

My Odyssey

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MY ODYSSEY

An Autobiography

NNAMDI AZIKIWE

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*Dedicated to those who continue to do good,
in spite of man's ingratitude*



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PREFACE

'You say, "Where goest thou?" I cannot tell,
And still go on. If but the way be straight,
It cannot go amiss! Before me lies
Dawn and the day; the night behind me; that
Suffices me; I break the bounds; I see
And nothing more; *believe*, and nothing less.
My future is not one of my concerns.'

VICTOR HUGO

My life is a pilgrimage from the unknown to the unknown. I do not know whence I emanated or whither I am bound. I have been taught that my father and mother were biologically concerned with my conception and birth, during which process I developed as an embryo, emerged as a helpless baby, evolved into a dependent adolescent, and grew up into an independent man. After this evolution, I learned that idealism is that aspect of philosophy which concerns itself always with standards of perfection; while materialism reasons that, since the facts of the universe are sufficiently explained by the existence and nature of matter, so the material well-being of the individual should determine the code of human conduct.

Since attaining manhood, 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 these 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.

Man comes into the world, and while he lives he embarks upon a series of activities, absorbing experience which enables him to formulate a philosophy of life, and to chart his courses of action; but then he dies. Nevertheless, his biography remains as a guide to those of the living who may need guidance,

either as a warning on the vanity of human wishes, or as an encouragement, or both.

So far, in my peregrinations on earth, I have learned much by association with different peoples and by confrontation with certain realities of life. I now chronicle my wanderings and experiences and, in common with all autobiographers, try to attune myself with the hymn of infinity not because I feel that I personally am qualified to be a signpost to any section of humanity, but because the factors which have influenced my way of thinking and my mode of life have, for better or worse, indirectly influenced the lives of others.

In a subsequent volume I hope to discuss how I founded the African Continental Bank; my entry into the orbit of Nigerian politics; my participation in the crusade for the freedom of Nigeria; my stewardship as Premier of Eastern Nigeria; the founding of the University of Nigeria; my tenure of office as Governor-General of the Federation of Nigeria, and then President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; my premonitions of the wrath to come and the military revolution that followed; and what I believe, in the various fields of human endeavour.

Of the present volume, the first seven chapters were prepared at Adazi Nnukwu in Awka Province, while the last seven chapters were finished at the Nekede Farms in Owerri Province, during the civil war.

Finally, I offer an apology to those readers of this volume who were not born in West Africa for what may seem the over-large number of names of individuals, with whom I have been associated at many different stages in my life from childhood onwards, which appear in my narrative. If the inclusion of these names revives some happy memories for the people concerned—those of them who are still alive—or for their descendants, I shall be satisfied, and I ask for the indulgence of others.

London, 1970

NNAMDI AZIKIWE

CHAPTER I

MY GENEALOGY AND NATIVITY

The biological and geographical setting of my birth

'There are good men in every land. The tree of life has many branches and roots. Let not the topmost twig presume to think that it alone has sprung from mother earth. . . . We did not choose our races for ourselves. Jews, Muslims, Christians—all alike are men. Let me hope I have found in you—a man.'

GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING

I. MY PATERNAL LINEAGE

From the information gleaned from my parents, relatives and other relevant sources, 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. They settled originally at Umudei, Ogbe Odogwu, Ogbembubu, Ogbeabu, Umuaroli, Isiokwe and Ogboli Eke quarters. They are regarded as the royal family.

My father was a native of Ogbeabu. His mother was a native of Umudei. My father traced his ancestry to Inosi Onira, who was fourth son of Dei, the second son of Chima. The second son of Onira was Ozomaocha. The third son of Ozomaocha was Molokwu. The second son of Molokwu was Azikiwe, who was born in *circa* 1854. His son, Chukwuemeka, my father, was born on November 2, 1879, the day Onitsha was bombarded by the British gunboat, *HMS Pioneer*.

I have had to make a number of inquiries in order to ascertain my ancestral origins. Since the information obtained is based on oral tradition, I cannot vouch for its accuracy; however, it is the best evidence available to me at the present time. The problem of fixing the dates of birth of my immediate ancestors was adjusted on the basis of the prevalent practice at Onitsha in the last two hundred years.

Usually, an able-bodied male married at the age of twenty

or thereabouts. Other things being equal, his first offspring comes after a year of marriage, with subsequent children at intervals of two years. The family is usually polygynous. This means that the intervals between children of different mothers may vary. By and large, I have assumed that my immediate ancestors married when they were twenty years of age. Since their offspring are known, I have made my deductions accordingly. But these are not error-proof.

I have made an exception to the general rule established above in connection with my father, Chukwuemeka. Unlike all his ancestors, he attended school and was educated. He had to earn his livelihood abroad, unlike his contemporaries who had to follow the usual farm and village routine demanded by local convention. Therefore, he did not marry until he was twenty-four, that is, one year after he had entered the civil service. Had he remained an illiterate, he would have complied with the demands of convention, got married at twenty, and proceeded to rear a family according to his economic standing.

Our ancestral land in Ogbeabu is generically known as Ani Umu Inosi Onira. The expression *ani* means land and *umu* means children or descendants. Our ancestor had two children by the names of Daike and Ozomaocha. Ozomaocha had four children: a daughter, Odogwu Nwanne, Ogorlu, and *Molokwu*. Daike had three children as well and they were Melie, Okosieme and Azike. Odogwu Nwanne had three children: Ifejika, Madumezia, and Nwosisi. Ogorlu had five children: Ajubu, Odigwe Nkpe, Munonyedi, Nwata, and Igwenma.

Molokwu had four children: Chukwude Akwue, *Azikiwe*, Egonwanne Uwakwe, and Abadom. Since these children were borne by Mbido kwu, the common mother, it is relevant to elaborate on this ancestry. Chukwude Akwue had at least eight children from different mothers, including Ndichie Chief Nwosa (late Oziziani of Onitsha), Ndichie Chief Okwusogu (late Ogbuoba of Onitsha), Ibeneweka Onugbu, Arude, and the mothers of Ndichie Chief Phillip O. Anatogu (the present Onowu of Onitsha) of Umuasele, and of G. N. Ikpeazu of Umudei.

Azikiwe had six children from two wives (Nwabunie and Ochili): Azumdialo, Okwuegbunam, and Chukwuemeka were

children of Nwabunie; whilst Oloria, Ifekandu, and Ilomuanya were those of Ochili. The rest of Molokwu's children were: Egonwanne Uwakwe, father of Thomas, John, Webber and Nwanyelumume, etc., and Abadom, father of Stephen Nwao-bia (Mgbachi Ogene), Emenike, John Obiefuna, 'Eze Igala,' Thomas, among others.

One of the children of the Azikiwe-Nwabunie union was *Chukwuemeka*, my father. Azumdialo, the first daughter of this union, was born about 1875 and was the mother of Samuel Nwachukwu Obi and Mrs Janet Chinwe Obodochina. Okwuegbunam, the second child, was born about 1877 and was the mother of Onyeagom Oyieze, Andrew Onyeisi Mac-Intosh, and Phillip Akor.

Chukwuemeka had over ten children from six wives. Those who had grown up before his death in 1958 include the following, among others: *Nnamdi*, *Eziamaka*, *Onuora*, *Obiamaka*, *Nwabundo*, *Bosah*, *Chiagor*, *Arah*, *Nwobu*, *Okwudili*, etc.

Ifekandu, the junior half-brother of my father, begat Ifediba. Ilomuanya, his other half-brother, was the father of Anagor, Patricia, etc.

On his mother's side, *Chukwuemeka*, my father, was the third child of Odua Nwabunie and Azikiwe. Odua was the oldest daughter of Mba Akalam of Umudei. Akalam and his wife, Kalu Onya, were among the first Onitsha citizens to be converted to Christianity following the establishment of the Church Missionary Society mission there in 1857 by Bishop Crowther.

Oduah had two other sisters and a brother: *Nwobuaku*, *Omenwata*, and *Okechukwu*. *Nwobuaku* married *Odukwe* and begat John Odukwe and Mrs Janet Okala, the mother of Dr J. B. C. Okala. *Omenwata* married *Mazeli* and had the following offspring: *Odikpo*, Mrs *Aduba*, *Nwakor*, Mrs *Ibegbu*, *Charles*, *Nwabufu*, Mrs *Omuzua Odiari*, and Mrs *Batokwu Osili*.

Okechukwu was born about 1865 and was christened Isaac. He taught in the CMS Mission for a number of years. As an uncle of my father, he trained him in his Christian household when father was a schoolboy. In 1923 he was appointed Honourable Member for Ibo Division in the Legislative Council of Nigeria. Later he became an Ndichie chief, as the Owelle of

Onitsha. Among his children are Mrs Sophia Freeman, Blackie, Ernest, and Catherine.

Thus, in tracing my paternal lineage, I could say that 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 Onira, who was the fourth son of Dei, the second son of Eze Chima, the founder of Onitsha.

2. MY MATERNAL LINEAGE

My mother was a native of Ogboli Eke. Her mother was a native of Isiokwe. At Ogboli Eke, my mother could trace her ancestry from six kings of Onitsha beginning with *Obi Udogwu*, the thirteenth king of Onitsha, whose son *Obi Akazue*, signed a treaty of friendship with Queen Victoria in 1877. *Onowu Agbani*, the first daughter of *Obi Udogwu*, could not succeed to the Onitsha throne, being a woman. This princess royal bore *Onyechi*, *Ndiwe*, *Oyinma*, *Ilukwe* and *Ndichie* Chief *Aghadiuno*, the Ozi of Onitsha, the father of my mother, who was born about 1859 and died in 1913.

The father of *Aghadiuno* was *Isagba Igwe Ajie*, who was the son of *Nwanne Ugwulu*, the son of *Ozoma Oyife*, the founder of Ogboli Eke. *Isagba Igwe Ajie* is also identified as *Igwe Nwatumade*.

The mother of *Aghadiuno's* lineage is as follows: daughter of *Obi Udogwu* (the thirteenth king of Onitsha), who was the son of *Obi Ijelekepe* (the twelfth king of Onitsha), who was the third son of *Obi Chimedie* (the ninth king of Onitsha), who was the second son of *Obi Aroli* (the eighth king of Onitsha), who was the fourth son of *Obi Chimaevi* (the third king of Onitsha), who was the third son of *Eze Chima* (the first king of Onitsha).

Aghadiuno had five children: *Nwabunkie*, *Anyamdio*, *Chinwe*, *Onyejiaka*, and *Agegbumnofu*. *Nwabunkie* was born about 1880; she married *Obi Okoye* of Asaba. *Anyamdio* was born about 1882; she married *Iwegbu* of Odojele and bore *Obiama*, *Azuka* and *Akudo*. *Chinwe* was born about 1884; she

married *Chukwuemeka* Azikiwe and bore me and my sister, Eziamaka. She died on January 26, 1958. Onyejiaka was born about 1886; he inherited virtually all his father's wives and begat many children including Godfrey Onwuka Aghadiuno, the successful Lagos realtor. Agegbumnofu was born about 1888; she married Ofili, a native of Umuikem, and her grandson is a Durham University graduate who was a tutor at the Lagos City College before the civil war.

My mother's mother was Mozenye, the eldest daughter of Agagwu in Isiokwe quarter. Agagwu was the son of Enckuzu. The mother of Mozenye was Nwanma Nnia Akpe, the daughter of Ozomaike of Umuasele. She was the elder sister of the mother of Ndichie Chief Samuel Chukwuma Obianwu, the Owelle of Onitsha, and a successful merchant. He was appointed the Honourable Member representing Niger African Traders in the Legislative Council of Nigeria in 1923-33. His eldest son, Josiah Okwudili Obianwu, is now a chief magistrate in the Ministry of Justice.

So that 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 Rachel Chinwe Ogbenyeonu (Aghadiuno) Azikiwe, who was third daughter of Aghadiuno Ajie, the fifth son of Onowu Agbani, first daughter of Obi Udokwu, 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 about 1748 AD.

I belong to the Ndokwaka age grade (in 1970 the members of this grade are 65-66 years of age), which is the ninth in seniority at Onitsha today. The custom of age grades, belonging essentially to a non-literate society, still persists. It is a means of identifying an age group, representatives of which, on reaching the age of sixteen or seventeen years, gather to choose a patron (*nna*), who advises them on the choice of a name. A date is set for the ceremony of name-giving, and they are then inducted. The bond of the common age grade continues to be felt all through life. At a public meeting called to discuss an important issue, the senior age grade present sits in the front seats on the left, and so on to the back of the hall. The age

grades senior to mine are Nmaku (which is the name of a great warrior—age 81–82), Adobisi (another great warrior—79–80), Odinani (reverence for ancient custom—77–78), Iganiru (progress is worth aiming for—75–76), Nnokoka (the gregarious instinct—*lit.* ‘getting together’—73–74), Ositadinma (if today we correct past mistakes there is hope for the future—71–72), Ota Bueze (the bird that flies highest is usually king—69–70), Ota Ugo (the eagle flies highest—67–68). My age grade name Ndokwaka means ‘peace is better than strife’. Further down the list are Douglas (name of popular administrative officer at time of group’s birth—63–64), Nwayobuije (hasten slowly—61–62), Wenite (as you rise in life, help others to rise—59–60), Ifunanya (love is the most potent medicine in human relations—57–58), Nkiruka (what the future holds in store is more important than the past—55–56), Ifedinma (thing of beauty—53–54), Ifediche (better than others—51–52), Ifeatu (renowned—49–50), Tobechukwu (respect the great creator—47–48), Ifekandu (this child is more precious than life itself—45–46) and Ifediche Atabuzo (whatever is different attracts attention).

Late in 1946 I was inducted into the Agbalanze Ozo Society at Ogbeabu with the title of Ogbuefi Nnanyelugo. The word *Nnanyelugo* means ‘Your father has glorified you’; literally, ‘Your father has given you an eagle’s feather’. In 1963, when I was President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Paramount Chief Onyejekwe, the officially recognized Obi of Onitsha, appointed me Ndichie Chief-designate with the tentative title of ‘The Oziziani Obi of Onitsha’.

* Schooling was very difficult in the boyhood days of my father. His maternal uncle, Chief Mba, insisted that he attend school and be educated. His father objected strongly and insisted that it would deplete the labour force on the farm to allow a strong boy like Chukwuemeka to idle away his time absorbing the nonsense of the white man. His mother, being a staunch Christian, supported the idea of giving her boy an education. Father used to tell me how he and his mother would deceive his father into believing that he was going to farm in the morning, whilst he would wrap his clothing in cocoa yam leaves and bolt away to school.

He completed his education in 1898 and among his con-

temporaries were Bishop A. C. Onyeabo, Chief Samuel C. Obianwu, Henry Venn Okwusogu and D. O. Okagbue. I have in my possession a photograph which father and the last named two class-mates took in 1898 with their tutor and guide, Rev. Taylor. He taught school for some time before he was selected among those recruited for service in the Northern Nigeria Brigade. Father's first station was at Lokoja. Later, they moved to Zungeru, only to shift again to Kaduna, whose climate was more salubrious to Lord Lugard.

Three significant features form a background relief to my family tapestry. First, Mba Akalam, the father of my maternal grandmother, died as the oldest living Onitsha citizen. He was reputed to be over 100 years old. He knew practically all the early missionaries who worked in Onitsha from the days of Bishop Crowther.

Secondly, my paternal grandfather, Azikiwe Molokwu, was said to possess a photographic memory. His mind was very sharp and he never forgot names of people he had met. He was so good at figures that, when there was a dispute as to the correctness of dowry claims, he was usually retained by his contemporaries; and his calculations were accepted as correct.

Thirdly, the royal lineage of my maternal ancestry depicts a cosmopolitan mixture of tribes and clans, for example: the mother of Obi Udogwu hailed from Akiri; the mother of Obi Ijelekepe came from Ibuzo; the mother of Obi Chimedie was from Oze; and the mother of Obi Aroli was an Igala woman from Idah.

3. IBRAHIM OF ZUNGERU

*According to J. Barlatt Hughes, the Sierra Leone octogenarian who had lived in Northern Nigeria for close on sixty years, and who was a contemporary of my father, the eve of my birth was signalled by the flash of a comet, which set the tongues of different sections of the Zungeru community wagging. When I was born at noon the following day, November 16, 1904, in a conically-shaped grass hut, many soothsayers predicted a chequered future for me. One of them was said to have christened me 'Ibrahim', after an emir who made things very hot for Lord Lugard in the days of the pacification of Kontagora district.

Zungeru, in the Wushishi District in Niger Province, was then the capital of Northern Nigeria. Being a civil servant, my father was assigned to work in that section of the military department known as the Nigeria Regiment, which was a unit of the West African Frontier Force. 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, Badegi, Baro, Muregi, and Lokoja from the Baro railway junction at Minna.

As far as my childhood recollections go, it appeared to me that the earth was peopled by all kinds of living and moving things – bipeds, quadrupeds, reptiles, birds. I was particularly afraid of a feather-covered biped, whenever I happened to handle one of its chicks; of all living things, fowls came in closest contact with me. As for men and women, they were like giants to me.

* As I grew up, one of the questions I was obliged to ask was why I was named Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe, alias Olobonma-nebulu-okwu. I was informed that it was my parents' wish to have me so named, and that it was usual for a Christian to have three names. I did not quarrel with my middle name and my surname, but it seemed rather queer that I should be given the name Benjamin, which is not indigenous to the African. Not until I was 30 years of age did I have the courage to blast tradition and cast it away whilst retaining the purely African and Onitsha names, NNAMDI AZIKIWE. As for the alias, it was given to me by my mother, and signified that she thought that I was the most beautiful boy in all creation, so beautiful as to make others envious. This cognomen typifies the highly developed sense of humour, blended with romance, in Onitsha colloquialism.

Occasionally I would ask questions as to how I came into the world, and either a good smack on the buttock or a severe lashing from the tongue of my mother was the answer. I was not satisfied, but later I managed to learn the truth from my neighbourhood playmates. We all hoped that sooner or later, we would grow up to be like our parents, fully developed and matured to bring children into the world.

* My education began at an early age under a Sierra Leone

gentleman, Mr Ray, who I was told put the finishing touches to my study of the ABC. Then I was placed in the care of T. J. Watson, chief dispenser of the medical department, then a very junior officer. I had expected a grand reunion with him when I planned to tour the north in 1937, on the eve of the inauguration of the *West African Pilot*, but he unfortunately died one month before my arrival at Kaduna.

¶ Up to the year 1912, I lived in Northern Nigeria with my parents. To all intents and purposes, I was a Hausa boy then, for I was able to speak that language very fluently, so that my father became apprehensive that I might lose my mother tongue. He therefore decided that I should return to Onitsha to be trained by my aunt and paternal grandmother in the lore and traditions of Onitsha.

On my return to Onitsha, I had to attend the Holy Trinity School of the Roman Catholic Mission with my cousin, Andrew MacIntosh, whose mother was the original owner of the site of the lands adjacent to that mission. My father objected to my being brought up as a Roman Catholic. He was of opinion that although he was not nominally a Christian, yet he was one at heart, who lived by, and practised, the Golden Rule. When now he heard that I was to be baptized as a Roman Catholic he instructed that I should attend the CMS School, because he wanted me to become a Protestant as he was. So I became a member of Christ Church in the CMS Niger Mission.

During the religious services, I actually believed that the pastor-in-charge of Christ Church, Onitsha, the Reverend George Nicholas Anyaegbunam, the first clergyman produced by Onitsha, was God himself. I made this confession in later years in America, when certain critics of Marc Connelly's *Green Pastures* thought that the theme of the play was fantastic and was not true to life. In my personal experience, it was.

¶ The year 1913 is important to me because it signified the time when I had to assist nature in my habiliments. Hitherto, my father had been approached by my aunt, Azumdialo, to purchase a pair of boots for me. My father always replied that the pair of natural boots which God had graciously given to me were sufficient. By persistence, it was possible for him to buy me a pair of boots in order to celebrate Christmas in 1913.

They were bought at the store of Mr Nottidge and the boots squeaked like a cat's meowing!

★ In 1914, after the start of World War I, I was one of the bell-ringers of the school. At the hour of twelve, I would climb up to the belfry and toll twelve; then all the teachers and pupils of the school would kneel down in prayer, as the pastor or the headmaster prayed to God so that the Allied armies might be victorious. I was perplexed by these prayers. So I asked my teacher why was it necessary for us to pray to God in order to enable the Allied armies to win the war. He told me that, according to the knowledge he gleaned from the colonial administrators and missionary teachers, the Germans were barbarians and butchers who were devilish in their brutality. So it was necessary to invoke divine aid.

↘ I further asked him whether the Germans prayed to the same God, and he replied in the affirmative. Then I inquired whether German schoolboys also prayed that the Allied armies should win the war. He replied that they prayed for the Central Powers to win. Because it looked rather queer to me, I insisted that I did not understand why the Allied armies and the Central Powers should pray to the same God for victory on their respective sides. I then questioned my teacher whether God was partial.

↘ I was spanked and ordered to shut my mouth and cease from asking silly questions; otherwise I would be lashed on the buttock, twelve strokes plus one for the Kaiser! So I kept quiet. Nevertheless, I could observe from the puzzled look of my teacher and my class-mates that all were perplexed at the anomaly of two opposing armies praying to the same God for victory over each other.

4. ONITSHA ADO N'IDU

I started, like other human beings, at a very early age to be curious. My paternal grandmother told me that I was so curious to find out the constituents of fire that I would almost have been roasted alive had she not been present to save me. The scars on my arms and right knee are the living witnesses of my first attempt to leave this earth by accident. As usual, the incident created a great stir in our family circle and some

unkind gossip accused grandma of having bewitched me in order to hand me over to her associates in witchcraft.

As grandmother found me a willing listener, she used to enjoy entertaining me with stories relating to the early history of Onitsha. Although she was illiterate, she had a very keen mind and I used to tell her that I wished my memory were as highly developed as hers. One day I asked her the meaning of the word 'Onitsha'. She explained that it had historical significance. The terminology meant one who despised another. It is a contraction of two words, *Onini* to despise, and *Ncha* meaning others. So that the two words when joined together mean one who despises others.

Then I asked her why we despised others. She patted me on the back and told me that it was due to our aristocratic background and tradition. I insisted that she should explain to me the basis of this supercilious social attitude. She told me that we despised others because we descended from the royal house of Benin, and so regarded ourselves as the superiors of other tribes who had no royal blood in their veins. It was therefore taboo for us to associate with others on a level of social equality.

Of course, this view sounds rather anachronistic today; I do not believe in aristocracy of birth but aristocracy of intelligence, but I have recorded grandma's views to show how the earliest Onitsha socialites regarded their contemporaries. Of course, this fatuous attitude has been considerably modified as a result of external factors and the forces of social progress.

I continued to belabour my grandmother to tell me more of the history and origins of the Onitsha people. She narrated that many, many years ago, there lived at Idu (Benin) a great Oba who had many children. Due to a power struggle regarding the right of precedence among the princes of the blood and other altercations, there was a civil war in Benin. One day, the supporters of one of the princes insulted and assaulted Queen Asije, the mother of the Oba of Benin, who was accused of having trespassed on their farmland.

Enraged at this evidence of indiscipline and lawlessness, the Oba ordered his war chief and brother, Gbunwala Asije, to apprehend and punish the insurgents. In the attempt to penalise them, Chima, the ultimate founder of the Onitsha city-

state, a prince of the blood in his own right, led the recalcitrants against his uncle, Gbunwala. This intensified the civil war which rent the kingdom of Benin in two and led to the founding of Onitsha Ado N'Idu.

Grandma continued that after fighting for a while Chima realised that his men were outnumbered, and so he urged them to become pioneers and migrate to the eastern bank of the Niger so as to found a new nation, where they would be their own masters without irritating interference by the Oba or his satraps. So they retreated and, wherever they encamped, the place was identified with the prefix 'Onitsha' because they were too headstrong to be disciplined and too proud to surrender.

As the great trek from Benin progressed, some did not have the stout heart of the pioneer-warrior, and decided to settle at different places, known to day as Onitsha-Ugbo, Onitsha-Olona, Onitsha-Mili, Obior, Issele Ukwu, Ossomari, Aboh, etc.

There my grandmother stopped this thrilling narrative. But I insisted that she should tell me some more about Chima and what happened to him. She said that since the migration took a long time, Chima did not live long so as to enjoy the fruits of his leadership before he died. Some of the pioneers, who thought that Gbunwala might still pursue them, crossed the River Niger and penetrated the territories bordering the eastern banks of the Niger. As grandma continued her story, I dozed in her arms and fell into a deep slumber.

