74	72	57	Tunisia
128	1	125	21,440	103	660	88	94	92	54	94	97	122	47	119	18	Uganda
118	2	115	14,700	62	350	101	108	108	48	84	97	108	33	115	18	Zaire
78	20	98	7,250	54	290	95	101	100	51	113	92	83	58	84	46	Zambia
71	20	95	6,550	62	350	73	70	87	56	120	90	108	54			Zimbabwe

- Developed country
- Other Area
- none or negligible
- ... not available
- *Soldier: represents all members of the armed forces.
- 1. Represents average of ranks for GNP per capita, education, and health.
- 2. Ages 5 - 19.
- 3. Represents % of adult population (over 15) able to read and write.
- 4. Deaths under one year per 1,000 live births.
- 5. Expectation of life at birth.
- 6. Represents supply of food available per day per capita, in calories, and grams of protein.
- 7. Egypt is now in the political grouping of Middle East rather than in Africa.
- 8.

RANK shows the standing of the country among those in the table. The rank order number is repeated if more than one country has the same figure.

National Integration

This is a serious political problem and very basic to the development of Africa. National integration has been a problem in the past, it is still a problem and concern today and will continue to be a major concern in the years to come. Coleman and Roseburg point out that:

the problems of integration are the major issues and obstacles in the task of nation building, which is itself the primary occupation of the leadership (and elites) of the new states. ²⁷

The fear of national disintegration is still a basic concern of most African leaders and intelligentsia that there is a continuous call for those things that will bring unity. Until this problem is solved, sectionalism, civil disturbances and civil wars will plague the countries. From some of the works of authors on political integration or nation building in the developing countries,²⁸ the problem of national integration in Africa is conceptualized as that of essentially getting the people of various socio-cultural and discrete linguistic groups to identify more with and owe greater loyalty to a central government, show willingness to remain in the system, and not threaten or make bid to take the 'exit' option.

Nation building means building not only a new political structure but a new society and a new economy. The feeling of national unity had to be built from scratch in African countries composed of many different peoples arbitrarily pulled together. Common opposition to European rule rallied Africans from various ethnic groupings in order to form a successful force and opposition against the alien rule.

The Charter of African Unity signed by thirty African heads of states at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, embraced African unity as a goal, but at the same time declared African states independent of one another and free to do as they pleased.²⁹ The unity that does exist depends wholly on the voluntary co-operation of more than the fifty individual African leaders and their governments, parties and people. Most African leaders have difficulty holding their own countries against the divisive forces of race, language, religion, region and tribe. The real test of the Pan-African ideals today is whether the spirit of unity can settle such deeply felt and troublesome disputes as the border war between Ethiopia and Somalia; the civil war in Sudan; the Eritrea war and opposition to Ethiopia; until recently, the civil war in Chad; the occupation by

Libya of the mineral rich northern strip of Chad; the internal ethnic clashes in Rwanda; guerilla activities against the Angolan government; the war between the Polisario and Morocco; the ethnic violence between the blacks in Senegal and Mauritanian Moors and South Africa's dominance and military incursions and threats to other Southern African countries.

Azikiwe saw integration as a *must* in order that Africans and the continent will be protected against external threats. Also, integration was necessary "in order to improve the quality of life of the people including the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms under the law."³⁰ Also for him, integration, "can also set an example of how to restore the dignity of man."³¹ His crusade and need for integration was the need to fight the forces against the economic and political domination of Africa. He finally said: "I submit that people who are strangers to one another cannot experience mental emancipation much more economic emancipation."³²

It was a prophetic foresight for unity is very much desired in order to create conditions of peace, whereby Azikiwe's dreams would have had much more meaning, however, Africa has been quite a violent continent since the second world war. Statistical data indicates that approximately 40 of the 130 wars since World War II has been fought in Africa. Over 30 of the African countries were involved.³³ Almost all of the wars were civil wars, or fought for religious, tribal or similar reasons, or wars fought across borders. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the African countries spend a total of about \$16,000 million a year on military activities. (This obviously does not include the arms purchase). The world figure is \$500,000 million.³⁴ It is estimated that "Africa spends more on the military than social services — almost twice as much on arms as on education and six times more on arms than on health."³⁵ According to Ruth Leger Sivard, an American expert on world military and social expenditures, the average developing country spent \$18 per capita on education, \$7 per capita on health, and \$26 per capita on the military, out of a GNP of about \$480 per capita. The unstable character of African political life reflects complexities of a society in change. The mass of people in Africa who understood independence to mean that poverty would be eliminated became frustrated as the poverty took new dimensions.

Military intervention was predictable because the prerequisites which the army could give for their reason for intervening were present. Usually they were:

- (a) The shortcomings of the civilian regime;
- (b) Intensive inter-elite and inter-ethnic rivalry and strife;
- (c) Gross electoral frauds;
- (d) Government inefficiency;
- (e) Corruption; and
- (f) Many other unjust acts.

This situation is aptly summarised by Lt. General Sani Abacha in a broadcast to the nation on the eve of the 1983 military coup when he stated thus:

Fellow countrymen and women .. You are all living witnesses to the grave economic predicament and uncertainty which an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation ... I am referring to the harsh, intolerable condition under which we are now living. Our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged. We have become a debtor and beggar nation. There is inadequacy of food at reasonable prices for our people, who are fed up with endless announcements of importation of food stuffs. Health services are in shambles as out hospitals are reduced to mere consulting clinics without drugs, water and equipment. Our educational system is deteriorating at alarming rate. Unemployment figures including the graduate have reached embarrassing and unacceptable proportion ... yet our leaders revelled in squandermania, corruption and indiscipline, continued to proliferate public appointments in complete disregard of our stark economic reality.

It is important at this point to examine the leadership and the party in Africa since independence.

Leadership and Party

After independence, most African countries inherited a party and leader of government who had fought the nationalist struggle for freedom. Usually, this leadership could be termed 'charismatic' because they appealed to a broad spectrum of the different cultural and linguistic groups enabling them to manipulate the diverse groups into transferring their political loyalties from parochial to central institutions. (Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah, Tanzania under Nyerere, Guinea under Sekou Touré are some examples).

According to Ake,³⁶ the underlying assumption of the theory is that the masses respect the charismatic leader in a way they do not respect the state. It is this respect for the magnetic personality of the leader that he seizes upon to stabilize the state until it wins its own legitimacy. This type of leadership that initially emerged after independence of most African nations, has been criticized. For

instance some scholars³⁷ point out that charisma does not provide for adequate type of leadership, but only of power. Leadership functions with the existence of structured power, that is institutionalized power "but since charism is

the very antithesis of structured power, it is not clear what charismatic leadership means."³⁸

Claude Ake stated that personal authority for enhancing the state should not be sought from one charismatic leader but from a multiplicity of sources like traditional leaders etc. This point is relevant because of the recognition of the fact of the multi-ethnic composition, cultural heterogeneity and the socio-political cleavages among the ethnic groups in Africa that militate against the emergence of a leader with wide appeal and authority.

There are other types of leadership which do not apply to Azikiwe alone. However, mention must be made of the rational-legal and traditional leadership. The form of authority of the traditional leadership is vested on the inherited or ascribed role of the ruler, e.g. The Sultan of Sokoto, Mosheshe of Swaziland, King Hassan of Morocco.

The rational-legal leadership authority is generally acquired on the basis of dearly known roles to be performed, often with limitations of what the leader can do or cannot do as legitimate, e.g. Tanzania under Mwinvi, Senegal under Diouf, Egypt under Mubarak, etc.

In most African countries, the same leader is both the head of state and leader of a single ruling party. In most matters his word becomes law. The power of the leader is based on his party organization or national army (Kenya, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Malawi, etc). The government, including the legislature, courts, police, etc. also became instruments of the party and its leaders. The party also usually controlled all other organizations such as the trade unions, student groups, women's clubs etc. They were party members too. Let us briefly examine the party systems in Africa.

Party Systems

Usually political parties function as intermediaries between the people and the government and as a mechanism for integrating diverse groups within a state; however, they are not found in all political systems. Some governments are under military rule while a few are under royal regimes. In some countries in Africa, there are no political parties.