I would like to concentrate now on important personalities who helped to develop Onitsha and enable it to take its place with other communities on this side of the Niger. Also I should not like to overlook my childhood classmates and playmates. As for the former, I remember that in 1914-15 the following were my classmates in Standards I and II, before I left for Lagos: George B. C. Anyaegbunam, Mercy Anyaegbuman, Mrs Helena Ogu Mends; Mrs Eunice Abiana Nnoruka, Janet Brown, Mrs Jemima Okobi Anazonwu, Solomon Nnaemeka Orakwue, Eva Orakwue, Simon Agu, Emmanuel Jacob, Isaiah Nwanza Ilochukwu, Christopher Nwitom Akalam. My playmates consisted of the boys who lived in our neighbourhood at Ogbe Umu Onitsha. In alphabetical order they

were as follows: the Agbasimalos (Chukwuma and his brother 'Boy Nta'); the Agus (Simon, Paul and Michael); the Anyogus (Luke, Charlie and Jacob); the Obianwus (Martha, Josiah Okwudi, Samuel Chukwuma, David and Edward); Daniel Ojukwu; Ben Okonkwo; the Onyejekwes (Isaac Obiekwe, Christiana Ifeyinwa, Samuel Akose, Arinze, Robert, and Patrick Ubaka).

✕The bigger boys in our neighbourhood did influence our lives by their activities and achievements. They made us to aim higher, and to realise that the success achieved by them was within our reach. I refer to the following: Samuel Nwachukwu Obi; Johnny and Luke Anyogu; Isaac, Thomas and Samuel Ojukwu; Johnny and Samuel Amobi; Richard Onyejekwe; and Samuel Cole. S. N. Obi left the Government School, Onitsha, in 1914, to assume duties as a customs clerk in Warri. The two Anyogu brothers, Johnny and Luke, were the first sons of Onitsha to proceed to the United Kingdom for secondary education. The others were easily absorbed in the mercantile establishments. In those days, jobs for first school leavers were for the taking.

Another source of reinforcement to the Onitsha community consisted of some natives of the Gold Coast, some of whom settled permanently while others returned. Names like Blankson, Sanniez, Winful, Arthur and Mensah left their impressions on this riverine town. In the heyday of the Royal Niger Company, most of the coopers and book-keepers employed by this firm were from the Gold Coast. 'Sanniez Bread' is still a hallmark of superiority in local bakery, thanks to the industry and diligence of the wife of the popular dispenser of the 'African' Hospital at Onitsha for many years. For decades the name of Winful was synonymous with the BBWA Onitsha.

Among the most famous European missionaries who served Onitsha loyally and faithfully for a number of years were Bishop Tugwell, Bishop Lasbrey, Archdeacon Sidney Smith, Archdeacon G. T. Basden (whose two classics on Ibo ethnography earned him a doctorate of literature from Durham University), J. N. Cheetham (legendary accountant of the CMS, Ozala), Miss 'Ochiligwe' Elms (after whom the Mission hospital at Iyi-Enu was named), and Miss Alice Warner (founder and famous Principal of the CMS Girls' School at Ugwuoba, near

Ogbunike), Rev. Payne, Rev. Prior, Archdeacon Wilcocks, Rev. E. J. Clark, and Dr Cecil J. Patterson, Archbishop of West Africa.

Onitsha-on-the-Niger made history when Bishop Ajayi Crowther and the Rev. Schon landed there in 1857 to lay a foundation for the establishment of the protestant Christian mission there. This spiritual venture attracted quite a number of dedicated individuals, black and white, to settle down here and aid in disseminating civilising influence on this historic community. There were European, West Indian and Sierra Leone missionaries, some of whom died and were buried at the Old Compound cemetery.

Among Sierra Leoneans who settled permanently at Onitsha, following the wave of migration from the western hemisphere, were the Nottidges, Smythes, Johnsons, Dayrells, Cokers, Roberts and Doomabeys, not to overlook Claude Allen and Agbakuta Williams. These men left an indelible impression on Onitsha, and were all absorbed as members of the Onitsha community, and their children were accepted without question as Onitsha citizens.

Perhaps the family to influence me most to aspire for the stars in those days was the Anyogu clan, who lived a stone's throw from my grandmother's house. Their parents, Jacob Oradiwe and Mrs Anna Fatima Anyogu, were devoted Catholics and pillars of that church. Their eldest son, Johnny, was our big brother and we all learned to respect him as such. But he was full of pranks also and would hide on the second floor of their building and watch for me as I returned from fetching water from the River Niger, and shout: 'Ben is a bad lad!' I would be furious, and shout imprecations at him. But Johnny would look out from the window and calmly ask me whether I had seen the latest Catholic primer? Then he would recite from it: 'Ben is a bad lad!' And all the Anyogus would have a hearty laugh at my expense.

It was not long before he and Luke travelled to England to study at St Mary's College of the Holy Ghost, Castlehead, Lancs. They returned five years later, having finished their secondary education with flying colours. Johnny has the distinction of being the first Onitsha Catholic priest and the second Ibo to be admitted into holy orders, in 1930; the first

being Father Paul Emecheta of Asaba Division, who was ordained in the Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos, by Bishop Terrien in 1917.

After many years of meritorious service, Father John Cross Anyogu was consecrated an auxilliary Bishop in 1957. Five years later, he assumed full episcopal responsibility for the newly-created Enugu Diocese, and died on July 5, 1967. In my eulogy on the memory of this pioneer Christian apostle, I said:

'Playing the role of "big brother" was his forte. Giving protection to the young boys who were harried by local bullies was his self-appointed duty. Telling stories of great men and women who made history was a sort of magnet which drew us to him. . . . He was my senior boyhood mate and playmate. We grew up and played together, like good neighbours. . . . That was the indelible impression "Johnny" left with me throughout life.'

Our pastime in those days was swimming and angling. We would drift to Otu Okwodu, near the Ebenebe tree, and join other boys in fishing. Whether successful or not, it was always a pleasure for us to compete among ourselves for the first boy to swim across the River Niger, from Onitsha to Asaba. Usually we swam to the nearest sandbank; but Daniel Ojukwu, the swimmer with bloodshot eyes, excelled by crossing to the western side once in a while.

✶ The year following, 1915, wrought a great change in my life. I had progressed in my class and was now promoted to Standard II. One day I visited my aunt, the mother of Andrew MacIntosh, and while playing with Andrew, their dog jumped on me and bit my right foot. Mr Akor, my aunt's husband, saved me, and I was taken to the 'African' hospital, admitted, and treated by Dr C. W. O'Keefe, whose name I remember so well because I had nothing else to read except my bed-ticket.

As usual, grandmother came in for a share of the blame. My aunt charged her with having bewitched the dog which bit me; grandmother of all people, since I was her pet! The kindly old soul bore the flimsy charges with dignity and fortitude becoming upright Christian African womanhood. Meanwhile, reports had reached my father, who was now stationed in Lagos, that I was bitten by a dog and unless I was

sent to Lagos I might be harmed by the witches and wizards of Onitsha.

So my father requested that I should come down to Lagos to continue my education. This gave me the opportunity of attending a secondary school and broadening my horizon. Thus an ordinary dog-bite paved the way for the realization of my life's dream.

CHAPTER II
BOYHOOD DAYS

The sociological realities I had to grapple with during my formative years

'God make my life a little staff,
Whereon the weak may rest;
That so what health and strength I have
May serve my neighbours best.'

J. WALCH

I. IN THE LAND OF DOSUMU

As a lad of ten I was excited at the prospect of travelling to Lagos, the land of King Dosumu and the capital of Nigeria. Feverish preparations were made for the voyage. My aunt, Madam Azumdialo Obi, was to accompany me, and we were to travel by one of the Niger Company's stern-wheelers, sailing on the Niger to Forcados, whence we should join a mail or branch boat to Lagos. As the date of our departure dawned, I bade farewell to my playmates in our neighbourhood at Ogbe Umu Onitsha. Grandmother, Janet and other relatives were at the waterside to see us off.

We sailed down the river, skirting Odo Ekpe, Atani, Ossomari and Aboh. Then we viewed Ndoni and Assay in the background and proceeded to Patani, Gana-Gana, Burutu and finally reached Forcados, where we lodged in the house of a relative who worked in the Marine Dockyard. The next day we joined an ocean steamer and proceeded to Lagos. It was the first time I had been to sea. It was so majestic; but was I sea sick! At last we arrived in Lagos and I was happy to have a reunion with my parents and sister, Lily, at 189 Bamgbose Street.

Our house was near the Araromi Market, by the sandgrouse, which was swamp-land undergoing reclamation. Back of our house was Tokunboh Street, flanked by Epetedo,

where the descendants of Oshodi and his Tarpah warriors settled in the early days of Lagos. I still remember 'Pa' Sola, a close friend of my father, who lived opposite us. He was ever willing to teach me how to speak Yoruba, and before I had been a year in Lagos I had mastered its rudiments.

In 1916, my father was transferred to Kaduna and had to arrange for my accommodation elsewhere. I was left in the care of a guardian, Madam Ofajju, an Onitsha relative who lived with her daughter Mary and her husband at 139 Bamgbose Street. Mary's husband was a Sierra Leone Mende whom we called 'Alfa' because he was a Muslim. This change of environment wrought many changes in my life because it brought me into contact with the Aguda section of this 'Brazilian Quarter'. Here were concentrated many families of repatriated Brazilians and Sierra Leoneans of the old Lagos.

* No. 139 Bamgbose Street will ever remain green in my memory since I spent the most interesting phase of my boyhood days there. Nearby at No. 137 was the residence of another boy, Francis Adebayo Alaba, whose parents came from Abeokuta. We lived like brothers and seemed to have the same bent in life, my contact with him making me interested in printing and photography. I remember dreaming with him how we would own a printing press and a cinema theatre, where both of us could work together and make jobs possible for a great number of people.

I went so far as to tell him that with his knowledge of printing we could start a newspaper; and with his knowledge of photography we could start a cinema. Then we would advertise the cinema in the newspaper and then advertise the newspaper in the cinema. He was assistant head printer of the cms Press in Lagos for many years before he started his own printing business. His mother, who acted as my foster-mother in those halcyon days, expired in 1938, and I felt her death just as keenly as her children. So close was the attachment between me and the Alaba family.

Two other boys lived in the same yard. They were Ladipo da Costa and Emmanuel 'Esu' Coker. Ladipo was a very good pal; but I could not choose which of the two, he or Eman, was the more rascally inclined. I doubt if any day passed when either Ladipo or Eman did not receive a good hiding from

their mothers. As for Ladipo, his father almost wore himself out by lashing the chap on the buttock. But the joke was that after receiving floggings from their parents, they often turned to Bayo and myself and gave us a good whacking, because we were too good-natured and too soft to resist their taunts.

I seemed to have been Eman's favourite, while Bayo was Ladipo's favourite, whenever they started their escapades. This mutual sufferance drew Bayo and myself closer and we are still good friends. Eman is now known as Claver. Whenever we meet we talk of the good old days; and whenever we remember Ladipo, we mourn his early demise.

In Bamgbose Street we also lived near the Akereles. John, the eldest son of the popular contractor, was very kindly. Up to that time I had not met any boy who was such a humanitarian during my stay in Bamgbose Street. His three brothers, Alaba, Oni, and Abiola, were real Aguda products. I do not say this in derision, but I mean that they were the life of our neighbourhood and they made things hot for boys who were not strong enough to resist the affronts and bullying pranks of other Aguda boys.

Alaba, who became a barrister, is now dead. Oni and Abiola are medical practitioners, known in polite society as Dr J. O. Akerele and Chief Dr Flavius A. Akerele, respectively. All of them will continue to remain for me what they were in 1916-20. Alaba was nearer my age whilst Oni and Flavius were my juniors. Our attachment was particularly solid when we played our football and cricket matches in 'Toronto' (as the open space in front of King's College was called) or in the middle of the streets. Of course, Alaba did not generally mind hitting his boundaries by shattering the window panes of nearby dwellings. Among our other playmates I should mention Vera Cruz, Beecroft, Soares, Pinheiro, Gabriel, Zollner, D'Almeida, Grillo, Salvador, etc.; names that clearly bear witness to descent from Brazilian Negroes, who returned to Africa about two generations earlier. Unhappily, John Akerele was drowned at the Victoria Beach on an Easter Tuesday. We were all together that day enjoying the annual picnic and frolicking when some one indicated that John was missing. I believe John would have carved a great name for

himself in the world, just as the rest of his family have done.

Our friendship with the Akereles was almost severed when Bayo and I decided not to join the Aguda Masquerade called *Kareta* and derived from Brazil—the dancers wore the costumes of sixteenth-century Portugal—because they were too rough and we had not the physical capacity to stand the gaff, especially when the *koboko* (horse whip) was used freely among their members. When now we joined the Olowogbowo Masquerade, we became marked boys in our neighbourhood. Salvador and the other leaders of the Aguda Masquerade would waylay us, whenever we returned from Olowogbowo, and chase us around the neighbourhood. But we were often saved by our allies, the stalwart sons of Oshodi (a Tarkpa chief).

Another young man joined our ranks at 139 Bamgbose Street: Adeoye, Prince of Akure. He was not a rascal and so he supported Bayo and myself against the bullies of Aguda Quarters. When I left them for the north, on a vacation, Adeoye gave me a note-book, which I still possess, autographing it as follows: 'From your friend, Adeoye, Prince of Akure.' He has since lived at Ado Ekiti and Oba, near Akure.

2. 'NON SIBI SED ALIIS'

I had not been in Lagos one week when my father took me to the Wesleyan Boys' High School at Broad Street, where he was granted an interview by the Vice-Principal, the Rev. L. C. Mead, who was in charge of the school whilst the Principal, the Rev. A. W. Moulton Wood, was on leave. After seeing me and asking me a number of simple questions to test my knowledge of English and my intelligence, I was admitted as a student of the school.

Wesleyan Boys' High School is the second oldest secondary school in Nigeria. Founded in 1878, it joined the CMS Grammar School and King's College to offer secondary education to the children of Lagos. The former is the oldest secondary school in Nigeria, whilst the latter was the blue riband of secondary schools of the time. When the scout movement flourished in

Lagos, its establishment followed the same pattern, the CMSGS being the first patrol, and the WBHS the second.

As the next term opened, I reported myself at school. The first student to welcome me and to treat me cordially was George Egerton Shyngle, one of the children of the great lawyer, then a leader of the Nigerian bar. While he wore a sailor's suit, I was garbed, as usual, in khaki. Later, I got to know that his father came from the Gambia and, since I had never been outside Nigeria, I became very interested in him.

In those days our upper class-mates included some of the finest products of this old secondary school: Abraham, O. I. Ajose, Frank Browne, Frank Byass, Rev. Cadmus, Francis Cole, Hassan Johnson, the Lawsons, Melbury, A. E. Desmond Mills, Mould, B. B. Salami, Peter K. Sagoe, Taiwo, Torto, Vanderpuijc, Wilson, and Adekunle Wright. Our teachers included Professor S. M. Harden, H. Ipinlaiye, Victor Adedapo Kayode, E. Oladeinde Osho, J. Kwao Sagoe; also Frank Browne, Frank Byass and Hassan Johnson. Being placed in Form II, along with George, he introduced me to some of his friends, who were our class mates. Amongst them were Flowers Macaulay, Babington Macaulay, Leslie Modupe Hall Gage, J. B. Hartley, Cyril Parker-French, George Otonba Payne, and Stanley Robin.

I still remember how Flowers and George used to tease the old professor, especially when he fell asleep on hot afternoons, during the dry season. One of them would creep behind him and tickle his ears with a straw, the whole class silent. The professor, an erudite and kind soul, would wake up chagrined and say: 'Who has committed this atrocious act of cowardice? Who has defied all codes of honour and of decency to tickle the ears of his teacher? If I find out that person, "I shall cut one off"'. By this the professor meant that he would cut off the ten weekly marks for conduct, one by one, until there was none left. These boys were the life of our school.

We also had a bully in our class, Moses Williams, whose forte was to use his head and butt some of us into submission. His favourite hunting ground was the back of the Priscilla Memorial Hospital, between Catholic Mission Road and Igbosere Road. He would waylay those of us who were marked out to be his victims and challenge us to a fight. One had no

choice of weapons, so I dreaded returning from school by that road. It was a relief for me when I shifted from 189 to 139 Bamgbose Street!

✕ For leading my class at the end of 1916 I was awarded a special prize, which was presented to me by Lord Lugard on our prize giving day at the Glover Memorial Hall early in 1917. It was autographed by the Principal, and it was a de luxe edition of the Methodist Church hymnbook. I tried to memorise most of the words of the favourite hymns. It is one of the treasured books in my library today.

The most important lesson I learned at this secondary school was the embodiment of its motto: *Non sibi sed aliis*, 'Not for us alone but for others'. This implied that education was meant to train human beings to serve their kind in a spirit of selfless service and love. As opportunity presented itself, our Principal and other speakers did not fail to emphasise that we were privileged to receive the benefit of secondary education; therefore, we should use our knowledge in the service of our fellow-men and so elevate mankind from a lower to a higher estate in life.

✕ At the end of the second term in 1918, my father requested me to join him at Kaduna South and make preparations for my return to Onitsha to continue my schooling there. I was too young to appreciate the issues involved. It was not until later that I realised that there was a deep-seated misunderstanding between him and my mother, so that they decided to separate for good. For me, going to school was all that mattered, the venue made no difference. It was later that I knew that a domestic squabble was responsible for my being removed from Lagos.

One important feature of my early boyhood days, 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 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. We studied together and participated in various extracurricular activities and

different sports, mainly athletics, boxing, cricket, football, hockey and swimming. I took part actively in practically all of these sports. The contacts made me to be more cosmopolitan and fraternal in my human relations.

In this connection I would say that I recall with pleasure incidents which were poignant and which had made lasting impressions on me to this day on my attitude to people generally. In 1917, a close friendship developed between me and Adeoye, a son of the late Deji of Akure. As I have narrated earlier, we are still friendly. Three years later my room-mate at the boarding house of my school was Adedoyin Williams, a son of the late Akarigbo of Shagamu in Ijebu Remo. We used to spend our vacations together at the *Afin* (Oba's palace) of their fathers. The kindness and hospitality extended to me without any discrimination left an indelible impression and has sustained my friendly relationship with the Yoruba. I can cite identical instances with other linguistic groups.

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 the sanctions of authority. A glance at the staff lists of those days will show that most of the chief clerks hailed from the West Indies or Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast; Nigeria at that time had insufficient educated men—a legacy from the days when it was ruled from Sierra Leone (1866-74) and from the Gold Coast (1874-86). However, Nigerians of various tribes worked together under them to lay a lasting foundation for an efficient civil service.

3. VACATION IN KADUNA SOUTH

Before 1917 was over, my father ordered that I should proceed to Kaduna to spend my holidays. I was very glad of the opportunity because I wanted to revisit the north which was the

scene of my childhood days. Having bidden farewell to Bayo, Prince Adeoye of Akure, Eman, Ladipo and other friends, I went to the Iddo railway station.

Because I travelled third class I was able to appreciate what it meant to sit on a hard bench for sixty hours. Some of the travellers were very sociable and would share their meals with others. Hausa travellers would buy bananas, sugar cane, groundnuts, oranges, and other kinds of fruits for me. Since I spoke Hausa fluently at that time, I was regarded as one of them. Thus the long trip was not so tedious, and I enjoyed it thoroughly.

On arrival at Kaduna South (as Kaduna Junction was then called), I found my parents—father, mother and stepmother—and my sister waiting for me at the platform. It was a delightful reunion. I also had the opportunity of renewing acquaintance with the new wife of my father. Thus, at a tender age, I was privileged to study the part played by polygamy, as an African marital institution, in the African family. The new wife was known to me when I lived with my paternal grandmother at Onitsha.

I found everything pleasant at first, but later I discovered that what my father had always advised others was true: whenever people asked him about polygamy, he neither denounced it nor praised it, but would simply say: 'One wife, one trouble; two wives, two troubles.' By having a new wife, not only did he incur the displeasure of my mother but he also invited palaver in his home, because day in and day out, either the two wives quarrelled or he and one of them would quarrel so that he had no peace of mind.

My young mind revolted against polygamy. I saw my mother exchange blows with my father for no other reason than jealousy. And I saw my mother and the new wife exchange harsh words for the same reason. If father ate all the food cooked by one wife, then the other would regard it as evidence of father's affection for that particular wife. If father chatted with one oftener than the other, then this was regarded as evidence of his affection. So our home became a madhouse. These conditions became unbearable and so my father and my mother agreed to disagree after seventeen years of married life.

I had an aversion for polygamy then, because I saw with



1. The author's mother, Rachel Chinwe Azikiwe (alias Nwanonaku).



2. The author when a student of Methodist Boys' High School, Lagos, 1917.



3. Methodist Boys' High School, Lagos. Author seated, left. Centre front: the Rev. Leonard F. Webb.

my own eyes how it facilitated the dissolution of the marriage tie between my father and mother. In later years, when I studied anthropology more systematically, I changed my mind, and I am almost convinced that polygamy may be a better system of marriage designed for moral-living humanity, if all claims to moral-living can be realised without any hypocrisy. In my studies of this tantalising subject, I discovered that polygamy was a misnomer; the correct term is polygyny.

From a biological point of view, its protagonists seem to think that when two or more wives are married to one man, provided that the heredity of the wives and the husband is desirable, such polygynous union tended to improve the human race by producing a virile stock. Opponents of this view show that in the same way disease could be easily transmitted and disseminated to the family, thereby degenerating the race.

From a sociological point of view, it is believed that polygyny encourages mutual aid, and hence family cohesion. There is evidence to support this thesis, because wives generally regard each other as sisters and also treat the children of their co-wives with maternal affection. But those who oppose this system of marriage emphasise the spirit of jealousy which is often rampant among co-mates, and conclude that this is a disruptive factor.

From a historical point of view, the protagonists of polygyny assert that it is a universal practice, having existed throughout the world in all ages. It has therefore proved to be more practicable than monogamy. Opponents of this view dismiss the argument on the ground that the value of any practice cannot be assessed fairly by its universality.

Theologically, one group of Christians challenges others to refer to any portion in the Holy Bible where polygyny is specifically denounced. They refer to the great patriarchs of the Bible as famous polygynists, and cite many church fathers including Martin Luther and Father Bernard Ochino, among others, as having sanctioned it as a social practice. Opponents of this view quote portions of the Bible and other church fathers to show that polygyny is evil.

After having lived in a polygynous society for most of my life, and in a monogamous society for over a decade, I am more

favourably inclined towards polygyny. The western social system, in view of its hypocrisies and double standards, seems to me to be a bane.

The sight of our family cracking due to the forces of polygyny was sickening to me, and I was very much relieved to return to Lagos after the holidays; but the guffaws, heehaws and brawls, so familiar to polygynous families, lingered in my memory. I must confess my admiration for my father's new wife. She was so sociable, so friendly, so kindly, and so maternal to me.

4. BACK IN THE LAND OF CHIMA

A year later, my father instructed me to leave the high school and return to Onitsha, the land of Chima. He gave me secret instructions which were a code of behaviour towards my mother. When I reached home, in accordance with my father's orders, I refused to associate with my mother. But she called me and pleaded that she bore me in her womb for nine months and I was part of her. Therefore, I should not desert her simply because she and her husband had decided to separate.

I had second thoughts, and confessed my filial love for the woman who gave me birth. I vowed to be true to her, as the woman who made it possible for me to see the wonders of this beautiful earth and to participate in the various activities which beset me in life. Then I left her and went to my paternal grandmother and explained to her what had transpired with my mother. She blessed me and told me not to be biased by anybody towards the womb that bore me. Mothers, she pontificated, were the pearls of creation.

Somehow I became confused, having become enmeshed in a domestic quarrel to which I was extraneous. So I wrote to my father and condemned his action. I told him that he should have taken into consideration the fact that this woman had perpetuated his seed through two of us, and that he could have been more considerate. As for my father, he realised at once that I was being influenced by my mother; so he wrote and told me not to pass judgment on him, or any other husband for that matter, until I had become a husband myself, and could therefore appreciate the enigma called 'woman'.

When I rejoined CMS Central School, at Onitsha, I was placed in Standard vi, my class at the WBHS at Lagos, to the consternation of my former classmates who were still in Standard v. In those days the British West Indies gave some of their finest products to the British West African colonies. Among our West Indian teachers then were the Rev. W. E. Blackett (from Barbados), Messrs McKay and Stewart (the latter died at Onitsha), the Reverends Brown and Llwellyn.

In my new class I came in contact with new classmates; some were serious and some were as playful as any other bunch of schoolboys. Among these may be mentioned Samuel Obiora Achebe, Stephen Ezenwa, Godfrey Inoma, Emmanuel Isiakpuna, Charles Ijoma, Christopher Nwazota, Patrick Emengo, Gabriel Okoye, Osakwe, Simon Ugolo and Paul Uwechia. Uwechia was my bugbear in the class. He delighted himself in cracking jokes at my expense by calling me *Nwa-iyimpi* (child of a squirrel). My reaction was to let loose a flood of tears; and the whole class would burst into unrestrained laughter. One day I had to stone him with an ink-pot.

At this time, most of my boyhood mates and I were choristers at the newly established Bishop Crowther Memorial church at Egerton Road, Onitsha, founded by the English-speaking inhabitants of Onitsha, in order to have a place where they could worship in the English language, since all the other churches in Onitsha and environs were conducted in Ibo, a language not understood or spoken by them.

Most of these church-goers were businessmen or civil servants or salaried employees. They could ill afford to spend a lot on the maintenance of this church, so they offered to pay choristers the princely sum of one shilling a month, which we accepted with pleasure. This was enough to ensure our attendance at church every Sunday.

Our organist was C. A. A. Barnes, an architect and surveyor from Cape Coast who was reputed to hold a Mus. Bac. degree from Cambridge University. He engaged himself in welfare activities among the people of Onitsha, philanthropically designing free of charge the plans of the Dennis Memorial Grammar School building, which was then a project of the Church Missionary Society. His house at Old Market Road was a sort of hospital which most of the choristers frequented

for first aid treatment. Our choirmaster was N. T. Nottidge, whose fatherly guidance was appreciated by all of the choristers.

As students of the Central School, we were obliged to do 'Friday duties'. This meant that every Friday, the older boys would join the clearing gang to cut grasses at *Ajofia*, that is, 'the Condemned Bush' used for the burial of criminals. It was the site of the new secondary school. Others would carry burnt bricks to the site, or do all sorts of odd jobs to help the project. As a lad of fourteen, I cheerfully joined those who carried burnt bricks to the site on our heads. The great lesson we learned from this manual labour was that man should make some sacrifice for the welfare of his fellows. Thus I feel highly honoured to have contributed my humble quota to the realisation of the dream of the Dennis Memorial Grammar School's founders.

I was among those who passed the Standard vi examination; so I was appointed a first year pupil teacher and located at Oraifite, about thirteen miles from Onitsha, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. That was in 1919 and my monthly salary was seven shillings and sixpence. In view of my good fortune, I assured my mother that, as I was now a working man, I would share my earnings with her to make her happy. She was glad and rejoiced that, at last, I did not desert her.

My colleagues at St Jude's, Oraifite, were Reverend Abel Amobi, the head master, J. I. Onugha, his assistant, Charles Aghadiuno (second year pupil teacher), Joseph Okonjo and Miss Margaret Udeoji (first year pupil teachers). Our association at Oraifite was pleasant and I learnt a lot from the lectures of Messrs Amobi and Onugha. It was due to their early influence that I began to appreciate the value of hard and conscientious study as a means of success in life. At the end of the year, I passed and was among the leaders of my class. The following year, as a second year pupil teacher, I was located at Onitsha, at my *alma mater*, then under the headmastership of the Reverend Jeremiah Egbuche, a brilliant teacher and evangelist, who died in his prime.

By now pressure was brought to bear on my father by his mother and relatives. They advised him to consider my tender

age and leave me out of his squabbles with his wives. Father reconsidered his action and wrote me the most sympathetic letter a father can write his son: that I was only fifteen years old; that I should continue my secondary studies; that I should reconsider my decision to become a teacher; and that I should join him in Calabar. He suggested that I was too young to stop schooling, and that teaching was not appropriate for me at that stage of my life. He did not object to my adopting teaching as a profession later, but was of the opinion that my education was still inadequate.

I wrote and declined his invitation. I informed him that I was teaching and earning money with which to help my mother who was now alone in the world, without any means of support except through her efforts as a petty trader. I said that I had made up my mind to keep on teaching until I was in position to attend the CMS Training College at Awka with a view to becoming a certificated teacher.

Of course, father could discern that I had been influenced. So he wrote a most pathetic letter to my mother, pleading with her to realise my youth and suggesting that she should allow me to continue my studies for her own benefit, for the benefit of the family, and for the benefit of Nigeria. Father also wrote a nasty letter to Archdeacon G. T. Basden, then Secretary of the Niger Mission, who had previously warned my father to leave me alone as I was satisfied with the education the CMS had given to me. In his letter my father maintained that he was living in a new era and wanted his son to be better educated and more articulate than he was.

I visited my cousin, Chief S. C. Obianwu, to seek his advice. He explained to me my mother's economic difficulties, but urged me to appreciate that learning was better than silver and gold. After consultation with my mother and later with Dr Basden, I decided to resign and had to make arrangements to proceed to Calabar so as to enter the Hope Waddell Institute. Those were the days of transport pioneering in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria. The Weeks Engineering Transport Company of Aba was then among the well-organised lorry transporters in that part of the country. Travel was done in stages. Perhaps after a twenty-mile 'push-and-ride' in a lorry, the latter would finally go on strike and the passengers would

clamber out and help in pushing it through the mud and slime. My young mind enjoyed these experiences, for they gave me thrills of travel and adventure which I could not obtain in reading foreign books.

CHAPTER III

THE BIRTH OF A DREAM

The psychological factors and social forces that influenced the development of my personality

'While man's desires and aspirations stir, he cannot choose but err; yet in his erring journey through the night, instinctively he travels toward the light.'

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

I. 'HOW WE TRAIN IDIOTS'

* Early in 1920, when I reached Calabar, I was comfortably accommodated at the Abakpa quarter reserved for the African staff of the Nigeria Regiment. My stepmother was kindly disposed and made me appreciate her as a valued member of our family.

After I had settled down, father told me of his plans to enrol me at the Hope Waddell Training Institution. Later, he took me to the Rev. J. K. McGregor, principal of that famous school. Since I was not interested in the Normal Department, I was provisionally placed in Standard vi. This was unfortunate, for it meant that I had to repeat the class I passed fifteen months earlier. I removed from my father's quarters and settled in one of the dormitories of the institution, where I made new contacts.

My teacher was a West Indian, Mr Sinclair, a harsh disciplinarian. We dreaded that man with his leather belt which he used to drill compound proportion into our heads. His daughter, Doris, and Miss Chisholm were the two female members of our class. But they were not spared the indignity of sharing with the male students the blessings of flogging in school. Personally, I have always felt that results more than justified the corporal punishment inflicted in those days.

* It was during my stay at Hope Waddell that I first heard of a country whose executive and administrative officials 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 of the counties were black men; so were all the judges, the law officers and the heads of department in the civil service.

When I asked him why he came all the way to Nigeria where the reverse was the case, he told me that in Kru parlance, like in Ibo and Efik, whenever dogs congregated they often soliloquised that human beings, having been blessed by God to have buttocks instead of haunches, did not appreciate this divine gift. In other words, his country had the opportunity to give the black race leadership; but instead of doing so, they gave impression to the outside world that they were like swine who had pearls and either did not know their value or could not make use of them.

★ This revelation drew us closer, and I became very much interested in the Republic of 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. My humble attempt to interpret Liberian history and diplomacy in a book was the outcome of the inspiration I derived from my contact with this lad at Hope Waddell.

To my observation, the students were full of wit and humour. Despite the seriousness which attended our studies, they lived like other human beings and made fun out of any worthwhile situation. For example, they interpreted HWTI (i.e. Hope Waddell Training Institution) to mean 'How We Train Idiots'. When the school is not given its full name, it is also called Hope Waddell Institute. This was interpreted as 'Hopeless, Worthless Idiots'. In my youth I did not readily appreciate the significance of this joke.

✓ I was not aware of the fact that Africa needed liberation. My father was a First Class Clerk in the civil service. We seemed to be people who lived well. He gave me facilities which were not everyone's lot; and he gave me my pocket money of four shillings a month regularly. So naturally I never thought of any problems, excepting those of compound interest, which



9. Zik's Athletic Club: first and second teams, 1942.



10. The tennis player, 1947.

my West Indian teacher had assigned to my arithmetic class as home work.

Therefore I spoofed the idea of a Negro coming from America to redeem Africa, and I told my friend that we were being educated to take the place of our fathers. The young man had lost his father when he was young, and his mother was a petty trader, so he was not as lucky as some of us. He laughed at my ignorance of the conditions of the masses and proceeded to lecture me on the social conditions of the people among whom we lived.

Not all the students at Hope Waddell were sons of civil servants, he explained; some of them did not know where to go when school closed for the holidays. He referred me to some students at the institution known as 'Mission Boys'. I had not appreciated why they were so-called, imagining that they had dedicated their lives to serve the Mission. I was told that some of them were orphans or waifs or castaway twins or *osu*. They had no one to help them; so the Mission volunteered to maintain and educate them for service to their people. After giving me this pathetic information, an Ibibio colleague got hold of my right ear, pulled it and called me a dunce; I really was a 'hopeless, worthless idiot'. The rest of the boys had a big laugh at my expense. I asked this chap to retract the insult, otherwise I would report him to our Principal. He threatened that if I reported him, then he and the rest of the boys would show me 'how we train idiots' and that would consummate the mission of the school. There was another hearty laugh.

★ On Saturday I went home to Abakpa and complained to my father what had happened. He confirmed that my colleagues were right, and moreover that some Africans were 'hopeless, worthless idiots', which was why they tolerated alien rule without organised resistance. I accepted his judgment calmly. When I returned to the school, I summoned the boys and apologised for my misbehaviour on that fateful day of arguments. Judgment was delivered and I was fined one tin of herrings and one loaf of bread, to appease the Ibibio friend who had explained to me what the alphabets of the school stood for. I paid the penalty and normal relations resumed after we all had a good feed off the herrings and bread.

However, I was not satisfied to leave matters as they were.

So I asked my Yoruba friend, who was this Negro who was alleged to be coming to redeem Africa? I assured him that since father asserted that some Africans were 'hopeless, worthless idiots', obviously there was need for redemption. Therefore I wanted more information about this man and his mission. He went to his wooden box and brought out an old issue of *The Negro World*, which was then edited by the doyen of Aframerican journalism, Thomas T. Fortune.

It was a badly mutilated copy; some of the impressions were faint. But the front page contained a weekly letter from Marcus Aurelius Garvey, who was identified as 'Provisional President of Africa'. He read me parts of the message, and one part struck me forcibly. I copied it down in an old note-book:

'God almighty created each and every one of us for a place in the world; and for the least of us to think that we were created only to be what we are, and not what we can make ourselves, is to impute an improper motive to the creator for creating us.'

I was also captivated by the motto of the Garvey organisation, the Universal Negro Improvement Association: 'One God, One Aim, One Destiny.' For a long time we debated the various aspects of this message of Marcus Garvey. Later, I maintained that if Garvey was a great man, as his admirers claimed, then as black people we were not 'hopeless, worthless idiots' unless we chose to be. On the contrary, I suggested that we could make ourselves 'hopeful, worthy individuals' who were capable of appreciating the benefits of western civilization and adjusting ourselves to the new way of life Garvey preached.

I have forgotten the name of this remarkable Yoruba boy. We used to call him 'Ekpeke Kutu', and since 1920 we have lost sight of each other.

When I discussed Marcus Garvey with my father, he warned me that if I was found in possession of anything written by that man I would be arrested, because he was *persona non grata* with the authorities. Then I wanted to know why the mere possession of any newspaper containing the opinions of this remarkable West Indian should be a crime. Father explained to me that the colonial administration regarded his teachings as seditious, the crime for which Jesus of Nazareth was cruci-

fied. He refused to say more about this man and dismissed me with a warning to be careful not to be found with *The Negro World* in my possession.

Nevertheless, the motto of Garveyism appealed to me.—
 ✧ ‘One God, One Aim, One Destiny’—and I resolved to formulate my philosophy of life, so far as was practicable, towards the evangelisation of universal fatherhood, universal brotherhood, and universal happiness. Moreover, I decided to probe more into the activities of this man whose mere utterance could land Africans in jail—in a world which was said to have been made safe for democracy after World War I.

2. ‘ONLY THE BEST IS GOOD ENOUGH . . .’

In view of the fact that Hope Waddell did not have a secondary department, my father decided that I should return to Lagos to continue my studies at the Wesleyan Boys’ High School as a boarder. Having been provided with the necessary personal effects for my comfort, I left Calabar for Lagos on one of Elder Dempster’s cargo boats. Naturally, along with most African passengers, I travelled on deck.

On arrival in Lagos I reported at the school, to the Principal, the Rev. Harold W. Stacey. He kindly assigned me a room in the boarding house. My room-mate was Adedoyin Williams, the second son of the Akarigbo of Ijebu Remo. He and I cultivated a very friendly acquaintance.

The other boarders were Zaccheus A. Adebisi, Adedoyin (elder brother of Adedoyin Williams), Laduni Adeniji, Adero-unmu, Asante, Botchway, Kushimo, Macaulay, and D. Olarenwaju Stone. Both Asante and Botchway came from the Gold Coast. A friend of the boarders at this time was one Mr Lardner, a manager of the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Discovering that some of us had an aptitude for singing church hymns, he taught us some beautiful songs, one of which we used to sing before retiring at bed-time:

‘Lord keep us safe this night,
 Secure from all our fears,
 May angels guard us while we sleep,
 Till morning light appears.’

Another friend of the Rev. Stacey worked hard in establishing scouting at the school. We became the Second Lagos Patrol, following the CMS Grammar School, which pioneered the scout movement in Nigeria under the auspices of the fatherly Rev. J. R. Oliver. Some of my fellow scouters then included Festus Ogunlewe (now a chief in Ikorodu), H. O. Davies (now a lawyer), 'Keke' Richards (a deceased lawyer), L. O. Adesigbin (a deceased medical practitioner), the Kester brothers (one of whom was Chief Justice of Western Nigeria, and the other is a deceased medical practitioner).

My new class, Form IV, which consisted of thirteen boys, fought tooth and nail for class leadership. Having been away for two years, from June 1918 to 1920, I found myself the class-mate of my former juniors; but I decided to stick it out. Our class teachers included Messrs N. A. Esin, J. Kwao Sagoe (now a retired Government medical officer) and Aina Onabolu, the celebrated pioneer artist, who taught us drawing.

My new class-mates were : L. O. Adesigbin, P. H. Ahodipe (from Anecho, Togo), T. B. Ashley, Dunstan 'Iku' Cole, 'Bebe' Daniels, Christian Lawson, Lamina Oyekan, Ithiel Isola Phillips (a deceased civil engineer with B Sc degree from the University of Birmingham), P. D. Quartey (physical education master at Achimota College with BA degree from London University), Gabriel Stowe, Henry Vanderpuije, and Lasisi Williams.

Ahodipe would score almost 100 per cent in French. He was also a good student of Latin and algebra. The leadership of the class see-sawed between Phillips and Ahodipe.

The boarders attended the morning services at Tinubu Methodist Church. One day I listened to a sermon which saturated my whole being. I became spiritually electrified. It then dawned upon me that life had a meaning and I had a mission to fulfil; thus it was my task to make life worth while for my fellow men and to be a friend to struggling humanity. I was 16 years old; and the sermon was preached by the Reverend Doctor James Emmanuel Kwegyir Aggrey to a large congregation at the Tinubu Methodist Church. His text was taken from the Prophet Isaiah vi. 1-10, which reads as follows:

'In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

'Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain did he fly.

'And one cried unto another, and said, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory".

'And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

'Then said I, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts".

'Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs off the altar.

'And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged".

'Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then said I, "Here am I; send me".

'And he said, "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not".

'Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.'

Then Doctor 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. He proceeded to exegete his text, and asserted that Africans were ensconced in the wilderness of western materialism. Their ears were heavy; they heard but heeded not. Their eyes were shut; they seemed to see but they saw not. Unless, therefore, there was a reorientation of values in Africa, that continent was certainly doomed. Dr Aggrey spoke about his life, and said that when the time had come for someone to accompany the Phelps-Stokes Commission to Africa in 1921, he volunteered. And he had come to announce to us the glad tidings that 'Nothing but the best is good enough for Africa'. As he uttered these words, the scales fell from my eyes and I began to see a glorious future. His sermon ended in words like these: 'If I, one of you, could go to the new world, and make a man of myself, then you can too. May God help you. Amen.'

From that day I became a new man, and my ideas of life

changed so much that I lived in day-dreams, hoping against hope for the time when it would be possible for me to be like Aggrey. My colleagues were equally affected. When he visited our school the next day, I had the distinction to be the recipient of a gift of a book from him. It was a big book entitled *Negro Education: a Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Coloured People in the United States*. For the next five years it was my constant companion. In fact, I owe my higher education to this book, for it was through the information I gleaned from it that I was enabled to make the necessary contacts for my education in America.

✓ There was indeed something magnetic about that utterance of Dr. Aggrey, 'Nothing but the best is good enough for Africa', which I kept repeating until I became infatuated with it. I made a critical review of the achievements of our intellectuals and professionals in West Africa. I thought of the leaders of the various occupations and professions. I observed that very few of them measured up with the best in their calling in the world as a whole. I was perturbed at this example of arrested mental development.

Then I began to ponder why, irrespective of race, some people were born to rule others and why some people were born to be ruled. I began to realize what was meant by the expression: 'There is plenty room at the top.' There is plenty room there because very few people cared to travel up the rungs of the ladder. So most of us were satisfied to remain within the confines of mediocrity.

I realised now that I had been mis-educated into regarding any person with a wig and gown as emblematic of the highest intellectual attainment. After Dr Aggrey's sermon, I began to wonder why most of our lawyers then were not university graduates. I was puzzled why most of them were satisfied with obtaining the minimum requirements for licence to practise law. I questioned myself why none of our barristers ever dared to gain the LL M or the doctorate degree in law? I was also nonplussed that no Nigerian had written a text-book on any aspect of the principles and practice of law germane to their local conditions.

I have since realised that J. M. Sarbah's *Fanti Law and Custom* was regarded as an authority in the Gold Coast courts,

and that J. B. Danquah's *Akan Law and Customs* and *Akan Cases* were also accepted as authorities; yet my point was that no African had written even a commentary on, say, any aspect of law relating to the colonies. There were many decided English cases, which should have enabled any aspirant to legal scholarship to make research, collect data, and collate them with a view to producing a readable law book. Yet our lawyers seemed not to be so inclined, and they depended upon local official law reports and shelf-worn text-books.

In the field of medicine, I wondered why no Nigerian was a member, let alone a fellow, of the Royal College of Surgeons or Physicians. I also thought that something was wrong when very few Nigerians aimed at the MD. The same applied to other professions. I was intellectually curious and made up my mind that, other things being equal, I would proceed to America and attain great heights. I vowed that if I could not be the best in my chosen field, then I would try to be numbered among the very best, because 'Only the best was good enough for Africa'.

By now I had become interested in the biography of Dr Aggrey. I wanted to learn more about him so that his experiences might be a beacon to me, when I was sufficiently prepared to embark upon the great adventure. Delving into history, I learned that his father was a linguist at Anamaboe, and that he was born in 1875 and educated at the Wesleyan Mission School at Cape Coast. Whilst there, he learned the art of printing. Through the philanthropy of the American Methodist Episcopal Zion Church he was sent to the United States, where he entered Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina.

At Livingstone he was a good student and graduated with the BA degree in 1902. Ten years later he took his MA from the same institution. For twenty years he taught at his *alma mater* as a professor and rendered distinguished services both to the college and to the AMEZ Mission. In 1905 he married Miss Rose Rudolph Douglass, an Aframerican who had passed the BA degree examination at Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Dr Aggrey realised that, despite his educational opportunities at Livingstone, there was more beyond. So from 1914 he

made use of his summer vacations to study at Columbia University in New York. Five years later he graduated MA in Sociology from that university. Later, the degree of DD was conferred on him by Livingstone College for services rendered to it and to the Hood Theological Seminary.

Bearing these factors in mind, I said to myself that if Garvey could dream of 'One God, One Aim, and One Destiny' in America, and influence his contemporaries, and if Aggrey could also dream that nothing but the best was good enough for Africa, then not even death would stop me from reaching America in order to make my dreams come true. In such a mood I wrote to my father pleading that he should assist me to proceed to the United States for higher education.

3. 'FROM LOG CABIN TO WHITE HOUSE'

In December 1920, I was awarded the boarders' prize at the Wesleyan Boys' High School. The book was entitled *From Log Cabin to the White House*. Its author was W. M. Thayer, and it was a biography of James A. Garfield, a former President of the United States of America. This biography came into my hands at an opportune time, because I was then seeking for information regarding educational opportunities in the United States and I was in a quandary whether my dreams could come true.

I read the book over within two days. It was so interesting. It is now reposing in my library at Nsukka, slightly worn but looking almost like new. (Since these words were written, the library, of some forty thousand books, etc. containing many items that can never be replaced, has been largely destroyed as the result of the civil war.) I have read it over more than twenty times. Thayer's book showed how Garfield, who had lost his father at the age of eighteen months, was brought up in a log cabin, where he grew up, chopped firewood, did manual labour, farmed, worked hard at odd jobs, and finally worked his way through college.

He became a teacher; then a university instructor; then an orator; then a general in the army; then a legislator; then a statesman; and finally he was elected President as a compromise

candidate, only to be assassinated by an inordinately ambitious office-seeker.

This book also suggested a similarity in the lives of Abraham Lincoln and James A. Garfield, in these words:

'Both of these statesmen were born in log-cabins, built by their fathers, in the wilderness, for family homes. Both were poor as mortals can well be.

'Both were born with talents of the highest order; but neither enjoyed early advantages of schools and teachers.

'At eight years of age Lincoln lost his mother; and when Garfield was eighteen months old he lost his father.

'Both worked on a farm, chopped wood, and did whatever else was needful for a livelihood, when eight years of age.

'Both improved every leisure moment in study and reading. Both read all the books that could be borrowed for miles around; and each was known, in his own township and time, as a boy of remarkable mental ability and promise.

'Both displayed great tact and energy, turning a hand to any kind of labour—farming, chopping, teaming, carpentering. . . .

'Both were well known for their industry, tact, perseverance, integrity, courage, economy, thoroughness, punctuality, decision, and benevolence.

'Both taught school in the backwoods as soon as they knew enough to teach. Each of them studied law when pursuing another vocation for a livelihood: Lincoln a surveyor, and Garfield a teacher. . . .

'The talents and eloquence of both made them members of Congress: Lincoln at thirty-seven years of age, and Garfield at thirty-three; each one of them being the youngest member of the House of Representatives at the time.

'Both of them took high rank at once as debaters and eloquent speakers, as well as stalwart opposers of slavery.

'Both, also won a reputation for wit, humour and geniality, making them popular with both sides of the House. . . .

'And now, the most remarkable of all coincidences in their lives we record, with sadness: both died in presidential office by the assassin's shot. . . .

'Beginning life in the wilderness, and ending it on the summit of renown! Their first home a log cabin! Their last, the White House! Beloved by a trusting nation, and shot by the assassin!

'A more inspiring example to study and imitate cannot be found in the annals of the American Republic.

'As a model of whatever belongs to noble traits of character, heroic achievements, and the highest success fairly won, we present Garfield in this book.'

And I read, marked, learned and inwardly digested the

biography of Garfield. Then I made my supreme and irrevocable decision while I still awaited my father's answer to the letter I had written to him.

Books have steered me on my journey through life. The 1917 prize brought me closer with the greatest hymnologists of Christendom, and henceforth I began to dabble in the writing of poetry. Then came what I regard as the prize of prizes, the biography of President Garfield. This book revealed the possibilities of willpower in the face of abject poverty, and the rewards of the frontier spirit.

When now I received another book giving information about the American colleges and universities catering exclusively to the intellectual needs of persons of African descent, I was inspired to soar to the heights and perch on the tree-tops of success. The die was cast and I renewed my desire to proceed to America for higher education, no matter the cost, no matter the price to be paid.

In his reply, my father explained that he was just a clerk and, with his meagre salary, he had struggled to give me the benefit of some sort of secondary education. He suggested that I should attempt the next Civil Service Entrance Examination and, if I succeeded, I should then enter the civil service. I took the examination in July 1921 and was among the successful candidates. On October 17, 1921, I was employed by the Treasury Department as an unpaid Learner until the end of the year. Then I was made a paid Learner at three pounds sterling a month. On April 1, 1922, I was appointed a Third Class Clerk at four pounds a month.

✦ I discovered that, no matter if an African had worked for twenty years in a department, as soon as a newly appointed European assumed office, whether he was experienced or not, he automatically became the boss of the African. This anomaly was a challenge to me; my soul rebelled against what I thought was an iniquity. I was so restive that it was difficult for me to fit into the pattern designed for African civil servants.

My boss at that time was Kuye Aina, a disciplinarian of the old school. He believed in hard work and was surprised that I did not like to work overtime. I was obliged to explain to him that, as soon as any thinking person realised that he was just an automaton in any machine, and that the exercise of the grey

matter in his skull was immaterial to his European superiors, then only a certain type of humanity could bear that experience; and I was not that type.

Despite what appeared to some of us young men as 'eye-service', I knew that some of the responsible Africans in the Civil Service were very intelligent, efficient and conscientious. But my experience as a junior clerk enabled me to make up my mind that, whenever I reached a stage to articulate, I would battle against tribal prejudice, nepotism, favouritism, and other forms of iniquity which were in vogue in the civil service.

These circumstances made me very unhappy in the Civil Service. Most young civil servants with the ambition to improve their lot in life were just as unhappy, but the majority had to stick it out; it was Hobson's choice. I preferred to canalise my ambition into other outlets which might yield positive results. So I began an intensive correspondence campaign with certain universities in America.

One of my colleagues in the Treasury was Ignatius Washington Oshilaja, now a respected chief in Ijebu Ode, his home town. He was then a Second Class Clerk, in charge of Records and the Public Officers Guarantee Fund. Whilst we were exchanging ideas one day, he confessed that he was dissatisfied with his lot and felt that by venturing to stand on his feet he should be more successful in life. I agreed with him. He asked what vocation I thought would facilitate the realisation of his dream. I suggested that Africans were centuries behind other nations in appreciating the value of 'the written word'; therefore, printing was a virgin field to be explored.