In those countries where political parties exist, they differ in ideology, number and types. Party systems are usually classified by the number of political parties that compete for the control of government and attempt to secure most of the popular votes in elections. Based on this criteria, a categorization of party systems are: one-party, the two-party and the multi-party system.

In some countries, only a single party, the official state party, is allowed to function while other parties are prohibited. This party system is usually not compatible with democratic government. The best example of this type of one-party state is the Soviet Union, however, in Africa, (Tanzania, Guinea under Sekou Touré, and Ivory Coast) the party tends to be less extreme. The leaders believe that with the participation of the masses of the people, ethnicity would be discouraged and national unity enhanced.

The one-party system has provided for political stability in Tanzania but it has not worked out in other countries, for example, in Ivory Coast under Houphouët Boigny, political stability has been maintained by operating a ruthless one-party police state. The result has been regional discontent and the trend towards multipartyism.³⁹ Hence, there are short-comings of the one-party as an integrating force; also there is always danger that its democratic forms can actually conceal authoritarian government, as Hitcher and Harbold observed:

The absence of an opposition (in a one-party state) confronts the dominant leaders with neither rival nor checks; all too easily they suffer the delusions of indispensability and the omniscience and drift into unqualified dictatorship.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the party and government tend to become indistinguishable. According to Weiner and La Palombara, where party and government are indistinguishable:

Loyalty to the nation is equated with loyalty to the party and disaffection from the party may mean disaffection both from the national state and from the political process itself. The difficulties of achieving any kind of integration beyond the tribal territory is enormously complicated by such a pattern.⁴¹

Zaire and Kenya fall into the above categorization. Usually, one-party systems arise out of a social milieu after a prolonged war such as a revolution like that of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union or the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

A two-party system is a form of democratic politics in which power is exercised by the two parties, each of which has a chance of winning control of the central government.⁴² The two-party system also has its merits and demerits. For its demerits, it may not

accurately reflect differing political views in the country and it has been noted that it limits voters to candidates of two parties. The two-party system could also encourage policy ambiguity because ambiguity may be "safe" strategy.⁴³

The merits of the two-party system outweigh the de-merits. It has the effect of offering the voter a choice between alternative governments; the parties also tend to be moderate — moderating political conflicts and rejecting attitudes of extremism. Morlan states that the two-party system defines issues for voters and also "they can temporarily blur certain issues that are too sharply divisive for the society to bear."⁴⁴ Given time, the issues could be worked out, not just ignored. Thomas and Stoerker also maintain that the two-party system is an important institution because it affords a high degree of stability.⁴⁵ Maybe, because of its integrative merits, Nigeria has deliberately adopted the two-party system for its third Republic.

A country has a multi-party system, where there exists three or more major political parties contesting to win control of the central government. The appeal of the multi-party system is that it reflects various shades of political opinions in a society. Nigeria during its First and Second Republics is a good example of a country that operated this system. However, in a country that is characterized by plurality of ethnic and linguistic groups, diverse social values and differences of religion and political cultures, the multi-party system has its limitations as an instrument of national integration.

First, governments in multi-party systems are often composed of coalition of parties, making it difficult to distinguish government and opposition. And if one or more members of the coalition withdraws, the friction that ensues creates political instability and insecurity amongst the diverse groups within the country. In Nigeria, the resultant situation was that the major ethnic groups supported the party whose base lay in their region because it was most likely that members of their ethnic group would protect their respective interests. Of course, the end result is subnationalism rather than loyalty to a common central government.

The array of partisan views and opinions also complicate public opinion on national issues. There are cases in multi-party systems where parties organize only in certain sections of the country and do not offer national programs. Nigeria's First Republic is a perfect example. According to Ferguson and McHenry,

the disadvantages of having many parties is great ... The multi-party system produces instability, confuses the electorate with a multitude of alternatives,

represents local groups and factions, and diffuses responsibility for action and inaction. It would make continued functioning of an electoral system (and integration of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic groups) virtually impossible.⁴⁶

It is because of the fear that multiple parties create multiple separatist tribal groups that people advocate the one-party or two-party system.⁴⁷ Developing pluralistic societies in search of national integration cannot afford to experience abrupt political changes and instability. The multi-party system has failed in Nigeria repeatedly. It is interesting to take note that in 1977, President Senghor of Senegal made an effort to reinvigorate the decaying single party system by re-introducing multi-party constitutionalism through deliberate planning. To achieve his goal, he allowed three parties;

one is to advocate liberal democratic policies, another to support social democratic or slightly left-of-center policies, and a third to put forward extreme left-wing Marxist-socialist policies.⁴⁸

President Senghor deliberately adopted the multi-party system and restricted the parties to designated ideologies as stated above. Nigeria under the military regime of President Babangida is also deliberately adopting the two-party system for the proposed Third Republic.

From the brief analysis of the three types of party systems, it can be concluded that the problems of integration and the effectiveness and workability of government and its programs in Africa would depend upon the willingness of the people and the fairplay of political leaders. They must find other

institutional arrangements that will encourage dialogue among the diverse ethnic groups, (b) unblock communication channels, (c) keep political and governmental leaders on their toes, (d) be more accountable and facilitate the articulation and aggregation of conflicting interests and in these ways create a sense of political unity out of ethnic diversity.⁴⁹

In most of the African countries, the party made all the important choices and decisions. Party officials in high government offices also managed the state's economy. The elite that managed these economies utilized the state to build their personal economic base. Andreski stated that:

... even a casual inquiry into the ownership of the more conscious buildings in any African town reveals that a large part of them are owned by ministers and presidents who few years ago were simple clerks or teachers. The members of parliament, civil servants and party functionaries possess less sumptuous properties but which nonetheless must have cost many times more than what they have received as salary since they took up their appointment.⁵⁰

Hence, the vicious struggle to control the state because it gave authority of government decisions and access to 'big time money' through corruption, or what Fela Ransome-Kuti calls 'authority stealing'. Multinational corporations also bribed these officials to protect their interests. The power of the political elite makes it difficult and inhibits the growth of a legitimate business class by making it harder for them to compete for talent. In fact, business success is dependent upon political favours that corruption is the order of the day. This state of affairs encouraged political instability as the elites struggled for the 'lucrative' offices and disrupted economic development. The army, being the only organized group capable of challenging the party and leadership, made its entry.

Like the party, the army is a single organization directing many sides of national activity through government. Like the party, the army sees itself as the 'torchbearer' of a nation's destiny. However, most military regimes in Africa have been ineffective in dealing with the problem of corruption, nepotism, ethnic domination and inefficiency. Nweke noted that:

when a top Nigerian army officer warned his men 'to end corrupt practices including illegal sales of government property,' it was a pointer to the sad fact that there is little to choose between discredited civilian politicians and their military successors... 51

A London newspaper labelled Major-General Momoh as a corrupt tyrant. For his personal wealth, it states:

Vast. The whole government works on a web of corruption, founded on freemasonry. Anyone who wants to get anywhere in Sierra-Leone is a mason, and Momoh is a high ranker. Has fingers in lots of business pies. 52

The paper went further to state that Daniel Arap Moi was 'milking millions' in Kenya. It says:

Personal wealth: Enormous. Has milked his poverty stricken country dry. Rumoured to have salted away millions. Has been taking over business all over Kenya. 53

Further, the Inspector-General's report of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) stated that his findings were "astounding". He said that the African countries showed "inadequate accounting, financial mismanagement and unauthorized spending".⁵⁴ AID promised to tighten supervision of the projects it is funding.⁵⁵ It must be mentioned that it is recognized that corruption is a universal phenomena however the point is the extent of its practice in Africa, that is the state being used as an instrument for capital accumulation — the looting of the public treasury.