He explained that he had thought of printing and had already made some plans. However, he asked that I should assist him in obtaining further information. I gave him the address of Kelsey Press, Meriden, Connecticut, USA, who handled the Excelsior hand presses. That was in 1922. When I returned from the United States twelve years later, I was astounded to see the extent of the plant and machinery housed in his establishment named the Ife-Olu Printing Works. Oshilaja was the managing proprietor! We rejoiced as we reminisced over the days when we were victims of the 'yes sir' complex.

As a young clerk I was trapped in the vortex of economic insecurity, which was the experience of most junior clerks in those days. Earning from three to five pounds monthly, I found myself month after month unable to balance my budget, and obliged to live beyond my means, not because I was extravagant but simply because I was underpaid and therefore could not maintain a decent living standard.

While the economic system was responsible, social convention intensified it. The standard of living of the junior civil servants, and all African wage-earners for that matter, was very much below the minimum subsistence level. That was the time when Lord Lugard published his *Dual Mandate* and revealed that the wage paid to the average African labourer for a day's work was always equivalent to the cost of one fowl.

Enmeshed in an economic system which concentrated wealth in the hands of the few, and made the many labour for a pittance, I became a social rebel and decided to avoid sentencing myself for ever to servitude as a wage-earner. It is true that I had not then studied economics and did not appreciate the role of capital and labour in economic history; but as I had suffered personally, I needed no university instruction on this score.

* In my dilemma, I wondered why a handful of European officials, backed by force, were the autocratic rulers of my people. I questioned why a handful of European merchants, bankers, shippers and miners came all the way here and monopolised our finance, trade and industry, fixed prices and interest rates, and controlled our purchasing power. And I wondered whether the best way to offset the rapacious tendencies of economic man was to analyse the forces which made capitalism possible and to readjust them to a more equitable system.

I decided that to be a wage-earner for life was to perpetuate that phase of capitalism which was obnoxious, and thought that by becoming a small capitalist I might show by example that, with its faults, capitalism was only a means to a happy life and it was an institution which was necessary in man's economic evolution. Some of these views are still the basis of my economic philosophy, but others have been radically modified since I studied the ideology of socialism. I have to

admit that the capitalist system is a universal practice in Africa and, until it is universally rejected or radically modified, the prudent thing to do is to adapt ourselves to it until a revolution has taken place which might transform Africa or the world into a socialist leviathan.

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 positions to better the conditions of mankind.

I meditated that, after my education, I would start a business of my own, with a view to accumulating wealth to enable me to put into practice my ideas of a new social order. According to this ferment of ideas which completely pervaded me, I hoped that by the time I had sufficient money, I would be a philanthropist and offer scholarships and employment to those in need. The role of a Good Samaritan appealed to me. Finally, I speculated that I would build a university for the education of those who had brains but could not go overseas to study because of financial handicaps.

Thus motivated to become a wealthy philanthropist, it became obvious to me that I was a square peg in a round hole. In spite of its prospects and allurements for those with the aptitude, clearly the Civil Service was not the place for me to do my life's work. I had to cast my net elsewhere.

4. 'IF YOU CAN WORK YOUR WAY'

One day early in 1922 I decided that God should guide me in the choice of a university in America. I took out the book given to me by Dr Aggrey. I closed my eyes, prayed for divine guidance and opened one of its pages at random. Behold, it was page 311. I decided to choose by luck the university I would like to attend. So I took a pencil, closed my eyes again, and prayed to God to guide me aright, as I placed the pencil blindly on the page. The point of the pencil stuck at 'Howard University, Washington, DC'.

I called on my room-mate, Samuel Nwaolisa Adibuah, who was then unemployed and who was my fellow-adventurer in the attempt to go to America for higher education, and informed him of my experience. We agreed to send a jointly signed letter to that university. I drafted the letter and asked him as my elder to sign on the top line, whilst I signed at the bottom. It was then posted to Dr J. Stanley Durkee, President of Howard University.

After a few weeks, Dr Durkee acknowledged receipt of our letter and assured us of his interest in our ambition to better our positions in life by wishing to study in the United States. His letter, dated May 11, 1922, reads as follows:

'Dear Mr Adibuah:

'I have received your letter, and I may say it reaches my heart with its plea that yourself and Mr Azikiwe be aided to come to America to secure a professional education.

'I am sorry to inform you that from Howard University I have no funds available with which to help you. I can however put this up to you as a challenge.

'If you could secure about twenty pounds in money and work your way from Africa to England on the ships and then to America, I could secure your entrance at a splendid school, Storer College, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia.

'You there could fit yourselves and later come to Howard University for your professional training. If you should write Dr Henry T. MacDonald, President of Storer College, you would get in touch with him and he could guide you in your struggles.

'Some young men have written me seeking for help to come to America. They are: Mr J. E. Thompson, Mr J. T. Marbell and Mr C. O. Robertson, care of po Box 244, Ussher Town, Accra, Gold Coast, wca, and Mr H. E. Ani Okokon, Treasury Office, Opobo, Southern Nigeria, wca.

'Would it not be well for you to write these young men getting in touch with them, and then your whole group form a kind of league for helping yourselves, gaining your money and then finally finding your way to America for the splendid careers which may be yours?

'I will help all I can and shall be glad to seek funds later with which possibly I can aid just such worthy boys as you to gain the education you so much need.

'I am sending a catalogue of the university which will show you the splendid things which await you.

'Very sincerely yours,

'J. STANLEY DURKEE'

At the material time, two other persons were interested in taking the plunge, but being civil servants they were afraid to divulge their names. I assured them that, if all went well, they would not be forgotten. They were D. Ola Johnson of the Education Department and Christopher Archibald Jackson of the Treasury. We had a special meeting and decided that we should follow up the suggestions of Dr Durkee by writing to Dr Henry T. MacDonald of Storer College. It was agreed that the letter should be signed by Adibuah and myself.

On October 3, 1922, Dr MacDonald replied and threw a challenge to us, that if we could pay our passage to the United States, and were prepared to work hard, Storer College would make it possible for us to pull through our studies.

His letter reads as follows:

'My dear Sirs:

'I have been away from my office the past summer and do not feel certain that the letter from you was given the attention it merited.

'At any rate I am now writing you to say that we shall be glad to do all we can for you here at Storer College.

'I think that the suggestion of Dr Durkee of Howard University as to the amount of money you should have when you reach this country would be entirely adequate for your needs in this institution.

'I should say that your necessary school expenses here, less than at Howard University, will not need to be over 200 dollars per annum or, at normal exchange, about forty pounds sterling.

'I believe that I would be able to place you for the vacations to earn a considerable sum which would assist you in subsequent years of preparation for Howard University or whatever school you might deem or wish to attend. . . .

'We have a small amount of scholarship and which might be credited to your account after you have come and we have been acquainted with you.

'I shall be interested to go into the matter in the future with you and you have my earnest assurance that we shall be glad to do all we can for you that it is possible for us to do.

'Let me hear further from you as to your plans and hopes. Please feel free to state frankly just what your financial ability may be.

'Awaiting your further pleasure, I am,

Yours very truly,

'HENRY T. MACDONALD.'

Early in 1923 Dr Durkee wrote to us again, this time to assure us that if we followed the advice given to us by Dr MacDonald it would help us to understand the real conditions in the United States. His letter, dated January 2, 1923, concluded thus:

'I shall endeavour to keep in touch with you, and am hoping that this New Year may bring you the realisation of your dreams. Please follow Dr MacDonald's advice very closely, for it is very important that you understand all conditions which you must meet at schools here.'

By November 23, 1922, we had written to Dr MacDonald thanking him for his interest in our plight and suggesting that he should be kind enough to get in touch with the Bull Line Steamship Company of New York, and plead on our behalf, so that we might be employed as deck hands or what not, to work our way through. On December 23, 1922, he replied as follows:

'Gentlemen:

'Your joint letter of November 23 has not been forgotten; in fact it has been before me each day that I have sat at my desk, for it has been there all the time.

'It has not been sooner answered, because I did not see anything of an encouraging nature which could be added to what I had already said to you.

'The thing which apparently stands in the way of your present progress towards America is the matter of having adequate funds to pay your passage here.

'I wish that I could say to you: "I have a friend who would advance the money for you, come."

'But to my regret I cannot do this thing. It is possible that I may be able to do it, but I do not feel like making the promise now.

'I do not have anyone in mind who would be willing to make the needed loan of that amount. But let us hope and pray that the way may be opened for you both to come to Storer.

'You may rest assured that I shall try to do my part in the case. In the meantime, I suggest that you keep before you the plan of coming.

'God works in a mysterious way, His will to perform, and we cannot tell what may come from earnestly asking for His guidance and help.

'In accordance with your suggestion, I am proposing to the Agent of the Bull Line Steamship Company, New York, that

they give you such employment as will make it possible for you both to work a part or all of your passage to New York City.

'When I shall have heard definite word from them, I will advise you. I take it for granted that the time you would want to enter the United States would be about the opening of our school year: the last part of September.

'I do not know the dates of sailings, nor the port of departure for America. By correspondence, I shall be able to ascertain these facts, and having them in hand, I shall then proceed with the suggestion that employment be given you both.

'I hope that the way may be open for you both. With every good wish for the New Year, believe me to be, your friend,

'HENRY T. MACDONALD.'

So personally involved were these two American educators and humanitarians that Dr MacDonalld addressed a letter to the Agent of H. B. W. Russell and Company Limited, the Lagos Agency of the Bull Line, suggesting to them to assist us to gain employment in one of their ships plying between Lagos and New York. Extracts from his letter reads as follows:

'This letter will be handed to you by Messrs. Ben N. Azikiwe and Samuel N. Adibuah, both of your city. . . .

From the salaries they receive, I am led to think it will be almost hopeless for them to think of paying their passage to America and then have the necessary amount for their personal maintenance.

'Now, Storer College is willing to reduce their expenses, when once they reach us, to the very minimum. I cannot say that we shall assume all responsibility for their expenses, but we shall be willing to do well by them.

'Now, they will raise the question with you as to whether you may not be able to allow them passage to New York in return for such work as stewards or deckhands—or whatever you may suggest—on a boat sailing westward.

'If so, I feel rather certain that you will be rendering assistance to worthy young men, and they will give in return to the Captain of the boat on which they sail competent and loyal service.

'Will you take this matter under serious advisement?'

During our interview with the Agent, he said that they were willing to co-operate with us but our problem was our inability to fulfil the requirements of the immigration laws of the United States regarding public charges. Naturally, we were disappointed. Meanwhile, the number of adventurers had swollen to six. Quietly and secretly we familiarised ourselves

with most of the seamen on the boats which plied the West African coast in those days. Sidney Brown and John Anyaso were the latest aspirants to join our daring band of adventurers.

Since we were economically insecure and constantly in financial embarrassment, it was not possible for us to accept either the challenge of Dr Durkee or the kindly interposition of Dr MacDonald. So we decided to save money by novel means. Out of our pittances, we agreed to save one pound monthly over a stretch of one year by means of the *esusu* method of accumulating funds. This plan worked well, for all of us were able to have a sizeable saving at the expiration of one year.

When I was looking through my old files the other day, I saw a record of account kept by us regarding our expenditure in entertaining seamen and securing their goodwill, pending the time we should be ready to sail. Through this friendship, it was arranged that whenever we were ready to pay the fee demanded by them, we would be stowed away to England, whence arrangements could be made for us to secure employment on the various boats that plied between that country and America.

Later, when I felt certain that I had succeeded in persuading my father to support my scheme, I inquired from Dr MacDonald whether any Nigerian student was studying at Storer College. Dr MacDonald replied, referring me to Hogan Edem Ani Okokon, formerly a civil servant in the Customs Department at Opobo. He hailed from Calabar.

His letter to me, dated March 12, 1925, giving me the good news, reads as follows:

'My dear Sir: I am pleased to have your letter advising that you have made your arrangements to come to Storer College to continue your educational endeavours. We shall be glad to welcome you to all the advantages offered here.

I think you know that foreigners coming to America, for the purpose of attending accredited institutions of learning, are allowed, on oath by them to that effect before the proper authorities, to enter without reference to the number of their fellow nations who may be entering the us during the same fiscal year.

'Storer College is an accredited institution by the Government of the us and hence there should be no difficulty about your having your passport visaed by American Consuls at any port of departure to this country.

'I mention the above fact as one of the things you need to have in mind. May I suggest another matter of pecuniary importance to you. I suggest that you seek third class passage from your home port. By so doing you will effect a saving in the cost of your passage.

'We have in school this year a Mr Okokon, who came to us from Lagos, who knows your father, as I am informed. I have asked him to write you out of the fund of personal experiences he had in coming here, and desired of him that he make helpful suggestions to you in regard to the problems before you.

'I regret to tell you that the new catalogue will not be issued till May. One will be sent to you at that time.

'You will be able to take a train direct from New York to Harper's Ferry. You will come here via Baltimore and Ohio RR. The fare is about 10 dollars.

'Should you need to write me again before sailing, please feel free to do so I suggest that you write in advance of your sailing that I may know of the probable time of your arrival here.'

On the suggestion of Dr MacDonald, Hogan Edem Ani Okokon, the Nigerian student from Calabar, wrote to me, giving useful hints about the hazards on the way. He advised me on the precautions to take so as to ensure a safe and convenient passage. Finally, he warned me not to depend upon the good nature of human beings, especially in monetary matters. I must paddle my own canoe, trust in God, and be daring, he concluded.

His letter reads:

'Dear Mr Azikiwe:

'I have been shown by President MacDonald letters to the effect that you are planning to enter Storer College as a student next fall.

'I decided to write to you because I noticed that you are in my own town (Calabar) and because Dr MacDonald has requested me to do so.

'Perhaps it will interest you to know that the difficulties now before you have been my difficulties too, but through the help of some friends and mostly of the Almighty God, I have managed through them and have entered here with some experience of the way.

'Perhaps a few suggestions might help you. The road through which you are going to pass is far from an easy one. It will tax all your endurance. The most important concern of yours would be to have with you as much money in landing here as you can have.

'No one, however friendly, will give you any monetary help. You shall have to do everything your efforts can win for you to help yourself.

'Let this be well fixed in your mind and let it help you to make up your mind, as a man, before you leave Africa. Experience taught me that one can manage his way to New York by working at least part of the way.

'It is an absolutely taxing affair. I warn you, therefore, to fill up yourself like water filling a space with a will, depending on nobody for any help, outside of advices and papers and instructions. . . .

'Wishing you every safety under God.'

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 made by Dr Aggrey. His life was an indication of the opportunities open to Africans, if they would have faith and be daring enough.

The psychological factors and social forces that influenced the development of my personality, as indicated in my experiences in schools at Calabar and Lagos, gave birth to a dream. But it is not enough to dream. So I took up the gauntlet to make my dream come true.

Dr Durkee of Howard University, and Dr MacDonald, of Storer College, in their letters reinforced my faith in the ultimate goodness of humanity. But the personal and endearing tone of the letters of these two American educators strengthened my faith in the ultimate realisation of my dream of a greater tomorrow.

These Americans impressed me with the innate goodness of the true American personality. Their letters were a revelation of human kindness; they dispersed the clouds of gloom and brought sunshine to my young life. Their challenge tested my desire to survive and achieve success in life. The unselfish spirit that pervaded every line of their letters to us seemed to be incontrovertible proof that America, in the words of my great friend, Frank Buchman, was 'a nation where everyone cares enough and everyone shares enough, so that everyone has enough'. Such a nation, Buchman reasoned, would 'pattern a new social and economic order for this and all future generations'.

CHAPTER IV

IN QUEST OF THE
GOLDEN FLEECE

A father's sacrifice to enable his son to prove his mettle

'I shall pass through this world but once.
If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show,
Or any good thing I can do,
Let me do it now;
Let me not defer it or neglect it,
For I shall not pass this way again.'

STEPHEN GRELLET

1. ADVENTURERS OF THE ATLANTIC

We had dreamt dreams. We had seen visions. We had planned how to make our dreams come true. Now, we were confronted with the problem of doing what we had been thinking about and planning. Alas, whilst six of us had dreamed and planned the adventure, only three of us were ready to take the plunge when the testing time came.

The seamen had assured us that, when we had paid the prescribed fee, they would arrange our sailing. We had saved sufficient money and we were prepared to pay the seamen. The spirit was willing in all of us, but in half of us the flesh was weak. Mr Adibuah had been employed by the Agriculture Department and he had been transferred to the Moor Plantations at Ibadan. Messrs Johnson and Jackson could not make up their minds to leave the Civil Service so abruptly.

I was prepared to throw away my job and damn the consequences. Sidney Brown was prepared to do so as well, and John Anyaso joined us in this irrevocable step. At the time, Sidney was a technician in the Posts and Telegraphs Department, and John a printer. Sidney wanted to improve his knowledge of telegraphy and telephony and become a telecommunications engineer, and John's aspiration was to become a professional and qualified printer.

When it became obvious that our three friends were no longer energetic, as they had been two years earlier, I suggested to Sidney and John that the three of us should swear an oath of loyalty to the common cause. Having done so, we decided on a particular date to leave Lagos bound for Liverpool, on board the RMS *Appam*, after having made the necessary arrangements with three of the crew. It was agreed that for the payment of fifteen pounds we would be stowed away to Liverpool and be the guests of our seamen benefactors until we were able to secure employment on boats plying to American ports.

We had enough funds due to the novel *esusu* method practised by us the previous year. The whole arrangement was made in secrecy; and since we were not little children, we realised the risk that we were taking. Sidney and I, especially, who were civil servants, understood what it meant to leave our jobs without notice, contrary to the General Orders.

But we were social rebels and we had dreamt of self-realisation after passing through the rigours of hardship and of our academic life in America. We had solemnly reckoned the losses before considering the gains, and had decided to strike whilst we were young and daring and adventurous. On the appointed night, at eleven o'clock, near the General Post Office, we joined a canoe which taxied us from the Elder Dempster quay alongside the *Appam*. Our friends were on hand to receive and advise us.

We were to mingle with the passengers and sleep in one of the life-boats until we had left Freetown, when it was anticipated that we should be accommodated in the bunks of the sailors and be given some odd jobs to do with the firemen down below. We agreed, and the next day we sailed from Lagos, resigning our future to the hands of Providence. Not one of our relatives or closest friends knew when we left. Not even any of our three former comrades had any inkling of it. We were afraid of being found out and having our carefully laid plans shattered.

Our first night on board we were sea-sick and were unable to eat the special food our friends on board had served us. Sidney was especially sick. He started moaning at midnight when we were at sea. This was most embraassing because we had hidden ourselves in one of the lifeboats. But when Sidney's condition became worse, John was upset and told me point

blank that no person on earth would thwart his ambition to reach America. He swore that he would stop at nothing if anybody tried to play hanky-panky with him.

I myself was downcast, but I suggested that we should be patient and hope for the best. It was possible that after a day or two Sidney might improve; then we could continue our voyage without fear. The next morning we reached Accra. The sight of the town was pretty. Having mingled with the deck passengers we were not detected. Sidney implored that we should get ashore to enable him to regain his health; then we could resume our voyage. But John and I refused. Sidney wept in vain, telling us that he felt he was going to die.

That afternoon we sailed from Accra bound for Sekondi. Sidney's condition had worsened. He was incoherent in his speech, vomited a great deal and wept like a baby. Seeing him in such a plight I began to shed tears of pity for the unfortunate adventurer. John was also in tears, and the three of us were in a quandary.

Then John called me aside and suggested in low tones that, since Sidney seemed destined to be a fly in the ointment of our ambition, we should dump him at sea in the dead of night, so as to continue our voyage without hindrance. Besides, this would be an act of mercy, for the poor fellow might die anyway. I convinced him of its inhumanity; and we agreed to bear with Sidney, to suffer together in silence, and to pray to God for better luck.

The next port of call was Sekondi. On arrival there, Sidney insisted that we should disembark and that if we did not, he would spill the beans. After a secret conference we decided to disembark to enable Sidney to recuperate. I was deputed to see our sailor friends to implore them to refund the money we paid them and to assure them that, on the return voyage of the boat, we would be in position to rejoin them.

When I interviewed the seamen's spokesman to explain our dilemma, he frowned on me and uttered in pidgin English words to this effect:

'Waiting you want here, Bo? You no sabi say this place be wey sailor man dey stay? Wating you dey tell me about money? Me nor see you before and me nor no you?

So you be stow-away? You know say ebee crime to stow-

away on board? All right me dey go report to the Purser say some stow-away dey on board.'

I was chagrined because the man completely denied having known me, or having received any money from me! Since he was serious in his threats to hand me and my colleagues over to the purser; I thought it prudent to placate him. As a Christian I had been taught that 'a soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger'.

I begged the sailor to be reasonable and not to think that money was everything in the world. I said that if he saw the condition of Sidney, he would agree with us that no other alternative was open to us. My soft answer mollified him and his wrath subsided. He meditated for a while and said to me:

'Me understand wating you mean, Bo, but you see, sir, me be workman here. You know wating wrong with you Africans, una too sentimental. And una tink say de world go wait for una always to serve your pleasure.

'Why you not heab the poor devil overboard and go your way? Now you want to make ar give you back de money wey we don't share among ourselves, and we don't take am go give some Lagos women for Porto Novo Market Street.'

Having explained to me that the money had been squandered and that he was prepared to keep his part of the bargain provided we performed ours, he concluded that we, and not themselves, were at fault. But he did not hesitate to warn me that if I tried to expose the deal, he and his colleagues would land us in trouble. He advised that I and my comrades should ponder deeply over the matter and realise our delicate position. When I explained matters to John and Sidney, we decided to go ashore and forfeit our money since health was better than wealth. Sidney realised the noble sacrifice we made and thanked us for it.

Our next problem was how to land ashore. In June 1924 the construction of the Takoradi Harbour had just begun, and it was necessary that we should go ashore on surf-boats manned by Fanti boatmen who looked like black Apollos, their physique marvellous to behold. Our friends advised us to report to the purser that we were not able to purchase tickets before sailing from Lagos; but that we were prepared

to pay for the fare from Lagos to Sekondi. The purser accepted our explanation and assessed us accordingly. We paid and were allowed to disembark with other passengers.

Our experiences in an unknown country, whose people we knew nothing about and of whose language we were ignorant, can be imagined. Personally, I had heard of Sekondi as a place where my boyhood chum, Solomon Nnaemeka Orakwue, was trained; and at Onitsha there was a colony of Fanti men and women, some of whom were from Sekondi. Our first stopping-place there was the market. Here we regaled ourselves by eating pancakes made with corn and bananas. They were delicious. By now Sidney felt better and was able to eat a bit. John was very morose about the whole affair and, judging from the expression on his face, he was a disappointed man. He was sulky and irritable. He was the eldest of us three adventurers.

While we were having our refreshment somebody passed by and heard us chatting in Ibo. Behold, he was a cook, named David Okeleke. 'What are you folks doing here?' inquired the gentleman, in Ibo language. He was short and robust. His face beamed with smiles. We replied in Ibo that we were bound for Liverpool but one of us became seriously ill, so it was necessary for us to disembark at Sekondi.

He asked where we came from. We replied that Sidney and I came from Onitsha and John from Okigwi. He told us that he came from Umuoji, a village near Onitsha, and he was the cook to the General Manager of the Gold Coast Railways. He invited us to his house, where we enjoyed his hospitality, and through his co-operation we settled down to fend for ourselves.

After staying at Sekondi for a few days, we decided to seek employment. We went to Takoradi but were disappointed, since we found the atmosphere very hostile to us because we were Nigerians. We could not obtain employment at the McAlpine works, not even as labourers. I was actually engaged by a European as a labourer; but I was not permitted to work due to the intervention of the African foreman, who indicated that since I was not a native of the place, I did not understand the language and could not perform my duties efficiently.

Meanwhile, Sidney had fallen in love with a well-to-do

woman who owned a local hotel; so he was economically secure. John was employed as a compositor in the Methodist Mission. I was unemployed and disappointed. I felt 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. I thought it tragic that of the three adventurers I was the only one with secondary education; yet I was the only one of the three who was still unemployed after two weeks' stay in Sekondi.

I applied to several firms and government departments for employment. In nearly all of them I was discouraged by the Africans in charge, simply because I was a Nigerian. I was told by other applicants that such discrimination was rampant, not only against Nigerians but also against other Gold Coast tribes. During my stay in Accra, ten years later, I appreciated the correctness of this statement, for I noticed that the Ga discriminated against the Fanti, Twi, Ewe, Ashanti, etc., and vice versa.

At last I was offered appointment as assistant book-keeper by the West African Lighterage Company Limited, at £60 per annum. I accepted and found my European boss very considerate. But my African colleagues were peeved and would not co-operate with me. I persisted patiently and optimistically, and after few days the European remarked that I was bright and had aptitude for figures; so he gave me a more responsible job.

After a week in the office I received a letter from the Commissioner of Police, Western Province, in reply to the application I had made for employment in the police force, that I had been selected for training at Accra, and that I should report to him immediately if I desired the job. I went to my European boss and told him that I wanted to be relieved of my job in order to join the police force. He granted my request and paid me off.