It is not our intention to discuss the military regimes in Africa here as it has been exhaustively dealt with by several author's⁵⁶ and Azikiwe's prescription for transitional government from military to civilian has been dealt with in Chapter 17, however, suffice it to say that Azikiwe made a number of propositions for a diarchy such as

a civilian-based parliamentary democracy invigilated by the heads of the armed and security forces.⁵⁷

He went further to propose that the armed forces would have the veto power for five years in order to ensure that democratic principles and fundamental human rights were ensured. This proposition seems to be what Nigeria is adopting at present, however, diarchy does not militate against arbitrary military dictatorship nor will it guarantee a civilian regime that would be democratic. As Andreski states:

innumerable examples show from ancient Rome to contemporary Latin America, military dictatorships need not constitute any solution... is one of the least forms of government and not in the least immune to such diseases as corruption and internal strife. Military dictatorships... offers much less hope than the civilian because the army usually is the greatest glutton to wealth and one tank costs more than limousines for a dozen parasitic politicians.⁵⁸

The military are influenced by the same values of the political community, and "it is difficult to find, in the army intervention in tropical Africa of any wish to bring the fundamental social changes in the structure of power within the state".⁵⁹ Hence, structural transformation of the socio-economic structures is necessary in order to make corruption less pervasive. The leaders must be able to mobilise the various countries for the social transformation and stop looking forward or depending on foreign aid and capital imports. This 'dependency' again contributes to African poverty and neo-colonial relations.

African leaders generally were desirable to receive their independence and political stability. However, they disagreed widely over the meaning of independence; for example, Sekou Touré believed that continued close ties to France or any foreign power would compromise his revolutionary ideals, while Leopold Senghor and Felix Houphouët-Boigny were very eager to continue and did continue very close co-operation with France after independence. Some military regimes today maintain very close ties with the former colonies. In internal matters, most African leaders usually want to remain in control. Some like Nkrumah were willing to rely on authoritarian methods, others like Nyerere, less willing.

Most of the countries today are under authoritarian military regimes. Africa has seen tyrants like Idi Amin of Uganda; Megalomaniac 'comical' rulers like Emperor Bokassa who took loans and used almost all the country's resources in order to crown himself in 'Napoleonic' fashion — Emperor, jewelled crowns, gold throne, palace and a sumptuous feast to follow, in the midst of abject poverty.

Most African countries are heavily indebted to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Paris Club, London Club, Other Banks etc. It would be assumed that their priorities of spending and projects would be strict and curtailed to absolute necessities. How would one interpret this title and article in one of the Nigerian dailies:

World's largest Cathedral ready for Use". "... the cathedral, costing altogether \$160 million or N1.5 billion was built as a replica of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Italy. Sited in the birthplace of Côte d'Ivoire President, Houphouët Boigny, it took about three and half years to complete."⁶⁰

It is obvious that the development objectives and priorities of the leader or leadership here are not in consonance with the poor masses. It would, perhaps, be advisable, that while African States make their choices, they direct their efforts towards projects that would benefit these masses not merely the erection of Churches and Mosques.

How can one explain the fact that part of the political elite and leadership in Africa connive actively with foreign agents and multinationals in overthrowing their governments thereby sustaining the political and economic instability perpetuated by the foreign agents in Africa? For example, Richard Mahoney in his book *J.F.K.: Ordeal in Africa*, stated that one of Nkrumah's ministers whom Nkrumah has sent to represent Ghana in business with the World Bank in Washington, D.C. held "a midnight meeting" with Walt Rustow, the then U.S. Assistant National Security Adviser. Aware that Nkrumah would be visiting the United States, he asked Rustow to brief President Kennedy and ask him to express concern because of 'Ghana's Communist ties'. The Ghanaian Minister also followed up when he returned to Ghana by going to see the American Ambassador in order to seek U.S. support for the overthrow of Nkrumah. Mahoney adds that the Minister

proved to have little aptitude for intrigue. He seemed to want the Americans to do the work for him, and spent as much time plotting with the CIA Station Chief in Accra as he did with other Ghanaian conspirators. ⁶¹

Of course, this Ghanaian Minister is an epitome of foolishness; he was not mentally, politically or socially emancipated. He was a let-down to Ghana and the whole of Africa — imagine denouncing his President as a Communist sympathizer to a foreign power. Without vision, foresight, and ideals, how much better has Ghana fared since the overthrow of Nkrumah?

The ordinary citizens have little say about government policy, which is made by a handful of top leaders and passed down to be put into action by local officials. Opposition, (either spontaneous or organized) to leaders is prohibited in most African countries, and in many, public criticism of government policy is suppressed. Individual rights are not 'sacred', and may at any time be overridden if the government feels its rule is threatened. This lack of constitutional democracy and individual liberty is very grave and of great concern to many. Constitutional democracy needs a constitution written in beliefs as well as in words. It requires a sense of national loyalty greater than divisions of religion, race etc. Above all, it requires respect for the rule of laws not 'hero worship', and the rejection of violence as a way to solve national problems. These conditions are not present in Africa today. It is a challenge to African leadership.

Conclusion

There exists in Africa today massive poverty in a very wealthy continent. Its natural resources are exploited and squandered in favour of foreign entrepreneurs. There is heavy external indebtedness and all the ills of neo-colonies. Its large peasant population has not been turned to an asset as in China, instead it is a liability. There is general mass discontent.

Azikiwe postulated his ideological canons and reorientation for the emancipation of Africa from all the problems stated above, requiring foremost the mental emancipation in order that the African may be reoriented from the colonial mentality of 'inferiority' and suppression and colonial dependence. "... for mental slavery is worse than physical slavery".⁶² It follows that the leadership must articulate a goal, an ideology that gives direction and meaning to the African revolution. The mental emancipation is predicated on direction and intentions. Some African countries, (e.g. Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea under Touré, Ghana under Nkrumah), despite difficulties had made attempts at some type of structural transformation. However, they found the implementation hampered by not only the colonial inheritance but other external factors outside their control. However, they have directions and goals that the citizenry believe in, that makes their belonging meaningful.

Azikiwe envisioned the political resurgence of Africa when the renescent African had cultivated, experienced and realized his four canons in order "... to appreciate his manifest destiny in the world."⁶³ Obviously, by logical deduction, the success of renescent Africa would depend upon an articulate leadership and elite — this leadership totally failed in Africa. Azikiwe made further pronouncements on these problems and did say that:

it is obvious that our people will cease to harbour grievances about political iniquities, social inequality and economic insecurity when they have a country dedicated to the effective amelioration of social inequalities...⁶⁴

He believed that a team of dedicated Nigerian (Africans)

with a sense of mission, patriotic vision and inspired imagination assume the reins of government, they cannot fail to read the handwriting on the wall.⁶⁵

Hence, the leadership is yet to emerge; a leadership that is dedicated, that thinks and acts on what is right for Africa, a leadership that would cultivate unity, a leadership whose priority is clearly the people's welfare, a leadership that does not sell his country to foreign concerns, a leadership that is patriotic. In his book,

Economic Reconstruction for Nigeria,⁶⁶ Azikiwe postulated the thesis that political independence without economic independence was useless, both should be sought, the political power being the foundation on which economic independence would be sought.

Azikiwe's dreams were great but the impediments greater, as the struggle for real emancipation is yet to be taken seriously. And it starts with a re-orientation of the mind to realize the ills and disorder, and need, so that with planning, a restructuring of the system may occur. And the envisaged renaissance Africa will emerge, a new man with a new outlook – ready to work in union to build the great Africa that Azikiwe envisioned.

Azikiwe's visions has helped to inspire Africans, that Africa may still become its own. However, with the problems of integration, of national unity, of ideology, of the loss of leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Julius Nyerere, it would seem that the dream just exists. The environment of corruption and intense conflicts do not help either for dreams to be realized. Finally, despite the fact and reality that the dream still exists, for most, time is running out. These dreams have to be practicalized.

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 14. John Daveport, "The Only Industrial Complex South of Milan: The Controversy over South Africa's Racial Policies Has Obscured the Achievements of its Dynamic Economy", *Fortune*, Vol. 74, No. 7, December, 1966, p. 180.
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20

CONCLUSION

Realities and Illusions of the African Revolution

Michael S. O. Olisa

The preceding chapters of this book have performed the most important functions and objectives which should be basically expected from this book. They have, for example, (i) appraised the context and environment of Azikiwe's dreams of the African revolution (ii) examined the outstanding events and situations which affected the dreams — positively or negatively — during the five decades of Azikiwe's involvement in public affairs, (iii) critically evaluated Azikiwe's relentless efforts to concretise the dream through direct involvement in government and politics of Nigeria and (iv) surveyed the ups and downs in Azikiwe's heroic effort to sustain the intellectual content of his dreams of the African revolution. In consideration of what the reading public would expect from a book of this nature, it is now timely to conduct an assessment of what history could consider the realities and illusions of the grand dream of the New Africa which would emerge as the reward of the labours of Renascent Africans.

But was such specialisation possible at the time? Could one be a talker and not a doer in those days without losing credibility?

Evaluation of whether the dreams of the African revolution turned illusions or became realities is fraught with a few difficulties which must be identified and appreciated from the start. First, there is the fact that there were inherent advantages and disadvantages because Azikiwe was both a writer on and a practitioner of public affairs, a combination that was bound to create conflicting situations during his active involvement in politics and government. Second, there were illusions and realities arising from efforts to sustain the intellectual logic of his dreams in the face of objective favourable and unfavourable situations. Third, illusions or realities must be identified in the light of numerous events and situations which arose along the way throughout the five decades of his active involvement in government and politics. These will be borne in mind and applied in the evaluative overview of the dreams of the African Revolution.

Personal Illusions and Realities: The Philosopher's Quest for Kingship

One of the speculative questions about Azikiwe's political career is what could have been his achievement and historical stature if he had restricted himself to writing prolifically, as he has done, on public affairs without bothering to get involved in nationalism and politics. This specialisation would have landed him on the status of Plato, and such historical giants as Karl Marx and Walter Bagehot. Some argue that that option would have sustained his initial charisma longer, that he would have written a lot more than the much he wrote, that his political ideas would not have met the type of challenge raised against them especially by colleagues who became embittered about him without fully understanding him and that he would be much less blamed for failures of Africans to achieve fully the African revolution.

It would however have been an extraordinary exception for Azikiwe to embark on such specialisation during an era when scholar-statesmen were the common situation in Africa. Almost all heads of African states began and ended as writer-statesmen: i.e. nationalist writers on the colonial situation and ended up being the leaders of their countries governments facing the challenge of putting into action the nation-building ideas which they advocated in their writings. The philosopher-statesman role combination worked out well with several, prominent examples being Nkrumah, Nyerere, Senghor, Nasser and to a lesser extent, Kenneth Kaunda. Azikiwe was not as fortunate as these leaders because he did not, on

independence, become the executive head of his country, a position which would have enabled him to test the numerous ideas which he detailed in his written works.

Perhaps the most serious problem inherent in this combination of intellectual and practical politics is that it led Azikiwe, on several occasions, to take positions and policy actions which contradicted or reflected unfavourably on his known intellectual ideas on the issues involved. A case in point is his rejection of militant nationalism which the Zikist Movement saw as the most effective strategy for achieving the type of Nigeria in which Azikiwe's New Africa could be easily realized. It is quite possible that if Nigeria's political independence had emerged out of the type of crisis which ushered Nkrumah into power, Azikiwe could have emerged as a national populist leader even before the emergence of the powerful societal forces — ethnicity, regionalism, corruption, materialism, religion etc — which circumscribed his charisma and frustrated his chances of becoming Nigeria's executive head of state through the liberal democratic process which formed the corner-stone of his political philosophy.

His advocacy of militant nationalism was spelt out boldly in several pages of *Renasant Africa* and, above all, in the speech 'Before Us Lies the Open Grave', which he delivered to his National Council of Nigeria and Camerouns at the peak of colonial nationalism.¹ It is quite possible that he believed that the British Colonial authorities, both on the spot in Nigeria and in the colonial office in London, were so rooted in the principles of debate, natural law and justice that their reactions would not create occasions for bloody struggle, repression and possible compromise. He probably attached more importance to the non-violence tactics of Ghandi and the legalistic appeals which worked out well in the Indian nationalism and independence. These calculations may account for Azikiwe's frequent cablegrams to the Colonial Office in London and to prominent world leaders, frequent publicised statements in the media, and the historic but not so successful NCNC delegation to London to put the nationalist case directly before the British Government and the British public. In other words, he sought to apply the liberal democratic principles (fair hearing, debate, rule of law etc) to the nationalist movement.

Fortunately, for the short-term nationalist objectives, but unfortunately for Azikiwe's long-term future political aspirations, his liberal democratic methods received liberal democratic responses

from the colonial authorities. The NCNC delegation of 1947 was told by the colonial office that it was not representative of the large number of Nigerian peoples and that the NCNC should broaden its base in order to demonstrate solidarity of the peoples of Nigeria. If the strategy of "positive action" advocated initially by Azikiwe himself and re-echoed by the Zikist Movement, had been adopted in the nationalist response to the 1946 Richard's Constitution, most probably the Gold Coast scenario of 1947 would have been re-enacted in Nigeria. The Colonial Office would have refrained from continued military response and massive bloodshed, and whatever constitutional conference emerging from the confrontation would have been tilted in favour of the nationalist movement.

More significant still on this point, the NCNC was by the late 1940's the largest organised nationalist movement in the country, and its militant wing the Zikist Movement, was representative of much of the whole country in its membership.² If their strategy of country-wide showdown with the colonial administration had been adopted, the chances were that blood would be shed, Azikiwe would probably be imprisoned and the Colonial Office would have been forced to institute high-powered inquiry that would most probably come out with proposals for constitutional reform and ultimate concessions to the nationalist movements.

By the late 1940's too, the Action Group (founded as a party in 1951) and the Northern Peoples Congress (founded as a party in the same 1951), two organisations that became rivals of the NCNC from the early 1950's, were not yet inaugurated and were not in the forefront of the nationalist movement. They were still at the stage of what Hodgkin described as tribal associations which later on metamorphosed into political parties with brightening prospects of self-government;³ the Action Group began as *Egbe-Omo Oduduwa* just as the Northern Peoples Congress began as *Jamiyya Mutanen Arewa*. During the tribal association stage each association was concerned primarily with forging strong communal consciousness amongst its ethnic group as basis for a wide range of shared interests and establishing itself within the changing colonial situation. Each tribal union was organised by a small group of its western educated elite which was conversant with developments and events within the existing nationalist organisations.

As soon as the British colonial authorities responded to nationalist demands with arrangements for constitutional reform, such as happened in British West Africa from 1948 to 1951, the

tribal associations were transformed into formal political parties for purposes of more effective participation in the process of transition towards self-government. According to Hodgkin:

The birth of certain major West African Parties — the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) in the Gold Coast, Action Group and the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) in Nigeria, the Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) — can be correlated with different phases in this process of Constitutional reform.⁴

There was therefore a vacuum in Nigeria between 1945 and 1950 during which the NCNC was the only sizeable nationwide nationalist organisation which could have precipitated constitutional reform or other political settlement before the initiative for reform went to the British colonial authorities and rival political organisations emerged. Although it could be argued that the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) was older than the NCNC, the former was not as large as the latter in scope, membership and logistical equipment, especially in terms of media apparatus for sustaining nationalist pressure against the colonial authorities.⁵ Besides, it disintegrated rapidly since 1941.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this point is the fact that the NCNC membership, at these earlier years at least, contained leading nationalist elites from across the country, the most significant being Herbert Macaulay, acknowledged as the father of Nigerian nationalism. Even though he died one or two years before the call for militant nationalism in the form of "positive action", the support which he gave to Azikiwe and NCNC would have provided a strong basis for Azikiwe if he had opted for more precipitate pace in wrenching concessions from the colonial authorities.

Another important aspect was that during each of the major national crises which arose during the period, Nigerian nationalists showed obvious unanimity and readiness to unite for common action; cases in point being the Richards Constitution, general strike of Nigerian workers and the 1949 shooting of Coal Miners at Enugu. On the last occasion the nationalists formed the National Emergency Committee for common response to the crisis.⁶

In spite, therefore, of some differences that had begun to appear amongst the major Nigerian tribes by the late 1940's, a country-wide political crisis spearheaded by the NCNC and the Zikist Movement and resulting in Azikiwe emerging as the national symbol, would have elicited genuine and substantial support from most Nigerian peoples, and such universalistic political programmes that Azikiwe envisioned could have attracted many of his elite compatriots. The divide-and-rule accusation levied against the

Richards Constitution could have been shared and sustained, leading to a national political structure different from the unbalanced regionalism confirmed by the Nigerian elites at the 1951 Ibadan General Conference.