2. A GOLD COAST POLICE RECRUIT

Having satisfied the preliminary requirements for enlistment, I was granted one third-class training fare from Sekondi to Accra, via Kumasi, for training at the police depot in the

capital of the country. On arrival, I discovered that the Gold Coast Government had considered that there were some educated Africans who regarded the police force as a worthwhile career. Consequently, three divisions were established in the Gold Coast Constabulary: General Police, Escort Police, and Marine Police.

The General Police consisted of those who had passed Standard VII. They were assigned to office and patrol duties and to perform all police duties. The General Police were furnished with caps, knickers, trousers, tunics, etc. in blue serge; their uniform was designed to appeal to the educated class. The Escort and Marine Police consisted mainly of the illiterate and semi-literate classes of Africans. Their uniforms with fez caps, light coloured knickers, etc., were designed to appeal to their particular class.

The Assistant Superintendents, Superintendents and Senior Superintendents were chosen from the General Police; as such the organisation and administration of the police force aimed towards efficiency. When I enlisted as a General Police recruit, I hoped to be able to get to the stage where I might be appointed Assistant Superintendent in due course. I liked my new surroundings, and I made friends there with colleagues from different parts of the Gold Coast. I met an Onitsha boyhood mate called Jeremiah Orji there. So my stay at Accra was very pleasant.

I liked the disciplinary atmosphere of the force and I took many beltings from one Sergeant Krukru Frafra, who was detailed to put us through in drilling. He preferred to dole out punishments to us, by slapping our cheeks, when the command 'Eyes Right' was given during drill practice. Also, I was fond of the classroom work because, in addition to studying the *Police Manual*, we had to learn the fundamentals of criminal law and procedure and the law of evidence. Captain J. R. Barlow, our instructor, took great interest in me, because I was among the leaders of the class. He thought that, other things being equal and after six months' training, I could make the grade and probably be promoted as an Assistant Superintendent.

Needless to say our friendship developed because I was also an athlete and I was able to participate actively in the social

life of the police community at Accra. Thus I forgot all about tribal prejudice and started life afresh, bubbling with ambition to achieve fame as a police officer. One day, a Wangana orderly (the Wangana are a tribe of Northern Ghana) entered the lecture room and whispered into my ear that a woman who claimed to be my mother was outside to see me. I rose, moved smartly towards Capt. Barlow's table, stood at 'Attention', and saluted. He gave me the permission I requested to see my mother outside. I saluted again, made a right about turn, and marched away in military fashion.

Behold, I saw my own mother in the flesh! We shed tears of joy in each other's arms. The first words my mother spoke to me were: 'Son, what are you doing in a police uniform? Don't you know that you were educated to be somebody in the world?' 'Yes, mother,' I replied, 'the kind of police officer I am going to be will be somebody in the world.' Then I explained to her the difference between General Police and Escort Police. I pointed out to her that we wore boots but they went barefooted. I said that there were great prospects for me in the Gold Coast Police Force. And she shed tears.

She begged me to leave my police job and return home with her. I refused and explained to her that since I had enlisted to serve His Majesty King George V, his heirs, his successors, etc., for five years, it was not within my power to rescind or vitiate the agreement. Even if it were in my power to do so, I would not do it because I had learned to like the police and regard it as my future career. She kept on weeping, appealing to me to reconsider my stand and return home with her, and abandon my agreement with the Gold Coast Police because my father had agreed to aid me to proceed to America. Then she narrated her sorrowful experiences since her arrival in the Gold Coast. She first, went to Sekondi, from where I had written to my father of my whereabouts. She had travelled on a cargo boat from Port Harcourt. When she reached this land of Ebrutu (ancestors of the Fanti who settled there), she was informed that I had gone to Accra. Then she joined another cargo boat and came to Accra, only to find me in the uniform of a police recruit.

She told me that she met David Okeleke of Umuoji, Dominic Anaetoah of Adazi Nnukwu, and other Nigerians at Sekondi,

including Madam Ruth Blankson of Amawbia, Awka, with her children, the eldest of whom was Kofi. The Nigerians had been kind to her and wished her success in her mission. She tried to reason with me that I could have no other argument to refuse to return home since my father had agreed to finance my adventure to the United States. She knelt down crying, begging me to return home with her.

Naturally, I was moved, and I asked her not to kneel down and beg me. It was my duty to do so to her. When she noticed that I was disposed to heed her pleading, my mother asked me what made me go to Angu, ten miles from Sekondi, to work as a timber labourer for Prince Amachree of Buguma, then a timber dealer, who hired me and others to work for him, when I had no job at Sekondi. I confessed that economic circumstances forced me to do it, and that I appreciated the experience.

After taking into consideration all the factors involved, I agreed with her that it would be better for me to return home and start afresh on my plans to go to the United States. And so, like Coriolanus, I knelt down besides my mother and begged her to forgive me for my selfishness, which had jeopardised life by making her travel hundreds of miles in search of me. I confessed that I wanted to be somebody in the world; and I reasoned that if I could not proceed to America, then I should make use of what opportunity was available to me.

We decided that I should interview Mr Provost, then Acting Inspector-General of Police, to see if he would allow me to rescind the agreement which bound me to serve the police for five years.

I was marched into his office, and standing at attention, explained to him why I was before him. My file was on his table. I told him that my mother had come all the way from Onitsha in order to have me repatriated, because it was being planned by my father to send me abroad for further education. I assured him that I liked my police training and did not wish to leave; so I desired his advice on the matter.

He asked me how old I was. I answered that I was nineteen years and seven months. He said that I should be able to make up my mind. Mr Provost spoke to my mother and told her that, according to the report of Captain Barlow, I was one of his best students. He assured her that I had a future in the

Gold Coast Police Force. But she begged him to let me go, and he decided to relieve me of my contractual obligations. I was marched away to the quartermaster's office, where my accoutrements were checked and found to be 'All Correct'. I then bade farewell to my comrades, paid my last respects to Captain Barlow, and left the barracks.

We sailed on the *Ekari* and, on arrival in Lagos, I sent to Mr Akparanta, an Ndoki cook, who had been my co-tenant. Before sailing on the *Appam*, Sidney and I had given him all our personal belongings to take care of, telling him that we had written to our parents to take delivery of our personal effects, and hoped that he would hand them over when they were sent for. When my mother now went ashore and confronted him, he denied knowing me so intimately as to assume responsibility for my personal effects. I thus lost practically all I owned in the world, including some of my valuable books, a foretaste of the greater loss I was to suffer more than forty years later when my library at Nsukka was destroyed.

3. KINDLING THE SPARK

When I arrived in Calabar, my father was very happy to see me. He rejoiced that I had respected my mother's presence in the Gold Coast and agreed to accompany her back to Nigeria. My mother had disembarked at Port Harcourt *en route* to Onitsha to prepare for the wedding of my sister, which was due to take place within three months. My father's house was in festive mood. My stepmother left no stone unturned to make me feel at home. I felt like an obdurate son who had returned home to reconcile with his father. But my father insisted that I was not stubborn; I merely allowed my ambition to overcome my reason, which was natural. That was how he closed this incident.

After a few days father informed me that my sister, Lily Eziamaka, who was four years my junior, had been betrothed to Peter Obiekwe Arinze. He explained that the lineal background of the Arinze family was desirable, and that he was related to the Modebe family, one of the largest landowners of Onitsha. Peter was not wealthy, but he had received a sound education at the Holy Trinity School of the Catholic Mission

at Onitsha and was doing well as a Second Class Clerk in the civil service. From all accounts, he concluded, the young man appeared to be of a sober and stable character, which was desirable for a happy home.

Then he proceeded to outline the nature of my assignment in this union of the Azikiwe and Arinze families. He reminded me that I had worked from October 1921 to June 1924 and had not taken any leave of absence from my former employers. He would be prepared to give me a vacation to be spent at Onitsha. There I should represent him in giving away my sister to her intended bridegroom. He bought me some clothes and provided me with money to enable me not only to participate comfortably in the marriage of my sister but also to enjoy my holidays, until the end of the year, when I should return to Calabar for further talks.

I went to Onitsha and stayed with my mother. The first problem to confront me there was the issue whether my sister should be baptised a Catholic, as was demanded by the Catholic Mission before a marriage sacrament was solemnised in accordance with their rites.

My sister was baptised with me in the Tinubu Methodist Church in 1916. Her husband was a staunch Catholic and desired his wife to be converted to his faith. I consulted my mother and sister, who told me they did not have any objection. Naturally, my grandmother and aunt, whom I visited every day as a duty, could not see the need for another baptism. I explained the delicate situation to them and since it was already a *fait accompli*, they gave their blessing to the proposal. Thus my sister was baptised a second time. She had discarded the Protestant name Lillian and adopted the Catholic name Cecilia. All was now set for the wedding, which took place on December 24, 1924, at the Holy Trinity Church.

At Onitsha, I noticed that most of the young men were eager for knowledge. Those were the days when Francis X. Okwedy wrote articles and F. Nelson Oboli and Charles Ndaguba contributed good verses in *The African Messenger*, the last two, under the tutelage of James Murray Stuart-Young, a Briton who was much beloved by Onitsha people and adopted by them as their son. We founded the Onitsha Literary Club, and among its foundation members were J. N. Odogwu, Kodit

Onwuli, Patrick Emengo, Charles Anyogu, Christopher Anazonwu, the Afubera brothers, Jewel Egbuche and Terence Odiari. Those were the days when religious differences divided Onitsha youth into diverse compartments. It was very difficult for the Catholic and Protestant groups to commingle in a truly fraternal atmosphere. With the activities of the club, and with the active co-operation of Luke Anyogu, then on the tutorial staff of the Holy Trinity School, the idea of social consciousness dawned and became ingrained in us. We organised inter-denominational football games, staged debates and delivered lectures; we gauged our intellectual brilliance in those days by the polysyllables we could use in our oratorical displays.

What aroused our curiosity and caused a lot of dispute among us as young 'intellectuals' were topics on dogmatic theology and certain incidents of ecclesiastical history. We debated in the light of our limited knowledge. I was then a Russellite and I relied on biblical citations and the writings of the church fathers to justify my pontifications on such controversial issues as the immortality of the soul, the immaculate conception, the doctrine of the trinity, papal infallibility, and the reformation and counter-reformation.

Luke Anyogu was easily the best debater on the side of the Catholics. He would marshal his facts meticulously and present them effectively; his delivery of English was impeccable. Naturally we did not, and could not, resolve any of these questions; the main thing was the intellectual exercise generated by these friendly debates.

Contradictions in the social order caused me to find myself in a maze of ideological confusion. I became cynical; because after contrasting the preachments of those (the Europeans) who claimed to be the trustees of the African in various spheres of life with their actual ways of living, especially their discriminatory attitude and segregation in housing, I was sceptical about them and their ideals. Thus at my twentieth birthday I was more interested in thinking about the world that I knew rather than a world that was unknown to me. I, who had formerly been a regular church-goer and a chorister, had become disillusioned. I attempted to reconcile the teachings of the missionaries whose humanitarianism had enabled us an

our parents to discover our bearings in life; but my attempts were futile.

Then I began to ask serious questions. Why was no African thought fit by the missionaries to be a full-fledged bishop with European priests under him? Why were Bishops Crowther, Phillips, Johnson, Oluwole, Howells, and others suffragan bishops? Why was no African appointed Principal of the Wesleyan Boys' High School and the CMS Grammar School? I wanted to know why there were no African Catholic priests or reverend mothers and sisters.

Then I turned my searchlight on the mercantile establishments. It was the same old bogey of race prejudice. The same iniquity was practised in the Civil Service. My soul seethed with fury and discontent.

I was present when Nigerian soldiers returned from the first European War, and I was struck with the sad fate of many of them. The gratuity paid to those who returned was nominal and discriminatory, when compared to what was paid to Europeans; and none of them had risen above the rank of Regimental Sergeant-Major. When I asked my father, who was a senior clerk in the Nigeria Regiment, the reason for this anomaly, he told me that it was the policy of the Colonial Office to peg Africans down to a position subordinate to Europeans. I was furious. And I could not find the correct answer.

I was reared in a Christian atmosphere and in a home where Christian idealism was translated into our daily lives. My grandfathers, for historical reasons, were sceptical about western civilisation. My paternal great-grandmother was one of the earliest Christian converts in Onitsha. My father, educated for the teaching profession, had reasons to question the effect of western cultures on an African environment. As a Christian he had attempted, in his humble way, to correlate the problems of morals and social problems of this world with the ethical teachings of the Bible. Realising that the true Christian lives by example and not by precepts alone, he became a practical Christian by being a friend to man. He educated me to be my brother's keeper; and I was brought up to play, whenever possible, the role of a Good Samaritan.

Christianity has always appealed to me as a great world religion. From my youth I had been a first rate student of the

scriptures. As a student of history, I purposely enrolled in a theological seminary with a view to understanding the history and basic doctrines of Christianity. When I took a course in Comparative Religions with the 'theologs' at Lincoln University, I was impressed by the ethical norms of Christianity; but I was also impressed by some of the ethical ideals of Islam and the other world religions.

As a Christian, I have been many-sided denominationally, due to chance circumstances. At the tender age of nine I was a Catholic. At ten I became an Anglican. At twelve I was a Methodist. At sixteen I became a Presbyterian. At eighteen I was a soldier of the Lord (Hallelujah!) in the Salvation Army. At nineteen I left the emotional for the intellectual side of Christianity and became a student Bible Expositor (now known as a Jehovah's Witness). At twenty-one, I entered the Baptist fold. At twenty-five I was reaffirmed in the Presbyterian faith.

I had the sacraments of the various churches bestowed upon me, being baptised a Methodist, confirmed a Baptist, admitted to Holy Communion as a Presbyterian, and married as a Methodist. The reason for all this merry-go-round in the various churches is simple and typical for an African. The schools, colleges and universities I attended were maintained by various denominations; and I had to attend their respective churches.

Religious education had given me a positive conception of universal fatherhood and universal brotherhood. Dr Aggrey's sermon gave me intellectually curiosity, and Marcus Garvey's motto gave me the ambitions to be of service for the redemption of Africa. These were sparks which kindled my spirit and made me seek avenues to articulate my feelings and yearnings. At that period, the National Congress of British West Africa was agitating for a better political status for the English-speaking West African colonies and protectorates—in effect a constitutional advance to self-government. Most of us young men could not grasp intelligently what the Congress was battling against; but we followed blindly, pinning our hopes on the avowed integrity of the leaders of the movement, which we assumed from their opinions as formulated in the popular sections of the press.

With the publication of two pamphlets by Herbert Macaulay entitled *Fiat Justitia* and *Henry Carr Must Go*, I became interested in local politics. Ernest Ikoli had then begun to publish *The African Messenger*, a weekly paper which was very neatly printed. Then, Thomas Horatio Jackson was editing *The Lagos Weekly Record*, and was described as a trenchant defender of African rights and liberties. Other periodicals which were published then were *The Nigerian Pioneer*, edited by Sir Kitoyi Ajasa; *The Nigerian Advocate*, edited by S. H. Braithwaite; and *The Nigerian Spectator*, edited by Dr Richard Akiwande Savage.

In spite of my meagre salary I subscribed to all of these papers, and Herbert Macaulay, Horatio Jackson, Ernest Ikoli and S. H. Braithwaite influenced me by their writings to regard journalism as my future profession. I admired the dignity and gentility of Sir Kitoyi Ajasa; but after reading the attacks launched against him, and in keeping with the prevailing sentiment among the young men of my time, I thought that his leadership was not dynamic enough for Nigeria. In later years I learned to appreciate him as a great man.

As for Mr Ikoli, I enjoyed his paper which was then regarded as the best in Nigeria. Taking into consideration also that he came from Twon, Brass Division, in Eastern Nigeria, I was infatuated. I thought that if it were possible for any person to come from the Southern Provinces and write his name on the hall of fame of leaders in a metropolis like Lagos, it was not beyond my reach.

Dr Savage impressed me with the superb English of his editorials. His paper was cosmopolitan and included news from the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone. Mr Braithwaite allowed me to use his columns to write articles on some aspects of Nigerian life. Of course, some of them were puerile; but he encouraged me so that by frequent writing, supplemented by frequent reading, I began to appreciate journalism as a profession. His reproduction of the article, 'Forty Coloured Immortals' by Dr Moyse da Rocha, was the spark which generated my interest in African history.

In 1925, when I left Lagos and resided in Calabar, before sailing to the United States, I came into contact with another journalist who also influenced my ideas of life. I refer to W. Coulson Labour, who was then editor of *The Dawn*. He allowed

me to use the columns of his paper to publish articles and what I thought was poetry. It was through my contact with Mr Labour that I first knew what were bodkins, composing sticks, galleys, types, reglets, rules, quads, quoins, chases and other accessories which make up the plant of any newspaper. His wife was an expert printer, and his son, Oduntor, who was then a lad, was an adept at composing.

All this had the effect of sharpening my wits. It made me develop tolerant scepticism on the great social and spiritual issues of the day. In spite of my youth, I had become more rational and less emotional in my approach to these situations. Hence it is fair to deduce that the cultural incompatibilities of life helped to kindle the spark that was latent in me and ultimately ignited it by the time I attained maturity.

4. 'GO AND BRING HOME THE GOLDEN FLEECE'

After her wedding, my sister returned with her husband to his station at Koko, where they spent their honeymoon. I took leave of my grandmother, my aunt and my mother, and returned to Calabar, where I reported the details of the marriage ceremonies to my father. He thanked me for discharging this duty, and informed me that he had paid all the debts I accumulated in Lagos before the 'flight' to Sekondi. In his opinion it could not have been the ambition to study abroad that had made me leave my job.

Father then revealed to me that, acting under the assumption that my main problem was economic and that it had not been the desire to proceed abroad for further education which had made me leave my job, he had taken the initiative to seek for my reinstatement in the Civil Service. He showed me correspondence which had passed between him and J. G. T. O'Barka Torto, Assistant Treasurer in the Treasury Department, a native of Accra, who was then the highest-ranking African civil servant in that department. Of course, his request was officially turned down and he was at his wits' end to know what to do next.

I was not quite happy at my father's assumptions and subsequent acts, but I realised that he meant well and was trying to be realistic. So I thanked him for all he had done so far to

make me financially stable; and more so for the generous way he had liquidated my debts in Lagos. But I emphasised that while economic factors played an important part in my decision to leave the Civil Service, they were not decisive. I confessed that I really wanted to go abroad to study and make a man of myself; and I was determined to do so whenever I was economically able.

He asked me to show him my file of correspondence with the authorities of Howard University and Storer College, which I did. He kept the file for a week and read all the letters most carefully. Then he conferred with me and admitted that he was convinced of my deep desire to study abroad. He asked me to let him see the biography of President Garfield and the book given to me by Dr Aggrey. I surrendered both to him, for they were among my belongings that I carried with me to Sekondi.

Father perused Garfield's biography and became infatuated with the fortunes of this young American frontiers boy who became the father of his country. Then he advised me to be patient and allow God to direct our plans. He would meet me half way to enable me to pay my passage and my first year's expenses. Afterwards I would have to rely on my own resources.

I assured father that I was like Archimedes. All I wanted was a lever and a little room to put it under, and I had no doubt that I would lift any object however heavy it might be. We agreed that the best thing for me to do was to work in Calabar for a while, and he would explore the possibilities of accumulating what I required for the venture.

Although I was disappointed, I had to accept my father's advice. I was now unemployed and had to look for a job. I tried with Mr Labour at the office of *The Dawn*, but when he explained that I was not a printer and the weekly circulation of his newspaper was less than 500, at one penny per copy, and that his staff consisted of himself, his wife and his son, it was clear that he could not offer me a paying job.

Then I heard from my friend, Simon Agu, that the Niger Company had vacancies for copy typists and book-keepers at Burutu, where he was employed. I submitted my application and was requested to contact Mr Graham Paul, a Scottish advocate, who would interview me on their behalf. I attended

the interview and took tests in copy typing and simple book-keeping. Mr Graham Paul sent for me and told me that, although he had recommended me to the Niger Company, nevertheless, if I was willing, he could offer me a job in his office at the same salary the Niger Company had offered, namely £96 per annum.

I knew that he maintained a lucrative practice and by his affability he had earned the goodwill of both Africans and Europeans in Calabar. I therefore accepted his offer with pleasure; and he was obliged to write the Niger Company and informed them that in a typically Scottish manner he had pinched their prospective employee in view of the prolonged illness of his senior clerk.

I worked with him and gave him the best that was in me; but I was dissatisfied and disappointed with life. Dissatisfied because I had foolishly disclosed to my father my whereabouts in the Gold Coast, which had made it possible for my mother to come and repatriate me. Disappointed because, although father had promised to send me abroad, yet he thought that it would be better for me to remain in Africa in the meantime.

How father became convinced that it would be better for me to go abroad as soon as possible, instead of remaining in Africa, was providential. It was the wish of his grandmother that he should be trained for holy orders and the wish of his father that he should be a civil servant. It was as a civil servant that he served for twenty-three years before he retired on pension, on grounds of ill health. But before his retirement, something happened that started a chain reaction which ultimately affected me.

Aged forty-six and the senior member of the regimental clerical staff, my father had the task to put new European and African officials through the routine of the duties of the Staff Officer's office. By this means he inspired some Africans to aim higher in life. For example, five years of contact with him were sufficient to inspire Daniel Esin to leave the Civil Service, proceed to England and become the first lawyer of Efik descent.

One day, a young military officer openly insulted father in the office, apparently due to some mistake. He was rude and threatened to kick him. Considering that this was just a boy of twenty-five and that since his arrival in Calabar he had been

tutored by father, it was more than a shock for this tried and tested 'old' stager. He told the rash European that the was old enough to be his father; but for his race and lack of opportunity, he could match any white man on the scratch. The officer made some uncouth remarks about the affinity of father's race with *simiidae*. Father brooded over this un-paralleled insult.

As soon as he reached home, he narrated his sad experience and told me that I was right after all. There was no need to remain a clerk for ever. If one could develop oneself intellectually, one could even boss one's father. He was completely disillusioned and could not bear to remain in the Civil Service any longer. Moreover, his health had been deteriorating and he was nauseated with office life. He could neither work nor concentrate on his job. Recollecting his twenty-three years of service, which had been chequered at times with insults of various kinds, he concluded that an African servant was merely a cog in the wheel of the machinery used to put the African in his place.

After prolonged treatment, the Medical Department at Calabar recommended that he should be invalided from the Civil Service. This was most welcome to father, and his mental outlook changed completely as soon as he left the environment where he had answered 'Yes sir' so long that it almost became his second nature to do so.

Then my father called me and requested that I should hold myself in readiness to sail to the United States as soon as practicable. He confessed that he had made a small saving during his twenty-three years of hard work in the Civil Service; if I was sure that £300 would meet all the preliminary expenses for passage and first year's expenditure, then he would make that sum available to me. This for me was a great moment of exultation and gratitude. So I gave him the assurance.

My employer was away on furlough in Scotland; and his practice was handled by a *locum tenens*, L. A. McCormack, a fine Jamaican who, after narrating to me his experiences in the farms of Canada, and how after the European war he ultimately overcame his economic handicaps and read for the Bar, inspired me not only to appreciate the dignity of manual labour but also to be mindful that where there was a will there

must be a way. He was sorry to let me go, but he had no alternative. He gave me a fine testimonial and wished me success in my new endeavours.

As soon as he was officially notified that he had been invalidated out of the Civil Service and placed on pension, my father thanked God for granting him the opportunity, by finally giving me his support, to rectify what would have been an error of judgment. That night we all knelt down in prayer as he implored for divine guidance on the great adventure his first son was poised to dare. The next morning, he sent for me and presented me with the sum of £300, as he spoke to me in words to this effect:

'Son, I have laboured day after day in order to earn an honest living. In course of my duties, I have borne all sorts of gratuitous insults, because a wage earner has no choice but to bear these cheerfully. In our language, there is a saying that "Yes Sir" does not stir any ill-will.

'In the last twenty-three years I have saved some money which enabled me to fulfil the obligations required of me, in accordance with Onitsha custom and convention, to wit: I inducted my father and myself into the Agbalanze Ozo society; I married your mother and your stepmother; I built a house for my father and for myself; I gave you a secondary education as was compatible with my ability.

'I have not much money left in the world. If I had, I would have given you more than what I have here. This is the fruit of many years' frugality. Here it is, my son, it is only £300. It is part of my life's saving. Take it. It is all yours.

'If, as you tell me, this will pave your way to success by paying your passage to America and taking care of your first year's expenses then go ahead and reach America to realise your dreams.

In my school days, we read the story of how Jason and his heroic companions sailed on the *Argo* in quest of the golden fleece. Today, you are poised to sail to America in quest of the golden fleece of knowledge that is guarded by the dragon of ignorance which you must destroy, as Jason did.

'You will succeed, my boy. Dr Aggrey succeeded. President Garfield succeeded. Go, son, and bring home to Africa the golden fleece of knowledge. May God speed you on your voyage.

I cannot fully describe how I felt as I listened to the inspiring words of a father who had just sacrificed part of his life savings in order to give his son an opportunity to prove his mettle in life. After father's incursion into Greek mythology

I reminded him that we had studied *The Heroes* by Charles Kingsley at Hope Waddell in 1920, under Mr Sinclair. So I was able to appreciate the implications of his reference to Jason and the argonauts. I thanked him for his sacrifice and assured him that, God willing, I should bring home the golden fleece of knowledge.

Then father asked me to kneel down, which I did. And he prayed again to God to bless and guide me in my long journey to America. He added his own personal blessing, and left me to my own deserts. As soon as I left my father, the first thing that occurred to me was to write to Dr MacDonald and break the good news to him. I was now positive that I would sail to the United States in time to enrol at Storer College in September 1925. He replied as follows:

'Dear Sir:

'We shall be glad to welcome you to Storer College.

'I enclose a letter which, I trust, will enable you to meet the demands of the American immigration authorities at Liverpool, or whatever point you may apply for the visaing of your passport.

'You will understand that it is a little difficult for me to certify with absolute certainty that you will be able to support yourself after entering the us. But I see no reason why you should fail to do so.

'With what aid in securing employment we shall be able to render, I am sure you will get along all right. A new catalogue goes to you today under another cover.

'The general immigration law does not apply to students entering the United States to pursue studies. Institutions, like Storer College, on a Government approved list, are allowed to receive such students and the students are allowed to pass into this country with small formality.

'Still, I suggest that you be certain to call on the American Consul at Liverpool, if you do not do so at Dakar.

'You will note in the catalogue the date of the opening of the new school year. I suggest that you arrange your sailing so as to be here at that time. You will land at New York City.

'Consult officials **ONLY** as to obtaining any desired information. Ask to be sent to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Depot. There, buy a through ticket to Harper's Ferry, ascertaining, of course, the time of departure of train, reaching here by day, if possible.

'A through train from New York will bring you. We shall be pleased to welcome you to Storer College.

'It will be well for you to write me about the time of your arrival, so that we may be looking out for you.'

Now that the opportunity I had sought for all these years had offered itself to me, my elation can be imagined. I was extremely happy. To say that I was in a state of ecstasy would be an understatement. I could not think of the adjectives to be used to express my gratitude to my father. I was an entirely new man and I looked forward to my voyage to the new world. Then it seemed to me that what had cost me all that was dear to me in the world, including my job, and my worldly goods, and the personal inconveniences I had suffered, were becoming a thing of the past. Now my dream was destined to become a reality.

Before I left Calabar bound for Lagos *en route* to Liverpool, I entered my bedroom, went down on my knees, and prayed to God as follows:

'O God, who gave Marcus Garvey the courage to stand for what is right, and inspired Kwegyir Aggrey to open the eyes of the blind to see the great opportunities available to thy African children, grant me the privilege to be zealous and discreet in seeking for knowledge in the land of James Arthur Garfield.

'Strengthen my faith in thy righteousness and justness that I may apply the knowledge gained in America fearlessly; and imbue me with a sense of justice that I may be fair in all my dealings with my fellow man, to live and let live.

'Inspire me with thy spirit that I may see the way to true greatness: that I may not be selfish in seeking for academic honours and thereby forget that my main objective in life is to make lighter the burden of existence for my fellow man.

'Teach me to be humble in my quest for greatness so that I may not commit the common error of being ostentatious in the foolish attempt to overshadow others.

'Guide me through the temptations of life in America so that, after my education, I should not seek to acquire wealth in order to trample upon my fellow man and deprive him of his right to be prosperous in life. AMEN.'

Since making this prayer, I have striven hard not to deviate from the norms which propelled me to leave the sunny shores of Africa for the new world, when I was nearing my twenty-first birthday.

After a series of send-off parties I sailed to Lagos to make arrangements for my passport and passage to Liverpool. The Rev. Amos N. Cole certified that, having known me from childhood, I was a fit and proper person to be granted a British

passport. Since there was no American Consulate in Lagos, I had to swear to an affidavit regarding my admission to Storer College and of my desire to enter the United States as a non-quota immigrant. This was authenticated by Sir Kitoyi Ajasa in his capacity as a notary public.

Sir Kitoyi was so interested in my spirit of adventure that he offered me encouraging words of advice, patted me on the back, shook my hand, and wished me success. Then I visited P. J. C. Thomas at his office across the street. He also advised me not to be afraid of the dangers that loomed. I should be optimistic. He shook my hand and wished me *bon voyage*. Then I went to the Elder Dempster's and secured a third-class passage to sail to Liverpool on board the *Adda*.

During my brief stay in Lagos I resided with George B. C. Anyaegbunam, who was then studying at the CMS Grammar School. Christopher Nwazota, my classmate, and Henry Emembolu, who was studying at King's College, and I had a small party on the eve of my embarkation. Of course, I saw many other friends, particularly my old colleagues at the Treasury, who wished me a successful adventure.

Then the RMS *Adda* sailed from Lagos and, as the landscape vanished, I retired into my cabin, where I noticed that my companion was a West Indian who was returning home on retirement. It was also a pleasant surprise for me to meet C. O. Robertson on board. He was a steward and did not know me. But when he found out that I was travelling to England, he asked my destination. Then I explained to him that I was going to Harper's Ferry. When I showed him the letter of May 11, 1922, from Dr Durkee addressed to me and Adibuah, mentioning his name along with others, he embraced me and we danced on board with glee.

As the *Adda* sliced its way through the mighty Atlantic, Robertson and I engaged in conversations, ranging from the future of British West Africa to the philanthropic spirit of American educators, who were so sympathetic to the aspirations of African youth for higher education in America. We were very much impressed how Dr Durkee and Dr MacDonald took the pains to appreciate the nature of our problems and suggest practical solutions. We thought that it was a challenge to British educators.

Robertson then asked me my choice of profession. I told him that, first of all, I was determined to improve my mind and body; after that, to identify myself with any profession that would enable me not only to earn an honest living but to serve humanity. Above all, I wanted to be so educated that I could express myself faultlessly and fearlessly and, at the same time, confront any person without becoming apologetic for taking a stand on any public issue. So, I replied, I wanted to be a journalist.

While he agreed that journalism offered scope for developing my personality and serving humanity, nevertheless he thought that at that stage of the development of British West Africa it could not offer me economic security as would law, medicine or engineering, the sought-after professions in those days. After a little argument he agreed that with the development of education there should be an increase in the reading public which would give impetus to an enlightened public opinion. But he had his doubts about it paying a decent salary to enable me to live comfortably.

On arrival at Liverpool, I was accommodated in the home of Mr and Mrs C. E. Sawyer. He was a retired sailor, originally from the Gold Coast, and his wife was English. With Robertson, they introduced me to many black and white friends at that cosmopolitan port. Later, having contacted the American Vice-Consul and secured my visa for the United States, I booked a third-class passage to New York on board the Cunard liner *Scythia*.

CHAPTER V

'HIS SOUL GOES MARCHING ON'

*My struggles in 'God's Country' among godly and godless
images of God*

'It is wicked to break the laws, we are told; it is wrong to disobey the authorities.

'Why? What drivelling impertinence is this?

'Your very House of Commons was born in sedition. Your glorious *Magna Carta* was illegally forced from the supreme authority.

'What of Hampden, who dared to refuse ship money demanded by God's anointed? What of the "Mayflower"?

'If brave men had not resisted authority even to the blazing faggots, the black pall of superstition would still lie on the face of this land. . . .'

WORDSWORTH DENNISTHORPE

I. THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

The good ship *Scythia* sailed from the port of Liverpool and, as we passed Merseyside and crossed the channel, we entered the open sea. Then I began to make acquaintances and I realised that I was the only person of colour on board. I also noticed that in the third class there was quite a number of European emigrants bound for the United States to become American citizens. Most of them were Jews of middle age who hardly spoke a word of English. But they had faith that they were going to 'the promised land' to escape from political, religious or social persecution.

One of the passengers who spoke to me and inquired of my destination turned out to be a professor in one of the universities of New England. He was very friendly and tried to explain to me some of the difficulties confronting immigrants in the United States. He introduced me to a cultured circle, some of whom were artists, scholars and mature students who were returning from their summer vacations in Europe.

In my cabin I killed some time by playing my mandolin, reminding myself of the good days in Calabar when Francis Emegokwue, alias 'Oranye Nwa-emenjo', entertained me with his guitar. I played simple melodies which were popular in Lagos during my school and working days, some of which were 'shouted' by old women in our morning prayers at the Tinubu Methodist church and were based on biblical stories. They are related to the Negro 'spirituals'; only they have an African twang as only Sierra Leoneans can give.

As we neared the shores of New York, we saw a gigantic statue towering majestically above the sound through which our boat glided gracefully, nearing its final destination. The sight was inspiring. I was informed that it was the Statue of Liberty. One could see a gargantuan woman sculpted in stone, holding aloft a torch.

The Manhattan skyline was now becoming visible as we reached Ellis Island, the bane of immigrants to America. I kept repeating what I had been told was inscribed under the Statue of Liberty: 'Liberty lightening the World', and my mind traversed the course of American history. I recollected how some Europeans were forced by religious persecution to seek religious freedom across the Atlantic, on the Mayflower in 1620, and the thousands of Europeans who later sought political freedom there. I could appreciate the meaning of this living symbol of Americanism.

After the immigration and customs formalities, we docked at one of the Manhattan wharves. The skyline was like fairyland. It was my first sight of skyscrapers. I was shown the Woolworth Building, then the highest building in the world. I could not conceive of any building five storeys high, much less twenty or sixty or ninety. Yet before my very eyes were the wonderful architectural achievements of the new world. My impression was that the spirit of America implied the Americanisation of the Napoleonic idea to mean: 'Impossibility is not a word to be found in the dictionary of those who dare.'

When we disembarked in New York, I was directed to the YMCA building on West 135th Street, between Lenox Avenue and Seventh Avenue: that is, right in the heart of Harlem. Before landing in New York, I had read a newspaper advertisement regarding a YMCA hostel where, it was alleged, there was a

Christian atmosphere; I asked the taxi-cab driver to take me there, and he told me politely that he would. Now, I had asked him to take me to the 93rd Street YMCA hostel not realising that it was reserved exclusively for white folk, while the one on 135th Street was a segregated one for coloured folk. It occurred to me that something was wrong, because YMCA stood for Young Men's Christian Association, with emphasis on the word Christian. Surely, I reasoned, a Christian hostel could not discriminate on racial grounds alone. Remembering my readings in the Bible that there was neither Jew nor Gentile, I was nonplussed at this apparent disregard of the fundamentals of Christianity by an organisation which professed to be Christian. In my university days, after I had settled down and made friends among enlightened Americans, we agreed that the YMCA must change its segregation policy in order not to vitiate its Christian essence.

We got to the 135th Street YMCA where the desk clerk proved to be very courteous. He seemed to have been trained to be of aid to visitors and travellers of all sorts and he made me feel 'at home' in a Christian atmosphere. When I told him that I was an African, he asked if I knew Max Yergan and I confessed that the name was new to me. He explained that Max was a young Aframerican who, after completing his university education at Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina, a Baptist higher institution of learning, dedicated his life to serve the cause of the YMCA and was sent to South Africa.

He then narrated how Max adjusted himself to the racial problem in South Africa and established YMCA work among the indigenous Africans. The result was the expansion of the college at Fort Hare, which is one of the leading higher institutions in South Africa for the education of coloured and African youth. I noticed that the same bi-racial policies were not confined to any single country but as a stranger in a strange place, I reserved my comments.

I was impressed by the way most of the coloured folk conducted themselves at the 'Y'. They were well-dressed, refined and apparently cultured. Some were glad to meet me, while some just tolerated my presence. I was taken round the building which was five or six storeys high; and I also saw the swimming pool in the basement. Adjoining this were the

billiards room, and the dining room where food was sold at cost.

It was my first experience of life in New York, outside of what I had read in the papers or seen in the cinema houses. Most of the buildings in New York were five to ten storeys high. The underground railway, called the subway, was a masterpiece of engineering. Hurling to and fro at a remarkable speed were the trains that facilitated the transit of more than seven million inhabitants of New York City, a fact that struck a newly arrived young African with some wonderment.

My stay at the 135th Street YMCA was for only a few hours. At seven in the evening a train was due to leave New York City for Washington, DC, where I would make the necessary connection to Harper's Ferry. After thanking the 'Y' desk clerk for his kindness, I was directed to the 135th Street subway station, which made only a few stops before reaching the 33rd Street (Pennsylvania Union) station, where some of the leading American railway systems had their termini.

I knew I was supposed to get off at the next express station after Times Square (42nd Street); but decided to be reassured, and sought information from an Aframerican commuter sitting next to me. He said he would direct me to the proper place. Then he asked where I came from, and I replied that I was an African who sought to improve himself intellectually. He drew nearer, glanced at me closely and said, amazingly: 'Are you an African, sure enough?' I nodded in the affirmative.

He became very curious and asked me why I was not naked. Would I oblige by telling him about the lions and elephants which were supposed to roam the streets of Africa and made human life unbearable. Before I could answer, he interrupted: 'I beg your pardon, mister, do you belong to dem cannibal tribes who used to eat people? How does human steak taste? How does elephant steak taste? I betcha a dime to a dollar that lion steak ain't so tough but juicy!'

To me, it was a revelation of strange mentality; but to him, it was stranger still, for he could not believe that Africans were civilised enough to wear trousers, coats, ties, shirts and shoes, much less to speak English. When I looked at him crossly for some time without uttering a word, he told me that he meant no harm. He said that most of the missionaries whom he had

heard and the Hollywood films he had seen had given him the impression that Africans were still in a savage and primitive state. I pitied his ignorance and told him that I was shocked to hear a gentleman of African descent, in an advanced country like America, ask me such foolish questions; but because of what seemed to me mitigating circumstances, I took no offence.

By this time we had long since passed the 33rd Street station and were at Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn, about five miles away. He apologised and told me that he would show me how we could transfer to the other side of the track without paying an extra nickel. This trick worked and for the rest of my stay in America, whenever I was in New York City, I delighted myself in teaching new arrivals from Africa or the West Indies how to take a forty-mile round-trip on the subway for the equivalent of three pence.

When we reached 33rd Street he gave me a hearty handshake and assured me that his impression of Africans had changed, after I had told him that my impression of Yankees was that they were cowboys with ten-gallon hats and lassos seeking out Negroes to lynch for fun! He did not appreciate this joke at first, until he realised that one half of the world was ignorant of how the other half lived, due to the levity with which those who controlled the mass information media slanted their news or films to amuse their clientele.

2. JOHN BROWN'S RAID ON HARPER'S FERRY

The train I boarded travelled all night. When it was dawn the sun shone on the misty atmosphere and Washington, the national capital, was resplendent in all its glory. At the Union Railroad Station what struck me were the words carved on its portals, in bold relief, which read: 'Let all the end thou aimest be thy country's, thy God's and truth's. Be noble and the nobleness that lies in other men—sleeping but not dead—will rise in majesty to meet thine own.'

It was a unique experience to be confronted with such a message on reaching Washington, DC. To love one's country is the highest patriotism. To heed the presence of God in all we do is to demonstrate our divine affinity. To be wedded to

truth is to make life a rewarding experience. But the greatest lesson to be learnt from the message at this railway station was nobility of spirit: that by being noble, we ignite the nobility in others and make this earth a decent place to live in and make life happy for our fellow human beings.

In spite of my being a greenhorn at this cosmopolitan railway station, I found practically all the railway officials willing to help. From the porters who cleaned the waiting rooms and made them spotless, to the clerks who sold or endorsed tickets, and the locomotive and traffic staff, all gave me the impression that their duty was to make train journeys most pleasant. I made the necessary connection with ease and joined the 'Baltimore and Ohio Flyer' bound for Harper's Ferry. On the dot, the train left the platform speeding on its way to the town made famous by John Brown.

I had known of Harper's Ferry in the spirit. When I attended the CMS Central School at Onitsha, we used to sing of John Brown's body which mouldered in the grave whilst his soul marched on. This song referred to a great American abolitionist by the name of John Brown, born at Torrington, Connecticut, on May 9, 1800, a descendant of Peter Brown, one of the passengers on board the Mayflower.

His father, Captain John Brown, served in the War of Independence in 1776. Young Brown read for holy orders, then turned his attention to the tanning industry; but he failed in this business. When he migrated to North Elba, New York State, he engaged in farming. Here, he came in contact with the horrors of slavery, for some of the Negro settlers there had escaped from the grip of this inhuman scourge. They narrated their gruesome experiences to him and he was shocked that man should be so unkind to man. After making a little money, he decided to devote the rest of his life to the cause of the oppressed, by challenging his fellow white men and women to be more humane in their dealings with black people.

Because the Federal Government was not energetic enough in abolishing slavery, John Brown organised a group of eighteen Abolitionists, five of whom were Negroes, and raided Harper's Ferry, the site of a Federal Government arsenal. On the night of October 16, 1859, he captured the arsenal and arrested over sixty leading citizens and slave-owners as hostages. The next

morning the United States federal troops countered and overpowered him and his followers.

Of course, the violent method he adopted was unconstitutional; but he thought that the United States Congress was more or less a debating society which paid little heed to fundamental human rights. In his defence, some American historians explained that he was motivated to intimidate the slave-owners to enable the slaves to dictate the terms of their emancipation. On October 31, 1859, John Brown was convicted of 'treason, and conspiring and advising slaves and other rebels, and murder in the first degree'. On December 2, 1859, he was hanged at Charles Town, West Virginia.

His death was an impetus to the cause of the Abolitionists, because four years later, President Abraham Lincoln emancipated the slaves, only to forfeit his life in 1865 at the hands of an assassin. During the American Civil War the Abolitionists sang: 'John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on.' Indeed, the soul of John Brown still marches on where human beings breathe this free air of God.

As our train emerged from the tunnel under one of West Virginia's mountains, we saw the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers as if they held the town of Harper's Ferry as hostage pending the liberation of the spirit of John Brown to preach to the world the glad tidings of human freedom. I stepped from the train and the first objects to greet me were five tablets erected at this railway station in commemoration of the historic sacrifice of John Brown and his companions. It seemed as if their spirits hovered round the place, challenging the railway commuters to show nobility to humanity.

Two well-dressed persons of African descent, one a Canadian mulatto, approached and greeted me as if they already knew me, saying that they were detailed to welcome me on behalf of Storer College. I was surprised how easily they identified me, as there were many black as well as white passengers in the train. But I forgot that I was still new on the American scene and that my overcoat was of English make, which caused a lot of fun and laughter among Americans because of its austere cut.

When I told them that I had three trunks, they were

amazed because one was the usual load for each student. Meanwhile, we moved towards the American Express office, to claim the trunks. My friends were bewildered. They looked round and asked me where the trunks were; I showed them the three cabin trunks which were in front of them. Then they had a hearty laugh. One of them said to me: 'These are not trunks. They are camp boxes.' Then, I was shown the real steamer trunks which have wardrobes in them. I joined in the laughter.

My 'trunks' were placed in the truck, and one of the students of the college, who was working his way as a lorry driver, drove us to the campus. Here I was introduced to the Dean of the College, Professor W. A. Saunders, an ageing Aframerican who had been educated at Bates College, Lewistown, Maine. He assigned me to a room and advised me to adjust myself gradually to my new environment.

Before I settled down in my room, I asked a friend to show me John Brown's Fort, which had been removed by the college authorities from its original site to its present location on the campus. It was used as the College Museum and the original building, together with the holes bored by bullets cross-fired from the guns of the attackers and defenders of Harper's Ferry, could still be seen. I was awe-stricken and bowed my head in humility to those who died that others might live and enjoy the good things of the earth.

A tablet was attached on the side of this fort. I moved nearer and saw the following immortal sentiments engraved on a slab of marble:

'That this nation might have a new birth of freedom: that slavery should be removed for ever from American soil: John Brown and his 21 men gave their lives.

'To commemorate their heroism, this tablet is placed on this building, which has since been known as John Brown's Fort, by the Alumni of Storer College, 1918.'

Later, after I had returned to my room, I asked one of the students to take me to Dr MacDonald, President of the College, through whose efforts and inspiration I decided to attend Storer College after being introduced to it by Dr Durkee. Having been directed to his residence, I went there alone, and entering the gate saw a man of about fifty, wearing overalls,

energetically wielding the rake in the garden and sweating profusely like a hired labourer.

Thinking that he was one of the college employees, I greeted him and asked him kindly to direct me to the President of the College. Realising who I was and enjoying the humour of the situation, the 'gardener' asked me why I wanted to see the President. I told him that I was a student from Africa; that I was born and bred as an English gentleman; and it was not the business of a gardener to find out the nature of discussion between gentlemen.

The 'gardener' laughed heartily in a typical American manner. Then he said to me: 'If you are an English gentleman, why don't you look like an Englishman?' I replied that not all Englishmen were white and that English was a universal language. He countered that I was begging the issue. I added that it made no difference and that gardeners were not supposed to be intelligent; so he should direct me to the learned president.

I implored him to leave me alone, for I was tired and I was not prepared for further arguments. I added that I was interested in debates and that, as soon as I settled down, I would like to meet him and discuss some of these points, so as to prove to him that Americans were the cultural inferiors of Englishmen. The 'gardener' had another hearty laugh and said to me: 'Good afternoon, Mr Azikiwe, I am very glad to know you. I am Dr MacDonald. Please go inside and meet Mrs MacDonald. I will change my overalls and be with you in five minutes.'

He pulled his right hand from his working glove, and gave mine a hearty shake. I was stupefied and could not believe that Dr MacDonald would condescend to grab the rake and be seen publicly doing manual labour in the garden. I was perplexed 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!

'So you are a black Englishman?' asked Mrs MacDonald, who taught French and German at Storer College, as she welcomed me into their home. 'Yes, madam,' I replied as I sat down, and was still thinking why a learned man of the stamp of Dr MacDonald had to do the work of a common gardener. But that experience affected me because it made me resolve

to do any type of work, no matter how menial, in order to work my way through college.

I debated within me that if an intellectual did not consider it disgraceful to be seen publicly with a rake, and if he did not consider it shameful to wear overalls and sweat in public, then there was no reason why an ordinary student like myself should be so egocentric as to look down on certain types of work.

Meanwhile, Dr MacDonald had returned, looking fresh. He told me that he appreciated our dialogue; but he admitted that it was no new experience to him because other African students who came before me were of such opinion, excepting the one from Liberia.

I apologised for speaking so caustically to the President of the College; but he laughingly told me that there was no need to apologise. I was only a victim of my environment; that environment was aristocratic, and I was infected by its virus. Perhaps, by the time I finished my education in America, I might be singing a different tune, since America was a democratic environment.

I was assured by his wife that I was in an advantageous position compared with English or other African students who studied in England, and American students who studied in an American environment. Having been educated both in aristocratic and democratic environments, I would be in a position to select the best from each and improve my outlook and way of living; this would also affect my own environment after I had finished my studies and returned home.

Dr MacDonald told me that I had talent for argumentation and that, after a little brushing up, I might become an accomplished debater. He asked me about my travelling experiences and I narrated them to him as best as I could. After an afternoon refreshment of cakes and apple pies, I left him and Mrs MacDonald feeling that I was safely in the hands of friends.

By the time I reached my room, some of the male students (Storer College was a co-educational institution) greeted me and asked me to play a tune or two on my mandolin. I told them honestly that I was not an adept but that I had bought it in Liverpool to while away the time and could only play elementary tunes. They insisted that I should play anything, for they wanted to hear how African music sounded. So I

played the following lyrics which were popular among seamen and guitarists at Lagos around 1925:

'I come from Nigeria,
From lordly Nigeria,
Down the river,
Down the river,
Where the Niger flows;
Now I wonder,
Now I wonder,
Where the river goes.'

The students were hilarious. Then they asked me to play another tune. And I played an orphan song:

'Nobody, nobody cares for me,
Nobody, nobody cares for me,
My father is gone,
My mother is gone,
Nobody cares for me.'

They were delighted and they asked me if I were an orphan. I replied negatively but explained that Africa was like an orphan. Then I played another tune regarding the fate of man:

'I am nothing but a woman's slave,
You are nothing but a woman's slave,
A king or pauper; a genius or knave,
He is nothing but a woman's slave.'

Finally, I played a tune, as follows:

'When you get money,
You get many friends,
When you get fine house,
You get many friends,
When trouble come,
When trials come,
They turn their backs
As if they know you not;
For we are passing (6)
Like a rolling stone
On a bright summer day.'

The students were not quite impressed with the seeming monotony of this African Creole music; but they were delighted with the philosophy behind the lyrics. Then they took me downstairs and one of them began to hammer jazz music on the

piano. In a few seconds the hall was filled with happy-go-lucky young men, dancing the 'Charleston' and the 'Black Bottom' with ease. To me, it was a new type of dancing. Although it was vigorous, yet I became a willing student. The song which was used for the piano music was 'Dinah'.

Professor Saunders sent for me the next day and asked if I was willing to work and what type of work I could do? I told him that I was a clerk and that I knew a little of book-keeping, filing, indexing, and that I could typewrite. He asked whether I had ever been a fireman (or stoker). I said no. He told me that it was the only job which could aid in paying about one-third of my college bill for the year. 'You've never been a fireman?' asked Professor Saunders. 'No sir,' I replied. 'Well, what hard work have you done all your life?' he questioned. 'I have done clerical work and when I was a lawyer's clerk, I did a lot of typing. I am familiar with the making of affidavits, conveyancing, agreements, and . . .'