Taking all the circumstances together, the period 1945-1950 provided Azikiwe with a golden opportunity to sail to the status of a nationalist hero and eventual political leader of the whole Nigeria, at least for the first few years of the country's independence. As Coleman stated it:

Militant nationalism in the postwar period was a child of Azikiwe's journalism and charismatic qualities. The militant nationalists included genuine idealists, Communist-sympathisers, and political opportunists who were the shock troops of the NCNC.⁷

In summing up this line of reflection, it would be stated that there is some logic in the argument of some people that as far as the executive leadership of the Nigerian state was concerned, Azikiwe's political opportunities ended in the period 1945-1951 which was marked by the promulgation of the Macpherson (1951) Constitution. First of all, it was at the Ibadan General Conference on the Nigerian Constitution that Azikiwe and his southern nationalist colleagues bowed to the Northern Regional delegation's "Eight-Point Programme" which demanded, among other things, 50 per cent of all seats in the proposed central legislature for the country; it is argued that concession to this demand sowed the seed of Northern dominance of the Nigerian political system. Since the demand was based on a certain reading of the pre-colonial history of Nigeria, it now entrenched the Sokoto-Caliphate factor in the modern political history of Nigeria.

Second, it was at the Ibadan General Conference that the Nigerian nationalists who assailed the 1946 Richards Constitution proposals for regionalism with charges of "divide-and-rule", adopted regionalism as the structure of Nigerian government, a decision that immediately narrowed down Azikiwe's maximal political constituency and subjected his chances of national leadership to the whims of regional political groups of diverse dispositions. Third, the Eastern Region, with dominant Igbo population, which was now to be his political-springboard, was reduced by the 1951 constitution to a disadvantaged constituency which could only attain federal power through concessions and coalition with one of the other three such major constituencies. With the 1954 Constitution federalism based on three large component regions became confirmed for Nigeria; the country has continued,

even by the end of the 1980's, to battle with the numerous problems created by that political structure.

Azikiwe's failure to seize the golden opportunity offered him by the years 1945 to 1950 had, and have continued to have serious implications for his dreams of the African Revolution and the New Africa which would emerge out of it. The implications are two-fold, first for him personally in terms of how he saw himself as actor, as a mid-wife, in bringing about the African Revolution; second, for those objective non-personal benefits which the New Africa would usher for all Africans. The personal implications will be examined briefly at once, and after them the objective benefits.

The personal implications emerged clearer and clearer as the 1950's rolled by, reaching the climax by 1960 and in the 1960's onwards when most other African nationalists stepped into political independence as executive heads of the governments of their countries and Azikiwe emerged as a constitutional ceremonial head of state of Nigeria. Still, in keeping with his universalistic macro-approach to African development and his unchanging faith in liberal democratic principles he eulogised his lot in one of the most colourful speeches of the decade while also taking care to show that he was fully aware of the limitations of his fortune. In a paragraph typical of this undercurrent in his inaugural address marking his installation as Governor-General he stated:

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 ... a bifurcation in the exercise of power between the Governor-General as the crstwhile head of government in a colonial regime, and the Prime Minister.⁸

Two contradictions in the whole set-up obviously worried him. First, playing the role of a ceremonial head of state with no real powers could not help him concretise the dreams of the African Revolution, a point which emerged clearly when he had to occupy secondary positions in the critical years of the Monrovia-Cassablanca blocs of newly independent African states and the eventual emergence of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Second, his occupying the position of a symbolic figure of the British monarch, the former colonial power that he so much denigrated, did not favourably represent his dreams of the African Revolution, especially the political resurgence and mental emancipation with which the Renascent African was imbued. Nevertheless Azikiwe was optimistic of a future disappearance of the contradictions and did indeed look at horizons distant from the

immediate Nigerian situation. He went further in his inaugural address:

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 ... We regard all races of the human family as equal. Under no circumstances shall we accept the idea that the black race is inferior to any other race.⁹

In spite of the explanations and the optimism, the central fact of his lost initiative remained, it drastically reduced his capacity and opportunities to operate directly in shaping the New Africa. The first casualty of this impediment was his political philosophy. As he strove in the next three decades to redress the disadvantages placed on him by the changed more complex situations of Nigerian politics and society his philosophy suffered from what could be termed dwindling dimensions. Because he had to make more and more compromises and concessions his original universalistic vision had to be scaled down at each road block: pan-Africanism was scaled down in the face of barriers place by African sovereign states jealous of their national boundaries; pan-Nigerianism was scaled down in the face of barriers placed by ethnicity; pan-Igbo ideals dwindled to community patriotism,¹⁰ all in the face of political rivalries of ever-increasing complexity and aggressiveness, and ever-increasing overt criticism of him by former admirers and new less-adorative generation of politicians.

It will now permanently remain a speculation whether if civilian politics and government were not interrupted by Military rule and the civil war, Azikiwe would have overcome the limitations placed on him by the loss of initiative of the end of the 1940's and won the post of elected executive prime minister of Nigeria between 1960 and the end of the 1980's. The reality, unfortunately, was that prolonged military rule and the civil war that came as one episode in it dimmed more his hopes and chances. During the civil war itself Azikiwe had strained relationship with the military governor of his own region, the Eastern Region, whose bid to secede from Nigeria as independent Biafra was the immediate cause of the civil war. Their disagreements which ranged over a number of issues like the running of the University of Nigeria (founded on Azikiwe's initiative) and the actual management of the Biafra-Nigeria crisis itself were sometimes open and polemical. Azikiwe, like other Igbo, had to initially take refuge in various 'safe' areas of Biafra in the course of the civil war before he later travelled out as his relations

with the governor became more cordial and Azikiwe's identification with the Biafran cause more convincing.

The more important aspect of all these events — prolonged military rule and the civil war, however, was their impact on Azikiwe's prospects, or his hopes of prospects of winning the executive headship of the Nigerian state as an important step and opportunity for pursuing the actualisation of the African Revolution. At the end of the civil war the combination of events did not give room for optimism about Azikiwe winning executive headship of Nigeria: military rule continued indefinitely, the creation of twelve states in 1967 further whittled down his political base, politics and political competition would be practiced in new environment, memories of the unpleasant wartime experiences were still fresh, his age had increased by a substantial number of years, and the defeat of the Igbos in the civil war had reduced their impetus for Nigerian politics. In the midst of all these Azikiwe's patience and hope began to wear down while bitterness and disillusionment began to wax stronger, as expressed in the pamphlet *Civil War Soliloquies*. Portion of one of the poems in the pamphlet read as follows:

Had we been born elsewhere but Igboland,
Or if our parents Igbo had not been
The tribe-baiters would dare not reprimand
As an Igbo I know what it means
To be a scapegoat, to be slaughtered
By liliputs.¹¹

Then he showed bitterness over his failure to occupy the position he really wanted:

By merit pure I earned the highest price
Instead of victor's wreath my brow to crown
My world-wide fame they shamelessly chastise
Where are the Churchills of recent history?
Where are the Nkrumah's of yesterday?
They have gone the way of all flesh
No condition is permanent.¹²

He did not spare those who gave him occasion for personal grudge or violated his liberal democratic principles of the rule of law either during or after the civil war; thus in one of the poems he lashed out at them:

Listen to me heartless oppressor
Proud tyrant of this corrupt earth
Monarch of a format top desk ...
Spending public money with reckless abandon
Confiscating people's property without payment
Depriving the poor of their sustenance

Prepare willy-nilly for your Waterloo.¹³

These expressions sound ordinary or trivial in comparison with the lofty ideals and universalistic platform of the African Revolution; but one could see them as evidence that the dreamer of the African Revolution was also a human being.

Military rule of the 1970's ended in 1978 with a new Constitution detailing the ground rules of the new competitive politics out of which a new civilian government would be elected. Azikiwe came out and participated actively in the new politics, offering himself as a candidate for the position of executive president created by the new constitution. He lost in the contest; he still contested for the same position in the relevant elections in 1983 and again lost. Military take-over of the Nigerian government occurred again at the end of 1983 and the resultant military government is scheduled to hand over to elected civilian government in 1992. Almost all of what Nigerians describe as old politicians (of which Azikiwe is one) are banned from taking part in the elections scheduled as a prelude to the transition to civil rule in 1992. Even if he was not affected by the ban, Azikiwe would attain the age of 88 in 1992 and would most unlikely contest the presidential election at that age.