The genial professor interrupted and told me that I was a mis-educated person. For my age and with my physique, he said, I should have made a good farmer. He added that any donkey could be trained to do what I said I could do. It was routine work. In America, he pontificated, education emphasised the use of the head, heart, and hands, co-ordinately. Since I could use only my head, he advised that unless I was prepared to be re-educated, to use my hands as well, he was afraid that my coming to America would be futile.

I told him candidly that I had always looked down on manual workers and it was difficult for me to condescend to work with my hands; but since even Dr MacDonald was seen by me to be working as an ordinary gardener, there was no reason why I should not try. Professor Saunders doubted my willingness to work with my hands, but he decided to give me an opportunity to prove my mettle. He emphasised that gardening was not 'ordinary' but important work. I thanked him for the correction.

He called for Reverend Kent, who was the head fireman of the Storer College central steam heating plant, and introduced me to him. When I learnt that a minister of the gospel was the head fireman, I was amazed and all my pride gave way. Of course, I began to adjust myself accordingly. As an assistant

fireman, my job was to shovel coal into the furnace and see that an even heat-temperature was maintained. It was tough but most instructive.

However, it was with difficulty that I adapted myself to my new employment. I was so self-conscious and proud that every time I finished my job I felt that some persons were watching me in order to ridicule the idea of a gentleman like me working as a fireman. But the environment was congenial to student workers. Almost half of the students worked their way through college. Some of them were among the best students and athletes, and these practical examples so strengthened my character that I forgot my gentility and settled down to hard work.

Immediately on my arrival in America I had written to Dr J. Stanley Durkee, who was really responsible for my choice of Storer College as my preparatory school before matriculating at any American university. I had also written to my compatriot, Mr Okokon, whose hints regarding the problems that I would face in America steeled my constitution and prepared me for the worst. Dr Durkee, in a letter dated October 9, 1925, replied to my letter in these words:

'My dear Mr Azikiwe:

'A hearty greeting to you as you land in America.

'The ladder reaches far, far up, and with your foot now on the first rung, you have a wonderful climb ahead of you.

'Plod along, but be sure you are climbing.

'Whenever I can be of help, let me know and I will do my best.

'If you get to Washington be sure to call and see me.

'Meanwhile, work hard, keep cheerful, trust implicitly in God . . . and whistle your way through!

'Most sincerely yours,

'J. STANLEY DURKEE.'

Mr Okokon also replied. His letter, dated October 14, 1925, from Howard University, reads as follows:

'It delights my heart to have your letter just to hand. I am glad that you have passed along to Storer College and that my advices have been useful.

'Now, your trouble is not ended. Let me call that the "wayside" trouble. You have greater ones to face. The fact that you are

young and that you are purposeful encourage a belief that you will face, undaunted, the masses of difficulties before you.

'Do not leave yourself to be drifted by anyone at Storer. Be a man of your own self. 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.

'Respect all, but be weak to none. In your lessons, aim at making a record and work hard. They are a good bunch at Storer. Most of all, keep close to your God.

'I am working hard to take up my work at Canada next fall.

'Cheer up and aim high.

'Write me often. Best wishes to you.

'Your countryman and friend,

'H. E. ANI-OKOKON.'

Meanwhile, I continued to work hard at Storer College. My wage, according to the students' wage scale, was 20 cents per hour.* Usually I put in about two hours' work daily, which gave me a fair salary at the end of the month. Another vacancy occurred and I was called by Professor Saunders, who assured me that he was satisfied with my new idea of manual labour; in keeping with the tradition of the college, preference was given to the most willing students whenever vacancies occurred.

He asserted that some students were not diligent in their work and some were irresponsible. In his opinion, Reverend Kent had recommended me as a student who had a sense of duty. I asked him the nature of the vacancy. He told me that it was that of a janitor, whose duties were to sweep all the side-walks, from Mosher Hall (boys' dormitory) through the Anthony Memorial Chapel, to Lincoln Hall (girls' dormitory) and to clean the toilets, wash-basins and lavatories at Mosher Hall. The wage was 20 cents daily, it being reckoned as an hour's work.

He advised me not to be ashamed because the ladies would see me sweeping the side-walks; rather I should follow the example of the President and perform my duties satisfactorily. I accepted the job. This meant that every morning at five o'clock I had to wake up before the other students, and start sweeping the side-walks. I enjoyed the job. In fact, I discovered

* We are talking of days when the sterling equivalent of one US dollar was four shillings and two pence.

that some of the girls used to wake up early enough to say hello and also to have friendly chats with me! The thought of the accumulated wages at the end of the month, and the hope that the beautiful girls would be by their windows narrating their dreams to me for my interpretation, made me feel exuberant.

My first summer in America taught me a life-long lesson to be wary of city folk. Dr MacDonald had given preference to me and the Canadian, who had been to the railway station to welcome me, as the two students who should work as farm hands and assist Professor Winters during the summer of 1926 on the College Farm. The salary offered was 10 dollars (then about two pounds) a week for fifteen weeks. The college would provide us with board and lodging. The working hours would be from 6.30 a.m. to 8 a.m., then breakfast; 8.30 a.m. to 12 noon, then lunch; 2 to 5 p.m., then dinner. Calculating this, it meant that I should earn £30 by the end of the summer. This practically covered three-fourths of my college bill, and whatever I earned during the school year would be paid to me in cash.

But a student from Baltimore, Maryland, spoke to me about city life. He said that workers were paid at 40 cents (1s. 8d.) an hour and that they worked for ten hours daily, and that in a month there I could earn what Storer College would pay me in fifteen weeks. Thoughts of wealth filled my mind. So I went to Dr MacDonald and told him that I had decided to try my luck in Baltimore. He readily consented, but was kind enough to suggest that if I experienced any difficulty I should return to Storer College without delay. We arrived at Baltimore and we were engaged at the Bethlehem Steel Mills. We were provided with shanties as quarters and were paid at 40 cents an hour.

I was attached to the construction gang and had to do a lot of heavy work, lifting the wheelbarrow. I also worked with an automatic cement mixer which kept me working at top speed. But the job was so tedious that I became ill and fell a victim of home-sickness. This is a terrible malady, when one is ten thousand miles away from home and one is placed to work as a labourer under a stone-hearted Yankee foreman. The wheelbarrow was usually filled with mortar consisting of a mixture of cement, gravel and sand. I had to cart it from one

end of the factory to another, about 50 yards away. It was extremely heavy. By the time I reached my destination I was physically spent.

Despite my attempts to stand the test, I was not physically able to endure it. So I decided to abandon the job with its high wages and return to Storer College for work on the farm where the tempo would be generally more leisurely and less competitive. I decided that since nature had given me warning that the job was too hard for my physique, the prudent thing for me to do was to return to Harpers Ferry and conserve my health.

'Well, I'll be doggone, if it ain't our old friend Zik!' That was the expression of Ulric von Bowe, the Canadian who was supposed to work with me at the College Farm for the summer. Because my name was difficult to pronounce, the American students thought that the best thing to do was to give me a nickname. So they split my name into 'A-ZIK-IWE' and preferred the middle word; so 'Zik' has stuck with me since then as my nickname!

Mr Bowe was surprised to see me back. I told him that I was sick, and that I felt very much overworked and run down. So I preferred to return where some people knew me. He reported my return to Professor Saunders and Dr MacDonald. I was given a rest cure and advised to work gradually, since I had not done any real hard work until I arrived in America; it was necessary that I should train my constitutional make-up and adjust it to varying labour conditions.

After a few days of rest I joined the College Farm staff and began to appreciate not only scientific but also practical agriculture. I learned something of animal husbandry because I had to milk the cows and also feed the hogs, the cows, the horses, and the chickens. Then I was taught how to plough, to furrow, to weed, to hill, to harrow, to seed, to harvest, and how to work with horses and tractors. It was one of the most thrilling experiences in my life when I learned how to plough and speak appealingly to our horse, Tobe, either to keep on the move, or to stop or to wheel round!

At the summer school, some of the teachers who worked during the winter came to school for the summer; while conversely, the students who went to school during the winter, went to

work during the summer. This system enables the principle of earning whilst learning, and learning whilst earning, to be put into practice, to satisfy those who earned money during the winter and spent part of it to make progress in their education during the summer.

When the winter season resumed I was in a better position to face the new academic year. I paid my bills for the first semester in advance, and I had some change with which I began to operate what was known as 'Zik's Pawn Shop'. With my savings I loaned the students from wealthier homes, who were always in need of money, sums ranging from 25 cents to one dollar, with interest varying from a nickel to a dime per month.

The students usually pawned their suits, shoes, hats, books, typewriters, watches, and other valuable commodities. I did not accept jewellery because I knew nothing of it. Through this little business I was able to earn a little income. I also joined another student, Howard Battle, who was a tailor, by giving him the suits pawned to me for pressing and cleaning. When the borrower returned the original loan plus the little interest, he was glad to see his suit cleaned and pressed, and usually he was glad to pay the extra dime or quarter charged for this surprise service!

Then I operated 'Zik's Typewriting Bureau'. I accepted manuscripts from students and typed them at one cent (half-penny) per page. If a student consulted me in confidence I usually prepared home lessons at a nominal sum. The co-eds, that is, the lady-students, patronised my bureau greatly, although their main patronage consisted of my helping to do their assignment and lessons.

At Storer, I was able to develop my athletic abilities. I participated in American football, athletics, boxing and cross-country. In American football I was just a rookie, and my reward was a bashed nose; once my head collided with the goal-post when I was tackled by an overzealous guard. In athletics I won the special pentathlon medal in 1926: running the 440 yards in 50.9 seconds; the mile in 4 minutes 36 seconds; clearing the high jump at a height of 5 feet 10 inches; and long jumping 21 feet 6 inches. That year I also won the annual cross-country race for a distance of four miles.

Athletics taught me some of the bitterest lessons in life. I took up distance running because I thought I would make a good miler. But I found out that mile running went beyond the running track. On one occasion I lost a race foolishly in the one-mile run because, having won most of the races in which I was entered and having earned the acclamation of racing fans, I became swollen-headed and underrated my opponents. Therefore I did not train for this race, and thought that all I had to do was to put on spiked shoes and race to victory.

We were 'on the mark' for the race. Then we 'got set'. As soon as the starter shot the gun, I left my holes like a bullet and set a blistering pace, as usual, and most of the side-liners took it for granted that I had won the race. After the first quarter I had a forty-yard lead. After the second quarter, a thirty-yard lead. After the third quarter, my lead was twenty yards. In the last quarter I was utterly spent. I had no reserve and instead of 'kicking' at the back or the home stretch, I was a spent force, and finished last in the race. Here I learned a bitter lesson that unless one was well trained and well prepared in any line of work, no matter how great one's latent capability, one's talent will never reach its highest peak of development.

From athletics I also learned to suffer in silence. I learned how to let the other fellow suffer with me as soon as I decided to apply pressure. I learned how to act as if I was helpless, even though I was as powerful as an ox. I learned how to keep the other fellow guessing how I would counter-attack after he had launched his offensive. Moreover, I 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.

Athletics makes the average young man realise that life is a race in which all must start at the scratch. At the shot of the starter's gun, some runners will rush at a blind speed as a cyclone. Their cyclonic start is a fair prediction of a cyclonic fadeout. Some runners will run impulsively in a lackadaisical manner through the race. In very rare cases, they discover untapped energy to enable them to stay with the leaders in front. In many cases they fall out of the race. Some runners are

methodical in the way they run. They plan the varying stages of their race: the time to set a fast pace, the time to let down a bit imperceptibly, the time to accelerate the pace, the time to ignore the challenges of an opponent, the time to accept challenges, and the time to apply pressure so as to outwit all opposition and be among the first three to breast the tape.

These tricks of running have influenced my way of life, in that I have always looked at most of my problems as ones which confront a runner in a mile race. At times I am successful, just as I was in my heyday as university mile champion; and sometimes unsuccessful, just as I lost some races due to many causes, some of which were beyond my control.

Boxing taught me to cultivate a capacity to absorb punishment and to bide my time, so that when I struck I could land a pay-off punch. On one occasion, a rugged American bully knocked me down for a count of nine, three times. I simply took the counts, rested, and planned my counter-offensive. Despite the reverses in the first round, I got up, cycled backwards, calmly cleared my head of the cobwebs and stars which his punches had generated in my brain; then, as cool as a cucumber, I fainted him into knots, and knocked him out in the second round with a calculated blow to the solar plexus. This proves that one can face difficulties and be as cool and as destructive as a rattlesnake. That's the philosophy of pugdom. And that is life.

3. PITTSBURGH: THE SMOKY CITY

The year 1927 is an important landmark in my biography for three reasons: first, I was practically alone in the world; secondly, my plan to commit *felo-de-se* ended abortively; thirdly, I discovered myself as a self-reliant man. Having spent eighteen months in the United States and attained physical maturity, I now understood what it meant to rely upon one's individual efforts, instead of depending upon others, when it came to the solution of the practical day-to-day problems of life.

I had made a good academic record at Storer College during my two years of study there. My first year was spent in finishing preparatory studies in the high school or secondary

department. This was equivalent to university entrance or matriculation examination. In May 1926, I passed the examinations in the following papers with good grades: Botany 'A', Zoology 'A', Advanced Algebra 'A', Latin Language and Literature (Caesar and Cicero) 'A', French Language and Literature (*Le voyage de M. Perrichon* and *La tulipe noire*) 'B-', and American Literature 'B'.

The following year I enrolled in the Junior College department and passed examinations in the Freshman class as follows: Astronomy 'A', Geology 'B', Trigonometry 'A', Latin Language and Literature (Ovid and Livy) 'A', Philosophy (Ethics) 'A', and Sociology 'A'. Other things being equal, the two semesters' work should have enabled me to have sophomore classification at Howard University and save me time and money. Which was precisely what happened.

As soon as Storer College ended the 1926-27 session in June 1927, President MacDonald conferred with me in his office and informed me that the college had done its part in my educational career. He commended me for making enviable grades in my studies and wished for me a successful career in the university of my choice. He would be happy to give me a testimonial certifying that my character was excellent and that I worked in the college conscientiously as a person with a sense of responsibility.

Then he remarked that my *alma mater* now wished me to go forth into the world and discover myself. It was true that Storer College offered two years of junior college work, but he thought that no useful purpose would be served by my continuing another year, thus wasting time that should be concentrated on the important subjects of my specialisation for a university degree. With a pat on the back, he bade me farewell and hoped that when I made my mark in the world I would not forget Storer College. I kept faith with this college, for in 1947 I donated a cheque of one thousand dollars to it in appreciation of the opportunity it gave me in life.

When I entered the 'Pittsburgh Express', at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Station, bound for the smoky city of Pittsburgh, so described because of the many steel mills and collieries established there or near it, I felt that I was embarking upon a great adventure. As soon as we left the four tablets

beside the monument of John Brown, my thoughts were transferred to my new life.

I reached Pittsburgh the next morning, and started to seek for employment. I tried to secure a job as a labourer in connection with the street-cars (trams) or as a porter, but I was unsuccessful. After four day's effort I was lucky enough to be employed by the Duquesne Electric Company. This corporation held the franchise for supplying electricity to a certain section of this smoky city of three-quarters-of-a-million souls. I was placed on the ditch-digging gang.

The foreman asked my name and for my previous experience, I told him that I was called 'Ben Zik'. He wrote down 'Benzene' on the pay-roll. I was given a pick and shovel and directed to follow the other labourers. There were over two hundred of us engaged in this type of work—Poles, Italians, some Hungarians, Americans, West Indians, Canadians and Negroes. The pay scale was fifty cents per hour, for a total of ten hours daily.

A surveyor would come with a theodolite and, after performing his trigonometric 'tricks', the foreman would direct us to dig the ditches two feet wide and three feet deep. The experience was simply thrilling. I first swung the pick and then used the shovel. After digging the ditches we were shifted any-and-everywhere, depending upon the exigencies of the work.

After I had been working for two weeks, the foreman told me that he noticed that my energy was flagging and that I had no pep. Therefore, I should regard myself as 'fired'. The same excuse was given in the case of many others who shared the same fate. It gave me food for thought that an uncultured, tobacco-chewing and vociferous Yankee foreman could speak to me, a university undergraduate, in such vein,

I asked one of my Italian comrades for a possible explanation and he revealed the secret to me. Behold, the foremen were instructed to recruit unskilled labourers every two weeks or every month, so as to inject fresh blood in the labour supply. This idea enabled the company to employ and dismiss hundreds of unskilled labourers at will. It also enabled contractors, who were responsible for the supply of labour, to be busily engaged.

When it is remembered that these contractors were paid

commission for the number of labourers supplied, and that some of these labour agencies might be subsidiaries of the employing companies, one could easily see how the speculators profited on both sides of the bargain, to the detriment of the human factor in industry. That was how this Italian explained our anomalous situation.

I was shocked that an economic system upon which human lives depended could condone such inhumanity, and I refused to believe it. But he confessed that he had been employed and 'fired' on that job over six times! He used to change his name, his countenance, his dress, his language; in fact he had to use his wits in order to get a job. He would wear a moustache of varying shapes, or represent himself as an Italian, a Pole, or a Hungarian, or what not. He once blackened his face to look like a Negro!

Incidentally, I met Dr Max Yergan at this time in Pittsburgh, when he visited the YMCA, and I had the privilege to be one of the speakers at a testimonial meeting held in honour of his return from South Africa. Among the other speakers on this occasion were two African students from Freetown, Sierra Leone: Constance and Samuel Tuboku-Metzger, who studied respectively chemical and electrical engineering at the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

Early on the morning following my sacking by the Duquesne Electric Company, after a worrisome night, I was asleep when I heard a voice say: 'Wake up, Mr Zikiwacki or whatever is your monicker'. I opened my eyes and behold a fat woman was sitting by my bedside, shaking me out of my slumber with her ham-like hand. 'Look a yere, boy, I ain't no money-making trec. I's got five children to care for. I's got a husband to care for. I's got myself to care for. If you ain't gonna pay your rent and board, how do you 'spect us to live?' That was my landlady's greeting.

Although she knew that I was a student who was fighting his way in the world and it was her husband's younger brother who had brought me to stay with them because we were pals at Storer College, yet she demanded that the rent and board be paid promptly. I pleaded that since I had been 'fired' she should be patient with me. As soon as I got another job I would pay regularly. Besides, I begged her to have mercy on me because

the little money that I earned was to be used by me to enrol at a university.

'Boy,' she replied, 'I ain't playing no Santa Claus to nobody. I's got to eat and I's got to feed my sweet daddy, and I's got to feed the li'l children. So let me have some dough if you know what's good for you.' At that time, I had about 80 dollars (£16). So I braced up and asked her to let me have the bill. She replied that I owed her 30 dollars for three weeks and explained that I had to pay for everything: 'Even the water you drink and your enjoyment of the sitting room cost us money; and you've got to pay your share. Bisness is bisness, you see?'

I got up from my bed and put on my bath robe, opened my suitcase and handed her 30 dollars. She smiled and remarked: 'Lawdy, damn if I did not think that you were broke. Thirty green backs! Where did you get dem money from, you rascal? I thought you got canned. You hardly go to the movies or dances, and you don't seem to like the broads [girls]. I thought you were broke, boy. Now, you are forty with me. You can stay as long as you like and pay your bills when you are employed.'

By now I was disillusioned, and I gave this semi-literate-Alabama-corn-fed-lady the length of my tongue. I told her that I would move that very day, and if the garbage she fed me twice daily and the 'hen coop' in which I slept at night were worth 10 dollars (two pounds) a week, then she was a real gold-digger.

Of course she retaliated and told me about my African origin, and asked who ever heard of a cannibal going to college, much more coming to Pittsburgh. 'You can go, brother, because you may get hungry one day and I may miss one of my babies, while you'll be getting as fat as I is,' she added. She was now wild as the Bay of Biscay and I had to pacify her by apologising that I was to blame for the imbroglio. Later, I moved to the YMCA Hostel at 2620 Centre Avenue.

For days and weeks I wandered from place to place seeking for employment, but it was in vain; and my funds were depleting. One evening, as I returned from job-hunting, I saw an old cleric sleeping on the other bed in my room; it was a large room usually rented to two roomers. He was dignified in appear-

ance and his portmanteau showed that he was an experienced traveller. From the way he slept, it was evident that he was very tired. I decided to wait till the next morning before speaking to him.

When we finally spoke to each other, he introduced himself as the Reverend Mark C. Hayford, of the African Baptist Mission, Cape Coast. He told me that he had just returned from a trip to Canada where he had gone to collect funds for his missionary endeavours on the Gold Coast. I explained my plight to him and he gave me words of comfort. When he left me the next day, he wrote in my autograph book a quotation which became my spiritual rock of strength: 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy path.'

Four weeks had passed since I lost my job and no new job was in sight. By now I was worth one dime in all the world. I had rationed my funds so frugally that I went on diet for a long time, and at times had one meal a day. When no job was forthcoming. I reduced this to a cup of coffee and two thick slices of bread. But it was in vain.

Then I began to live on lemonade and bread. I bought three lemons for a dime, and a loaf of bread and a pound of sugar. I would squeeze one lemon into a pitcher filled with water, and add sugar into it so as to have lemonade. Then with the bread I would have a good meal. A few hours later I would feel as if I had eaten nothing. After all attempts at frugality, I was still unemployed and was worth only one dime, which later shrank to a nickel, and then to nothing. I bore the humiliation of starvation for two days in silence, and could not convince myself of the necessity of begging anybody for money or for food.

I wrote a letter to the Secretary of the YMCA, my good friend, Rev. Samuel R. Morsell, a graduate of Yale, asking him to forgive me for my delinquency in the rents and begging that he should inform my people of my fate. Thoughts of death filled my mind. I could not see any way out of my dilemma. Two days without food, two days of anxieties, and then came the final resolution. I took my pen and composed some lines, four stanzas of which are as follows:

Friendless, dejected,
Sorrow fills my mind,

All hope is gone, and now:
I want to die.

No one to cheer me
In this wilderness,
That is my fate, and now:
I want to die.

Farewell, my loved ones,
Far across the sea;
Whate'er I have, I gave:
I want to die.

Oh God, who made me,
Watch this feeble frame;
And let it rest in peace:
I want to die.

By 11 p.m. I decided that the best way out was to lie down across the rail so that when the tram came by at midnight it would run over me and cut matters short. This plan was well devised because the track of the tram was a descent of the hill, and it would be difficult for the tram to stop, and by the time it stopped I would have been ground like a sausage. I packed my few belongings and enclosed three letters in my port-manteau: one was addressed to my father, another to my mother, and the third to Dr MacDonald.

It was now 12.45 a.m., and Centre Avenue was practically deserted. I thought that was the opportunity to execute my designs. At 12.50 a.m. I heard the tram about 300 yards away at the top of the hill. I prayed to God to accept my soul and, bracing up, I reclined across the track, anxiously awaiting the approach of the speeding tram.

Nearer and nearer it came, and faster and faster it moved. My heart throbbed and almost leapt out of my mouth as the mental strain became too much for me. I did not waver, but I prayed harder and harder for the tram to grind me to pieces and let me have peace of mind. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly, a good Samaritan dragged me away from the track. As soon as the tram was about twenty yards or so from where I lay, I heard the screeching of steel.

The conductor had seen what he thought was a struggle between two persons and he applied the emergency brake.

Because it was downhill the brake did not respond immediately, hence the screeching; and by the time it came to a dead stop the tram was about ten yards from us. There was confusion inside it, because the emergency stop had caused some of the passengers to become frantic, thinking that some accident had happened. Some women shrieked.

Meanwhile, I opened my eyes. Then I said to this unknown friend: 'Why didn't you let me die?' He answered: 'Because life is full of the glory of God. Why must you die, so young and so full of promise?' 'Oh, you have messed up everything. You should have left me to die,' I replied disappointedly. The conductor having satisfied himself that it was only a 'Nigger' who wanted to die, continued his journey as the passengers gossiped about the incident.

'Look here, my boy,' said the kind friend, 'why did you do this? Your life belongs to God. You have no right to take it away. God gave you your life and God is the only person to take it away.' 'Yes, sir,' I remarked, 'but God must have known that I must live, before he made me. Why, then, did he allow me to become friendless and dejected so as to starve when I live in a world where there is plenty of food?'

The gentleman took me to the YMCA and explained to the desk clerk on night duty what had happened. A pint of milk was given to me for nourishment. I was guided upstairs to my room by the desk clerk and the unknown friend. Then I went to bed. When I woke up the next day, I found an envelope addressed to me. It contained five dollars. There was also an unsigned note which assured me that I would be introduced to a friend, to realise that the world was not a wilderness after all.

I had a hearty meal that day. I went to my usual restaurant and the waiter brought the regular fare of one cup of coffee and two slices of bread. I told him that I wanted something else. He was flabbergasted because he knew that for some time that had been my regular order. Oh yes, Italian restaurateurs are usually mindful of their patrons, and this fellow was no exception! I placed an order for beef steak, and when I got through with the meal I felt much better.