One important question necessary at this stage of this concluding assessment is whether in the light of the events that culminated in his being apparently sequestered from competitive politics and the chances of winning the executive presidency of Nigeria, it could be said that for him the dreams of the African Revolution ended in illusions. To answer this question it is pertinent to recall what has been stated earlier about his not restricting himself, from the beginning, to the roles of the philosopher, writer and inspirer instead of trying to combine all these with practical politics and statesmanship. The vast literature which he authored in the five and half decades of his crowded life abundantly testifies that he qualifies to be an intellectual giant of great depth, versatility and breadth in any place and profession in the modern world. In other words, he could attain equal if not more fame being just the philosopher and inspirer, having historical antecedents in Hobbes, Robespierre, Rousseau, Locke, Bantham, Burke, Nehru, Nkrumah, Fanon, Montesquieu, Bagehot, Madison and Jefferson, to name a few. But it could also be validly argued that a large portion of his intellectual output was stimulated and moulded by his practical personal experiences and crises of his involvement in practical politics from

nationalist leader to frontline statesman. This point is borne out by the fact that a large number of his written works were speeches which he made on various occasions throughout his life and times. Future generations of Africans and scholars all over the world will perhaps find Azikiwe's numerous written works of far more enduring value than the knowledge that he was in his life-time the executive head of state of Nigeria.

His numerous written works will survive him for centuries and the ideas embodied in them will constitute his real legacy for Africans in their journey towards genuine economic, political, social, mental and spiritual emancipation which Azikiwe envisioned for the New Africa. Therefore while evidence of illusions, for him, may exist in his not being able to achieve the political positions he aspired to and wanted to use to promote and concretise the African Revolution, great realities abound in the more durable legacy which he will leave for fellow Africans and non-Africans alike in the form of vast ideas embodied in his numerous written works.

Objective, Illusions and Realities

As stated both in the introduction to this book and in several of its previous chapters, one of the objectives of the review essays is to evaluate the extent to which the specific items of Azikiwe's dreams of the African Revolution have been fulfilled five and half decades after those dreams were eloquently and vividly portrayed in his *Renascent Africa* and several other subsequent writings.

The specific items — political sovereignty, economic prosperity, spiritual emancipation, and cultural authenticity — which New Africa would reap from the African Revolution (wrought by *Renascent Africans*) have been adequately discussed in various individual chapters. What needs to be done here is to devote some space in summarising most of the salient points raised and discussed in those foregoing chapters as they relate to the specific items of the Revolution.

Political sovereignty has been the most visible of the realities of the Revolution, just as it was at the most fundamental demands of the African nationalist leaders from colonial days. The pre-eminence of political sovereignty was in those days echoed by Nkrumah in his most famous slogan ("Seek Ye first political freedom and all other things would be added to you") adapted from the christian biblical injunction of "seek ye first the Kingdom of God ..." Responses of the colonial authorities to African nationalism took the form, in most

places, of constitutional conferences during which the terms of self-government and ultimate political independence were discussed and argued. Eventually most African colonies attained political independence in the 1960's (Ghana was the first, in 1957) and began their uncertain journeys to nation-building. The dream of political sovereignty was thus made a reality in the 1960's, political sovereignty in the real sense seems to have been illusory due to a number of forces which have continued to put heavy strains on mere political sovereignty.

A great majority of African states were under military rule or have been under military rule by the end of 1980's when this book was completed; political instability arising from several of what Huntington termed social forces (ethnicity, corruption, religious divisions etc.)¹⁴ have become a common event in the majority of African states; military weakness has persisted in spite of huge expenditure on arms; economic poverty (in its many forms) has made most states as dependent (on the advanced countries) as former colonies. In almost all African countries free elections, in the sense of elections free from rigging, violence, factionalism and other malpractices are still distant mirages in most African states; constitutions are constantly changed, usually with interventions of the military. In general the liberal democracy, with its roots in the principles of the rule of law, universal franchise, fundamental human rights (free press, free speech, free association etc.) is still a mirage in most African countries; to that extent, the political sovereignty dreamt of by Azikiwe has remained an illusion for the African.

In the case of economic prosperity the illusion is greater than the reality. Looking at the entire picture of the African economic conditions by the end of the 1980's one would have argued that Nkrumah's slogan should have been inverted to begin with "seek ye first economic freedom." The most disastrous aspect of the African economic situation is the increasing dependency on the economies of the advanced countries; even the economies of the African states who experimented or are still experimenting with socialism have not fared better. All the indices of a strong productive, independent and prosperous modern economy are seriously lacking in the economies of almost all African states. Each country is facing mounting heavy unemployment, low level of industrialisation, insufficiency of agricultural production (manifesting in high domestic prices of food and mounting food-import bills), heavy (and in many cases

crippling) external debts, and domestic markets dominated and manipulated by powerful multi-national industrial and commercial corporations. Starting from the mid-1980's when external debts became unmanageable in many African states the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund contrived for most of them what has now come to be popularly known as structural adjustment programme. So far none of the states which accepted the programme has experienced substantial recovery.

Economic dependency arising from economic poverty has thus watered down political sovereignty to a level as bad as former colonial status from which the African countries emerged as sovereign nations. Economic dependency subjects the politics and government of each African country to extensive and intensive covert (and often overt) manipulations by economically-advanced foreign nations, thus making autonomous nation-building difficult.

At the close of the 1980's, nearly thirty years since the "independence decade" and nearly six decades since Azikiwe's dreams of the New Africa, the peoples of Africa seem to have made more genuine progress in the matters of spiritual emancipation and cultural authenticity. Since political independence the citizens, (educated elite, as well as the masses) of almost all African states have acquired pride and confidence in being Africans, in being black. This sense of pride was boosted in the 1960's and early 1970's by black nationalism which flourished in United States of America, itself bouyed in these periods by the fact that many African peoples attained political freedom and became sovereign states. Even before actual political independence, pride in being African gained substantial momentum in the thick of African nationalism when the poems and proses of the African literary talents fired the spirits of Africans at home and in the diaspora.

Spiritual emancipation and cultural pride went hand in hand, each one reinforcing the other. Today African dress fashions, African music and dance, African food, African literature and visual art all enjoy pride of place across Africa and the rest of the world. Azikiwe's dream has thus been realised that Africans should not feel inferior or be willing to accept inferior positions vis-à-vis other nations and cultures of the world. This fact of spiritual and cultural emancipation waxes strong in spite of the serious handicaps and positions of weakness imposed on the black race by economic poverty and dependency.

All told, the dreams of the African Revolution could be said to have remained illusions in the key items while being substantial realities in the less crucial areas. As long, however, as the less crucial areas are the spiritual forces which work on the African spirit, hopes would remain strong on future actualisation of the key areas. As long as almost all Africans — elite and masses alike — consciously and articulately bemoan, as they do, continued economic poverty and dependency, hopes of future eradication of these handicaps would remain strong and realistic. Throughout history heroes have been great dreamers. Without their large visions they would be no different from the ordinary run of men. Azikiwe's dreams were therefore important for the development of Africa.

NOTES

1. Azikiwe, N. *Before Us Lies the Open Grave*, *op. cit.* in chapter 4.
2. Coleman, J. S. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), p. 300.
3. Hodgkin, T: *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (London: Frederick Muller, 1956) pp. 148-149. See also Coleman, J.S. *op. cit.* pp. 308-312; and Ezera, K: *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 100-104.
4. Hodgkin, T. *op. cit.*, p. 104.
5. Coleman, J.S. *op. cit.*, pp. 225-227.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 300
7. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
8. Azikiwe, N. *Respect for Human Dignity* (His Inaugural Address on installation as Governor-General of Nigeria), Enugu, Government Printer, 1960, p. 4.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
10. See, for example, his *Civil War Soliloquies* (Nsukka: African Book Company, 1976) in which one poem was devoted to disadvantages of being an Igbo in the Nigerian system. Also Azikiwe's expression of interest in the controversy between Onitsha (his community) indigenes and the Onitsha main market Traders Association (OMMATA) over the issue of elected or traditional Chairmanship of Onitsha Urban District Council.
11. Azikiwe, N. *Civil War Soliloquies*, *op. cit.* p. 59.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
14. Huntington, S. P. *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 8-12.

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404 *Azikiwe and the African Revolution*

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INDEX

A

- Aba Women's Riot, 138
 Abacha, General Sani, 377
 Abdullahi H. R., 163, 222
 Abrahams, Peter, 170
 Aburi Accord, 274, 281
 Achuzia, Col. Joseph, 277, 285
 Action Group (A.G.), 205, 206, 207,
 217, 227, 232-233, 237-238,
 245, 246, 248, 254-257, 323,
 390-391
 Adegbenro, Alhaji, 253
 Adjei, Ako, 170
 Africa, Economic predicament causes,
 341-345
 African Continental Bank, 292,
 236-237
 African Morning Post, 158-159
 African Nationalism, 93-96
 African revolution; impediments to,
 361-383
 Aggrey, Dr. Kwegir, of Achimota, 19
 influences on Azikiwe 32, 54, 75,
 142
 Aggreyism, 42-43
 Agwuna, Osita, 222
 Ajaokuta, 365
 Ake, Claude, 213, 221, 312, 373-384
 Akerele, Abiodun, 253
 Akintola, Chief S. L. 252-253, 255
 Amechi, Chief Mbazulike, 163, 168
 Anene, Prof. J. C. 10
 Angola, 313
 Anti-Tax Riots, 138
 Arikpo, Okoi, 233
 Asika Chief Ukpobi, 284
 Assassination story, 85
 Atlantic Charter, 75, 76-77, 83, 215,
 371
 Awa, Prof Eme, 316, 322
 Awojobi, Ayodele, 331
 Awolowo, Chief Obafemi, 103, 204,
 218, 227, 232, 246, 248, 252-253,
 280, 345.
- Azikiwe, Chief (Dr) Nnamdi
 on African nationalism, 5
 on the African Revolution, 327,
 387-397
 influence of Dr. Aggrey, 32, 43
 at Calabar 17, 19, 130
 civil war soliloquies, 395
 on civilian - military rule, 327,
 332-337
 as a democrat, 62
 on diarchy 332-337
 as a dreamer of African
 revolution, 7-9
 on eclecticism, 56
 on economic determinism, 79-80
 interest in Ethiopia, 158
 on Fabian socialism, 55
 his formative years, 9-26
 fragments of Onitsha history,
 12-13
 and Governor Generalship,
 245-264
 his historical and cultural roots,
 7-8
 at Hope Waddel Training Institute,
 17-19
 at Howard University, 34
 his ideas and strategies, pre-
 1943, 194-199
 his ideas and strategies,
 1944-1970, 199-207
 on imperialism, 198-199
 intellectual, origins, 53-71
 as journalist, 139-140
 criticism of the Legislative Council,
 141-142
 on Liberia and World politics, 195
 at Lincoln University, 35
 on Magna Carta, 62-69
 on military rule
 and the nationalistic struggle, 139,
 147-152
 on the New Africa, 47-48,
 195-199

- and the Nigerian Civil War, 265
- on Nigerian nationalism:
 - tactics and strategies, 189-211
- and Nkrumah, Kwame compared, 173-183
- and Nkrumah of Ghana, 166-185
- My Odyssey, 12, 13, 14, 18
- contributions to Pan Africanism, 93-108
- as a philosopher - statesman, 388
- political ideas, 72-90
- his political philosophy, 73-77
- joins politics, 140
- on pragmatism, 55-57
- and premiership, 232-244
- presidency, 262-264
- encounter with President of Storer College, 33
- renascent Africa, 195-199
- on the Rule of Law, 66-69
- and the Second World War, 139-141
- sedition charge in Ghana, 159-164
- social regeneration, 79-80, 302, 329, 361
- on socialism, 115-135
- Spiritual balance 303, 361
- on spiritual emancipation, 399
- at Storer College, 33-35, 83
- on Technical School Curriculum, 48
- on tertiary level education, 48-49
- his understanding of socialism, 116-117
- on University College Ibadan, 102
- at University of Pennsylvania, 35
- as a welfarist, 57-67
- his West African Experience, 154-164
- on the youth, 195-199
- at Zungeru, 17, 31

B

- Balance of payment crisis, 343
- Balewa, Abubakar Tafawa, 232, 246, 256, 258, 322

- Balogun, Kola, 236-237
- Bello, Sir, Ahmadu, 227, 250, 251, 251-253, 256
- Benson, Chief T. O. S. 235
- Bevan, Aneurin, 238-239
- Beveridge Report, 56-58
- influences on Azikiwe, 56-58
- Biafra, 265-266, 267
- Blackman's predicament, 93-101
- Blyden, Edward Wilmot, 108
- Boigny, Houphoué, 363-364, 375, 379
- Boundillon, Sir Bernard, 144
- Bridges Committee, 144
- British education and the American alternative contrasted, 39-41
- Brown, Frank Akintunde, 37
- Burns, Alan, 14

C

- Calabar, 17, 19, 30
- Casablanca Group, 106
- Census Controversy, 254-256
- Charismatic leadership, 373, 374
- Churchill, Sir Winston, 75, 76
- Coleman, J. S. 204, 214, 215, 219, 221, 247, 248
- on Azikiwe, 24
- Convention People's Party (CPP), 172-173, 391
- Cooperative Federalism, 335
- Cost of Living Allowance (COLA), 144

D

- Daily Comet, 146
- Danquah, J. B. 170-171
- Democracy with military vigilance, 327
- Democratic Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons (DPNC), 237
- Democratic Socialism, 253
- Diarchy, 323, 327, 332-337, 379
- Dipeolu, Akintunde, 37, 39
- Disu, A. K., 46
- DuBois, W. E. B., 54, 75

E

- Eastern Nigerian Guardian, 139
- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), 353-355

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), 356
 Economic determinism, 79–80
 292–293, 361
 Economic recolonisation, 339–345
 Effiong, General Phillip, 284
 Egbe Omo Oduduwa, 218, 220, 228, 248, 390
 Egypt, 365
 Emergency Powers (Defence) Act (1939), 143
 Enahoro, Chief Anthony, 163
 Endeley, Emmanuel, 232
 Enugu Coal Miners Strike, 391
 Eyo, Chief E. O., 237–238
 Ezechima, first Obi of Onitsha, 14
 Ezera, Kalu, 223, 224, 226, 246

F

Fabianism, 69
 Fajuyi, Adekunle, 281
 Federal Election Crisis (1964), 256–259
 Foreign aid, 299, 305
 Foster Sutton (ACB) tribunal, 236–237
 Fragments of Onitsha history, 12, 14

G

Garvey, Marcus Aurelius, 21, 42
 General Strike (1945), 145–147
 Genocide, 278, 282–283
 Ghana, 344
 Gowon, General Yakubu, 270, 280–284, 285
 Great Nigerian People's Party, (GNPP), 334
 Guinea, 344

H

Henderson, R. N., 12
 Hodgkin, Thomas, 217, 390, 391
 Hope Waddel Training Institute, 17, 19, 30, 157
 Horizontal education, 34, 41

I

Ibibio State Union, 207
 Ideology for Nigeria: capitalism, socialism and welfarism, 60

Igbo State Union, 206, 220, 248
 Ikeotuonye, Chief, V. C. 45, 85, 134
 Ikoku, Alvan, 233
 Ikoli-Akinsanya; dispute (1941), 215, 217
 Imoudu, Chief Michael, 145
 International Monetary Fund, 339, 346–348, 349, 351–352, 353, 363–364, 380, 399
 Ironsi, General Aguiyi, 281
 Ita, Prof Eyo, 207, 232, 233, 235, 243
 Jamiyya Mutanen Arewa, 390
 Johnson, Wallace, 158, 159, 169, 170

K

King's College Crisis (1944), 141, 144, 216

L

Lagos Plan of Action, 356
 Lennox-Boyd, Alan, 237–238, 239
 Liberia in World Politics, 19, 104, 157
 London Club, 352, 363
 Lumumba, Patrice, 100

M

Macaulay, Herbert, 97, 141, 145, 214, 216, 391
 Macpherson Constitution (1951), 217, 217, 232, 234
 Macpherson, Sir John, 227
 Magna Carta, impact of, on Azikiwe, 62–69
 Majekodunmi, M. A., 254
 Malawi, 344
 Mamser, 356
 Margaret, Green, 10
 Marriere, Samuel Jereton, 327
 Mass Mobilization, 355–356
 Mbadiwe, Dr. K. O., 46, 236, 237, 322 and NCNC Crisis, 232
 Mbanefo, Sir, Louis, 233
 Mental emancipation, 75–80, 303–304, 329, 361

- Militant nationalism, 389-392
 Moi, Daniel Arap, 378
 Monrovia Group, 106
 Musa, Balarabe, 334
 My Odyssey, 2, 13, 14, 25-26

N

- Namibia, 361
 National Council of Nigeria and
 the Cameroons (NCNC), 83, 85,
 141, 145, 202, 205-206, 207,
 213-229, 246-248, 255-257,
 389-391
 coalition with NPC, 246-248,
 257
 formation of, 215-221
 travails of, 232
 and UPGA
 National Party of Nigeria (NPN),
 334
 National Reconstruction Group, 141,
 252
 National integration, 371-373
 Neo-colonialism, 308-310
 New Africa, 195-199, 272, 387, 393
 ideology of, 41-45
 postulates, 45-46
 Nigeria - Biafra War (1967 - 1970),
 266
 Nigerian Civil Service Union, 137
 Nigerian National Alliance (NNA),
 256, 259
 Nigerian National Democratic Party
 (NNDP), 137, 140, 141, 214,
 255, 256
 Nigerian Outlook, 235
 Nigerian People's Party (NPP), 323
 Nigerian Spokesman, 139
 Nigerian Union of Students, 216
 Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM),
 83, 140-141, 213, 214, 215-216,
 391
 Njoku, Prof. Eni, 233, 236
 Nkrumah, Kwame, 20, 46, 311,
 313-314, 318, 344, 379
 Northern Elements Progressive
 Union (NEPU), 237, 245-248
 Northern People's Congress (NPC),
 205, 207, 217, 218, 227, 237,
 390-391

- NPC - NCNC Coalition, 246-248,
 257
 Nsukka Experiment, 102-103
 Nwapa, A. C., 233, 236
 Nyerere, Julius, 344
 Nzeogwu, Major Chukuma K., 275
 Nzimiro, Prof. Ikenna, 124, 163

O

- Obasanjo, General Olusegun, 281
 Obi, Prof. Chike, 85
 Ohonbamu, Obaroje, 331
 Ojike, Mbonu, 46, 111, 163, 236,
 238, 239
 Ojukwu, Col. Odumegwu, 267, 273
 273-274, 279, 283
 Okala, Prof. V. B. C., 46
 Okokon, Hogan Edem Ari, 37, 194
 Okoye, Mokwugo, 122-124, 126,
 149, 163, 222, 224, 320
 Okpara, Dr. Michael I., 235-237, 240,
 255, 256
 Oligarchy, 332
 Onitsha, 13, 14, 16, 365
 Onitsha, Cultural and historical
 origin, 12-14
 Oraitite, 30
 Organisation of African Unity
 (OAU), 110
 Orizu, Chief Nwafor, 34, 41, 44-46,
 84, 86-87, 276
 Osadebe, Chief Dennis, 255
 Osoha, Segun, 322
 Ostheimer, John, 218
 and the NCNC, 219
 Ottenberg, Prof. Simon
 on Igbo oracles, 11

P

- Paden, J. N., 246-247, 262
 Padmore, George, 35, 54, 170
 Pan-Africanism, 93-96
 Azikiwe's tactics and strategy, 97
 Paris Club, 352, 363
 Party Systems, 374
 multi-party, 375, 376-377
 one-party, 375
 two-party, 375-376

People's Redemption Party (PRP),
334-335

Pleas, Sir Clement, 238

Political Blueprint for Nigeria, 4

Post, Kenneth, 217

Practoriarism, 327

Presidential Liaison Officers,
334-335

R

Railway Workers Union, 138

Rational - Legal leadership, 374

Rawlings, Fl. Lt. Jerry, 314

Regional Central Library Enugu, 243

Renascent Africa, 2, 3, 14, 15,
44-45, 75, 77, 158

attributes of, 77-82

Republican constitution, 251, 252

Richards, Sir Arthur, 144-148

Ribadu, Alhaji, 247

Richards, Sir Arthur, 144, 145, 146

Richards Constitution, 145-146,
391-392

Robertson, Sir James, 246

Rosiji. Chief Ayo, 253

S

Schwartz, Frederick, 215, 246, 247,
248, 254

Second National Development Plan
(1970-74), 344

Sedition Trial, 159-162

aftermath of, 162-164

Selassie, Haile Emperor, 106

Senegal, 342

Shagari, Alhaji Shehu, 323-334

Shugaba, Alh. Abdulrahman, 334

Sklar, Richard, 215-216, 218, 220

Sleeman, Prof., 67-68

Social regeneration, 79-80, 302,
329, 361

Socialism, defined, 116

Sokoto Caliphate factor, 392

Solanke, Ladipo, 140, 149

Southern Nigerian Defender, 139

Spiritual balance, 303, 361

Steel industry in Nigeria, 365

Stockholm International Peace

Research Institute (SIPRI), 372

Stratocracy, 332

Structural Adjustment Programmes,
338-358

alternatives to, 352-354

meaning of, 346-348

problems of, 349-352

T

Tanzania, 344, 356, 375

Toure, Sekou, 344

Traditional leadership, 374

U

Udoma, Udo, 207, 235

Ukiwe, Commodore Ebitu, 324

United Gold Coast Convention
(UGCC), 170-171

United Progressive Grand Alliance
(UPGA), 256, 259

Universal Primary Education
(UPE), 242

University of Nigeria, 102, 241, 243,
251, 394

Uzoma, Chief R. I., 233

Uzuakoli, 266

W

Wachukwu, Jaja, 233, 235

Wallerstein, Prof. 16, 23

on the colonial situation, 23

Washington, Booker T., 47, 75

Weslyan Boys' High School

Lagos, 29, 32

West African Court of Appeal
(WACA), 161

West African Pilot, 69, 103, 139,
146, 149, 168, 199-200, 204,
214, 219

West African Students Union
(WASU), 140, 146

Western Nigeria Crisis, 252-254

Western Nigeria Election Crisis,
259

Williams, Gavin, 323

World Bank, 339, 346, 348

Z

Zikist Movement, 206, 222-224,
320, 324

Zikist National Vanguard, 238

Zikist postulates, 292

Zungeru, 17, 31





An objective, comprehensive and intellectual review of the life and times of Nnamdi Azikiwe is timely for a number of reasons.

A review of this nature at this critical period of African socio-economic and political development will make it possible to examine why the patriotic zeal and involvement of pioneer African leaders failed to steer Africa away from the path that led it to its present sad predicament. The New Africa of Azikiwe's dream did, in fact, emerge with the independence of nearly all the former colonies but economically and politically, the New Africa was deformed from birth and now suffers even more handicaps. It is not the type of Africa dreamt of by the pioneers.

This work is not a conventional biography. The logic behind this collection of essays is that it is necessary, at this critical stage of Azikiwe's life, when he has retired or is assumed to have retired from active politics to conduct such a review on the basis of his already numerous published works, all of which were written during the years of his active role in public affairs.

One of his fundamental propositions was that colonialism and imperialism were bad and should not be allowed to continue indefinitely in the African continent. To reject and eliminate these twin evils there had to be a change in the psyche of Africans and this change would imbue them with the attitudes and programmes which they needed for effective opposition to and elimination of imperialism and colonialism.

Viewed retrospectively today, the African revolution dreamt of by Azikiwe in his youth has not been realised. The continent throughout his active years could not be summed up as a failure. Although the key elements have eluded African states in many instances, they have achieved political sovereignty and acquired all the outward trappings of independent states in all world forums. But other harder realities have since then made the sovereignty what states have called "flag independence".

The editor, Dr. O. D. Oduro, and Oduneko Ikejiani-Clark, are on the academic staff of the Department of Political Science of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Both have researched and written extensively on Nigerian and African politics.



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