As soon as I returned to the YMCA I was told that a reverend gentleman was there to see me. In a note that he left for me,

the Rev. Dr A. M. Lamb, a white Presbyterian minister, introduced himself as a friend and requested that I should have lunch with him at one of Pittsburghs' leading hotels that day. I kept this appointment and cultivated his acquaintances. He assured me of his deep interest in me and my future.

Placing his aged hand on my head, he said to me, 'It is the unseen hand of Providence that saved you early this morning and brought me here, my son.' Then he announced that he had a job for me at a restaurant which belonged to one of his friends. The job would last for two weeks. It was dish-washing. If I cared for it, I could have it, and in two weeks' time, the Lord would provide another opening. The pay was 15 dollars weekly, and the hours of work were from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and one day off every two weeks.

I accepted the job. He gave me a note to the manager of this branch of 'Gammon's Restaurant and Cafeteria'. There were some branches in Pittsburgh. I left him and went to my new job. He returned to his manse, at Cheswick, and thus began a friendship which was destined to be lifelong. As soon as I gave the manager the letter of introduction, he shook my hand and spoke to me familiarly: 'I am glad to know you, Mr Azikiwe; go to the head dish-washer and he will give you an apron. You can start on the job right away.'

For two weeks I learned the art of dish-washing. It was fascinating. At times, from fifty to one hundred used plates would be piled on the sinks. I and another colleague, a student of mechanical dentistry, would then stack them in the machine and 'let go'. In a jiffy, hot water jets would saturate the front and backs of the plates in an elliptical manner washing away the dirt on the dishes. We would then remove them and all we had to do was to wipe the dishes dry with clean towels.

When the man whose position I filled returned, the manager was not disposed to give him back his job. According to the workers he had a bad record. He swore at the waitresses, handled the dishes carelessly, and at times he was drunk; but he was very industrious; he would work for hours without rest and that was his saving grace. The manager told me that I need not leave. He would remove the fellow to another branch of the establishment. When I noticed that this fellow did not

take kindly to the idea of being transferred, I begged the manager to reinstate him, telling him I had prospects for another temporary job. He agreed and promised to engage me whenever I returned for the winter, it then being the fall. I took leave of my co-workers and went to the cashier for my pay. Once more I was unemployed; but I had better prospects since I now had friends who cared and were willing to help, if it became necessary.

4. WORKING AND WHISTLING MY WAY THROUGH

The next day I noticed in the 'loop' section of Pittsburgh that there were hundreds of persons who were being engaged for employment. They were attracted by huge notices which appealed to all workers, white and black, to work in the mines of western Pennsylvania. I read one notice which promised to pay transportation expenses to any person who desired to work in the coal mines. Wages were 80 cents hourly for loaders of bituminous coal and one dollar and five cents hourly for loaders of anthracite coal. The work took ten hours daily.

I decided to join these prospective coal-miners seeking to escape from the dilemma of unemployment. I entered the office of an employment bureau which had advertised for coal-miners and was told that all I had to do was to register my name for five dollars and I would land the job. Because I saved every penny I earned at Gammon's, I was in a position to pay not only for myself, but also for another indigent student from North Carolina who shared my fate in not being able to return to college that fall.

We were given receipts and our tickets to New Kensington, or thereabouts, where we would make the connection for the particular mine to which we were assigned. The next morning we entrained. As soon as we reached our destination, we observed a group of hostile miners. Some of them carried placards reading: 'WE ARE ON STRIKE', 'DO NOT TAKE AWAY OUR JOBS', 'OUR WIVES AND CHILDREN ARE STARVING', 'DO NOT WORK IN THIS MINE', 'YOU ARE SCABS'.

I asked my American colleague what the banners meant. He told me that we had been fooled. We were scabs, that is, strike-breakers, and we were being used by the mine-owners

to neutralise the effect of the coal strike. Then I realised that I was a strike-breaker.

I remembered the soliloquy of Hamlet, whom the immortal Shakespeare made to ruminate:

'To be or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And, by opposing, end them? . . .'

I argued with myself that, if I did not work, I would be without funds and might find myself in the same predicament as I was in before the Rev. Dr Lamb came to my rescue. I had suffered 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'. It was time for me 'to take arms against a sea of troubles and, by opposing, end them'. So I decided to go ahead and do the job, and face the consequences of my decision.

As soon as we detrained, a cordon of the National Guardsmen of the State of Pennsylvania surrounded us and marched us to the entrance of the mines. A shot was fired at us, apparently by one of the strikers, and it hit the train. That was a portent. We were then taken to our new homes, shanties constructed by the mining company, and we were told that we could purchase anything on credit at the commissary and that our wages would be paid to us weekly, depending upon the work done.

I was assigned with others to dig and load anthracite coal, according to our choice, because we wanted to earn more money. We were provided with head lamps and we bought new overalls, gloves and caps at the commissary. In view of the lucrative nature of the overtime payment, some of us used to work for fifteen or sixteen hours. I remembered working eighteen hours regularly on Saturdays because I knew I would rest on Sundays.

The strikers made the job a very dangerous exercise. Every week we had casualties, some of whom died. It was an atmosphere of terror. The mine-owners refused to budge and the miners were just as adamant. But scabs had to work so as to live and they were wedged in between. Besides, some of us felt that it was immoral to deprive those who were legitimately entitled to the jobs that gave them their living. These factors,

among others, forced me to reconsider my decision. After six weeks of hard but extremely dangerous and hazardous work, I decided to quit the job. I went to the time-keeper for my wages

I had worked for about six weeks and I expected a goodly sum. The time-keeper told me that as an anthracite loader I was paid one dollar and five cents hourly, and was debited with the sum of 50 dollars 40 cents for my board and lodging and that I was due 297 dollars 45 cents. 'You are a good nigger, George,' he drawled in typical cracker style. 'Let's hope you won't waste this money on "seven-eleven" [gambling with dice]. Sign your "x" mark on the dotted line. . . .' mistaking me for an illiterate Negro!

'Look here, buddy,' I replied, 'don't you dare to cheat me with your curious system of accounting, because I am nobody's slouch. Although I may work like a fool, I am not a fool, and I will prove it, if you give me the chance to question your honesty.'

'You seem to be an intelligent nigger; where did you learn your 'rithmetic from? Down dar in Mississippi?' he interrupted.

'Look here, red nose,' I replied, 'it makes no difference where I learned my mathematics. I worked hard and honestly for six weeks; and I know what I made during that period. Now you are trying to take away from me even the modest earning I made, despite my sacrifices down the mines, whilst you were up here riding in high-powered cars and thinking of your ill-gotten gains.'

'For the love of Mike, will you take your money and get out of this mine, or else we'll stage a necktie party [lynching] tonight, and there'll be minus one miner tomorrow,' further bluffed the hill-billy time-keeper.

'Look here,' I interposed, 'don't you dare to call me a nigger, for I am a British protected person and I will report your fraudulent act to the British Consul in Pittsburgh, you damned red-necked pig-nosed cracker.'

'I see, you are a black Englishman,' he countered. 'So you are an aristocrat, aren't you? Maybe that is why you seem so smart, Sambo.'

'Yes, I may be a Sambo,' I remarked, 'but of all the dumb

crackers and fat-headed dudes I ever came across in these good old United States, you take the cake. Go ahead and give me my dough, Al Capone.'

'Listen to me, pal, I ain't dislike coloured people' he attempted to mollify me, 'because I was breast-fed by Aunt Jemima. You see, I am from Tennessee; and 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.'

I answered: 'Where I come from the British whites associate with us equally and we have no race problem.' I told him that very few African or American or West Indian Negroes cared to go where they were not wanted and that they did not bother to associate with those who were of the opinion that their colour was repulsive to them. 'Say pale face when I came for my money did I ask you to give me your sister in marriage?' I questioned him.

'Of course not' he replied 'you wouldn't dare do that.'

'And neither would you dare do that' I interrupted.

'Well, that is another matter, Geawge. We own this country and even in Bermuda, where I s'pose you come from, we can do what we please, but . . .'

Then I interrupted again: 'For the love of Peter, give me my dough before I raise Cain with you.'

'All right, if you think that you are so smart, then check up your time, according to my wage sheet and let me know what is coming to you,' was his challenge, as he handed the wage sheet to me upside down, apparently thinking that I was an illiterate.

I promptly turned it the other way round. From the wage sheet I discovered that I worked for six weeks as follows: total hours worked, 468; six weeks at ten hours daily, 360; six weeks at two hours daily, overtime, 72; six weeks at six hours extra overtime on Saturdays, 36; total credit, 547 dollars 85 cents; total debit for lodging and boarding for six weeks at 8 dollars 40 cents weekly, 50 dollars 40 cents; balance due miner, 497 dollars 45 cents.

I told the time-keeper that he was a dishonest rogue, because he tried to swipe 200 dollars from my pay. I called him a thief, a swindler, and I threatened to take the money he had placed on the counter (297 dollars 45 cents) to the police to show

how this contemptible pilferer lived by parasiting on the labour of others.

'O.K. Mon [abbreviated form of *monkey-chaser*, a regular nickname of West Indians in America], you are a smart jig, take your money and run as fast as your feet can get you out of here, if you know what's good for you, else . . .'

'There'll be no else, smart alick,' I interrupted, as I counted my money and placed the sum of 497 dollars 45 cents in my pocket and went to the railway station, in my overalls, looking very dusty and smoky. I joined an intermediate train and left the mining region bound for Pittsburgh. As the train rolled away, I began to think of the chicanery of this time-keeper. I realised that why so many coal-miners were impoverished was because of some unscrupulous people who cheated them out of their hard-won earnings.

When we reached Pittsburgh I was ashamed to return to the YMCA because my overalls were sooty. In fact miners hardly change their work clothes, except on Sundays, if ever they do. Then I mingled freely with the forgotten men of America: the workers of all races and classes. I spent the night at one of the Salvation Army workers' dorms in a neighbourhood which was comparable to New York's Bowery. I paid a dime for a bed and had a good night's rest. The next morning I went to the nearby Salvation Army Citadel and gave the Adjutant-in-Charge five dollars to help other unfortunate workers and indigent people who were not as fortunate as I was.

Then I went to my Jewish 'friend' and redeemed one of my suits which I had pawned to him previously. Since the 10 cents rent for the night at the hostel had not expired I returned to the dorm and changed my clothes. Then I joined the tram-car to the Centre Avenue YMCA to see Mr Morsell.

He was very happy to see me. I showed him my bank pass book and he was amazed at what I had saved in six weeks' time. I wanted to pay my debt to the 'Y', but he refused, urging me to show like kindness to other less fortunate brothers. The attitude of Mr Morsell inspired me to be more humanitarian in my dealings with the underprivileged.

He asked me what were my plans. I told him that I had heard from a Puerto Rican friend that road labourers were needed at Van, Pennsylvania. The pay was 50 cents an hour

and the job might extend for two months. He dissuaded me from going, insisting that I should take my health into consideration and find some 'soft' jobs in the city. I decided to take a chance. He approved and I left the 'r'.

As soon as I paid the employment agency the sum of five dollars required, the manager gave me a receipt and a ticket to Franklin, Pennsylvania. The next morning I entrained, and by 11 a.m. I had arrived there. I walked one mile to Van, which is a small hamlet in the neighbourhood of Ford City. On arrival, I reported to the time-keeper, who registered 'Benzene' in his pay sheet and assigned me to the labour gang.

My stay at Van was an eye-opener on the anomalies of American bi-racialism. Whilst in certain localities of the south, Negroes did the menial work, cooking and stewarding for the Caucasians and Negroes, yet at Van, which is in Pennsylvania, a northern state, Caucasians were employed as chefs and flunkys (cooks and stewards) for the black and white road workers. This reminded me of a poem by Langston Hughes, an outstanding American poet, who wrote about the Negro washing the doorsteps of George Washington and cleaning the boots of Julius Caesar. I mused that when I was travelling to America, descendants of Queen Boadicea served me as stewards and cooks; when I was in an average American city, descendants of Julius Caesar cooked for me and served me as stewards in the Italian restaurants; and descendants of Confucius and the Mikado served me in the Chinese and Japanese restaurants.

The next morning I reported at Nickelsville for the job and was given a pick and shovel. Being familiar with these popular tools I was once more in my element. I found out that I was working for a company of contractors, based at Youngstown, Ohio, who were constructing concrete roads (a familiar amenity everywhere in America) between Van and another town, via Nickelsville.

Winter was now at its height and I could not stand the biting cold air of western Pennsylvania. Indeed, we were affected by the frozen Lake Erie which was not so far from us. Moreover, the site of the job was 'up-state' and we were wedged between the states of Ohio and New York. Cleveland and Youngstown (Ohio), Erie (Pennsylvania) and Buffalo (New

York) were very near us. After three weeks of hard road work, during a cold winter, in which we cleared unbeaten track and graded it manually and mechanically, I decided to return to Pittsburgh.

I had earned 64 dollars 80 cents. I actually earned 90 dollars for three weeks' work at sixty hours each week of six days (ten hours daily) but 25 dollars 20 cents were deducted by the commissary for board and lodging, at one dollar and 20 cents daily. When I reached Pittsburgh, I was flushed, for not only was I able to redeem the rest of my pawned goods, but I had a respectable balance in the bank. Mr Morsell suggested that I should seek some easy job and rest until the second semester opened in February 1928, to resume my studies.

Once more I went to one of the employment agencies down town and registered myself with five dollars. I got a job as elevator operator (lift man) at Kaufman's department store. My job was not only to operate the lift, but also to announce the merchandise on each floor, as a reminder to the customers. Something like this: 'Going up. Second floor: lady's wear, dresses, undies, shoes and stockings. Children's wear. Going up. Third floor: men's wear, suits, overcoats, shirts, BVD's, shoes, stockings. Going up. Fourth floor: sports goods, sweaters, basket balls, skates, skis, track and field gear.' There were eight floors, I think.

After one week's work I was instructed to go and take my time. That meant that I was dismissed. I went to the manager and asked him kindly to explain to me why I was sacked. He was sorry to inform me that my pronunciation was not in the American language but in the 'Oxford' accent! He said they realised that the way I spoke fascinated some of the buyers, but they were in business and not displaying how the King's English was spoken by Englishmen. In other words, I lost my job because I spoke English the way I was taught to speak it!

Again I was unemployed and I went down town to the employment agencies. This time I got a job as a hod carrier, after paying the usual five dollars. It was night work, from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m., paying 80 cents an hour. The main task was to demolish buildings and remove the debris. It was a good job and I liked it. After three days I was sacked because the Union of Hod Carriers was a closed shop, and since I was not a

member of the union, and could not be one because of my colour, the union threatened to strike. So I was fired.

I wrote to the Rev. Dr Lamb and described my experiences in my last three jobs. I asked for his advice and possible help by way of reintroduction to Gammon's Restaurant for winter work. He came to Pittsburgh, took me to the manager of the Gammon's branch at Liberty Avenue, down-town, which was the business section of Pittsburgh, and I was re-engaged as a dish-washer at 15 dollars a week, with Gammon's giving me three square meals daily, and allowing me one day off every two weeks.

Again I lodged at the YMCA and had a room all to myself. I paid my rent regularly and worked from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. without fail. Every fortnight I had a day off. I had now become the confident boy I was when I left Africa two years previously. I was working and whistling my way through. Everything seemed to be working out for the best when, one day, a detective came to Gammon's and, after identifying me, placed me under technical arrest.

'Why do you place me under arrest? Who are you to place me under arrest? What is your authority for doing so?' These were the questions I asked the gentleman who came to identify and arrest me.

'I am a United States secret service agent. This is my badge of authority. Follow me, please, and ask no more questions,' was his reply, as he opened his lapel and showed me his badge.

'But anybody can pose as a detective and it is possible to wear a detective badge. Please identify yourself more correctly so that I'll be sure that I am not following a gangster,' was my retort.

He agreed with me and told me that a question had arisen about my status under the immigration laws of the United States, which was why he was sent to see me. He assured me that there was nothing serious about the matter; only the immigration authorities wished to have me clarify why I was not attending school, since I was admitted into the United States as a non-quota immigrant.

I was satisfied with his credentials, so I followed him to the office of the immigration authorities, where I was received by a very tactful and polite official. He told me that in accordance

with the immigration law, all accredited schools and colleges of the United States had to furnish returns of the foreign students enrolled in their institutions at the opening of the school year; and that in the return for 1926, Storer College sent in my name, but since September 1927 there was no indication that I attended any accredited school.

I admitted what was said and confessed that financial difficulties kept me out of school. He countered that indigent students or persons were not permitted to remain in the United States lest they become public charges. Understanding what he was driving at, that is, that destitute persons were subject to deportation from the United States, according to the immigration law, I assured him that I was neither destitute nor stranded, but I did not have my school fees in time for me to register in any accredited school.

The official asked me whether I had the money. I replied in the affirmative. He challenged me to prove that I had substantial money to return to college, and I produced my bank pass book. Why, he asked, did I have to work at Gammon's? I told him that I preferred to be industrious, instead of idling away my time, when I had no money.

Then he spoke to me in this wise: 'Young man, you are the type of immigrant that this country or any other country should be proud to welcome. Our immigration laws prohibit paupers and those who may become public charges; but we are always glad to welcome immigrants who are desirable, according to our laws. I am proud to observe that you appreciate the dignity of manual labour. Go back to your work, son, and continue to be the model immigrant that you have been. If you fail to return to college at the end of the first semester, may the Lord have mercy on you.'

He shook my hand warmly, led me to the door, opened it, and greeted me with a sort of parental 'good-bye' as I joined a tram-car bound for Gammon's. When I returned, my co-workers surrounded me and asked me what was wrong. I explained the circumstances. They suggested that I should take out my first papers and become a naturalised American citizen. I refused, telling them that I had a rendezvous with Africa.

That evening, when I returned home, I began to ponder

over the event of the day. I knew that I had not fully explained my position to the immigration officer because I depended on no person for financial support but on my own resources. From all indications, the immigration officer knew that I was trying to save my skin. But he was very human, and he preferred to apply the spirit, instead of the letter, of the law.

I pondered that my father or my relatives were not so well-to-do as to undertake the responsibility of my higher education. I knew that my father had advised me against going to the United States without sufficient funds. I knew that I had told him that £300 was all that I needed from him. I also knew that as soon as he retired on pension and drew his gratuity, he withdrew part of his savings and handed the sum of £300 to me and warned that it was part of his life's savings.

I had used part of it to purchase apparel and personal effects; some was used in paying for my passage from Calabar to Lagos, from Lagos to Liverpool, from Liverpool to New York and from New York to Harper's Ferry. Part of this sum was also used for my enrolment at La Salle Extension Institute of Chicago, for a correspondence course in law, part of which I successfully undertook and for which I earned a certificate eighteen months after my landing in America. In this course I passed examinations with distinction in contracts, quasi-contracts, criminal law and procedure, torts, domestic relations, agency, and personal property.

My conscience was restive. I felt that I had done the right thing and that since I experienced difficulty in obtaining and accumulating my modest savings, it might be more difficult to maintain myself in college in years to come. However, after consulting the Reverend Dr Lamb and Mr Morsell, they advised me that, in spite of handicaps, Lincoln, Garfield and Booker T. Washington had ultimately realised their dreams. They urged me to keep fighting, for there was more beyond, and behind the clouds the sun was still shining.

One week after my interview with the immigration officer in charge of Pittsburgh area, I met Captain A. J. Neely, Registrar of Tuskegee Institute,* an Aframerican. He and some officials of Tuskegee visited Pittsburgh and resided at the YMCA. I discussed my problems with him and he assured me that

* Founded by Booker T. Washington.

if I cared to attend Tuskegee, he would be glad to employ me where I could earn my board and lodging expenses. With my savings I could pay the nominal fee charged for tuition.

'Tuskegee is an international institution, and judging from what I heard of you from Mr Morsell and others, we should be glad to have you as one of our students,' Mr Neely assured me. I told him that I would think the matter over. After seeking advice on Negro education, I was informed that if I wanted vocational training, Tuskegee was the place for me; but if I desired an academic degree, I should attend either Howard or Lincoln or any northern university whose expenses were reasonable and which admitted coloured students.

Since the immigration authorities were on my trail, I thought it more prudent to apply for admission to Howard University without delay. Consequently, I applied to the Registrar, who replied requesting that I send to him the certified transcript of my academic work at Storer College so as to evaluate my credits. Dr MacDonald had previously warned me that until I had cleared my debt with that institution, it would not be possible to release my transcript. This stand was quite justified because it was procedural and it was uniformly practised in all American institutions of higher learning. I paid my debt and my transcript was released. On its face value, Howard University admitted me tentatively as an advanced sophomore.

I had written to Mr Okokon previously about my plans, and he replied that he was happy to learn of my intended enrolment at Howard University. He told me that two Nigerians also studied there: Ered Ebitto in the College of Law, and Babajimi Adewakun in the College of Applied Science. I wrote to both students. Ebitto was then already on his way to the United Kingdom to qualify in one of the inns of courts, but Mr Adewakun replied and informed me that he was leaving Howard University at the end of the school year to continue his practical work at the New York Electrical School. He assured me that it would be a pleasure for him to hand over to me his job as dishwasher, since I was already experienced in this art. This should take care of my board and lodging expenses.

I made preparations to enrol at Howard University in February 1928. Two weeks before the opening of the university's

second semester, I bade farewell to my friends at Gammon's. I really missed them because they were so understanding and affable. I had taught some of them Ibo and Yoruba songs. The manager, Gordon Craighead, gave me a fine testimonial, which I still treasure, certifying that I worked diligently as a dish-washer, potato peeler and vegetable man.

Then I took my autograph book to the Rev. Dr Lamb for his endorsement. These were his sentiments: 'Commit thy ways unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and he shall bring it to pass. From one who has found it true.' I asked the same favour of Dr Max Bond (then a PH D student at the University of Pittsburgh and later President of the University of Liberia; I knew him at that time as Director of Physical Education at the YMCA). He wrote:

'There now, look up and see the sunshine.
Look down and see the earth.
The sunshine never fails to come.
The earth is always staunch.
Fear not — meet all — be not afraid.
The goal lies just beyond.'

With such inspiring words, coupled with Rev. Morsell's fatherly guidance and prayers, I took stock of my experiences in Pittsburgh, and I was satisfied that my stay in that smoky city had not been in vain. I was now poised and fortified in spirit to fight my way to the top.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE CAPITAL OF THE USA

How an African student came into contact with intellectuals of African descent and was influenced to battle against wrong

'They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needst must think.
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

I. 'CLAD IN ROBES OF MAJESTY'

When I arrived at the Union Station, Babajimi Adewakun was at the railway platform to welcome me. A taxi took us to Howard University and I was directed to Clark Hall, where I had to share a room with Prince Hosea Akiki Nyabongo, from Uganda. He later graduated from Howard, then obtained an MA from Yale University, and ultimately earned the B LITT and D PHIL degrees from Oxford University. The other African student at Howard then was Simeon Bankole Wright, from Sierra Leone.

My academic studies there were concentrated on social science courses, my main field of specialisation being Political Science. The other disciplines I was exposed to included Sociology. Professor Tunnell cut my wisdom tooth in Political Science. When he retired from the university the following year, he was relieved by Dr Ralph Bunche. Professor William Leo Hansberry taught me Anthropology. Professor Abraham L. Harris taught me Economics. Dr Alain LeRoy Locke, a Rhodes scholar, taught me Philosophy. Professor Kelly Miller was head of the department of Sociology.

I scored 'A' and 'B' in all my studies excepting in Psychology where I made 'C' and in Education, where a Negro woman teacher, who impressed me as a psychological problem, gave me the only 'D' in my whole academic career in the United States. Of course, I do not, by this, mean to discredit female teachers, because the majority of the 'A' grades I made at Storer College were awarded to me by white and black female teachers, although the subjects were in the sciences and ancient language, where one either knows or one does not know, unlike certain courses where opinions vary and conflict, and one is at the mercy of the prejudices of a particular teacher.

My studies in political science gave me the necessary background for my life's work. I remember Professor Tunnell's regular joke that why Negroes failed to resist injustice actively was because they were too fond of 'eating pork chops'; in other words, the easy life. Because of this joke, we used to call him 'Pork Chop' Tunnell. But we learned from him the need to organise resistance to political misrule, which implied hard work and personal sacrifice on the part of the organisers.

Another lesson we learned from this veteran professor, who was said to have hailed originally from the Caribbean, was the necessity to arouse underprivileged people from their attitude of lethargy and nonchalance towards their lot. Freedom was a universal gift, he would assert; therefore, it was a birthright of humanity of which the Negro was a co-inheritor.

When Professor Bunche took over, we embarked on the struggle for individual freedom and for the enthronement of the rule of law throughout the earth. With me, this meant that I must value my personal liberty, as far as expression, movement, privacy and safety are concerned. It also meant that the conduct of the constituted authorities should be guided by the canons of written law, a contravention of which should nullify their official acts and make them illegal.

Contact with Professor Hansberry opened a new world to me. This modest and self-effacing scholar assumed the task of venturing into a new frontier of human knowledge. Because he was a generation ahead of his time, coupled with the inferiority complex that was inherent in the environment in which he thrived, his life's work was not appreciated, and the university he worked for failed to carve a niche for itself in

a field which is now exploited to the full by the leading American institutions of higher learning.

Professor Hansberry's courses in anthropology covered both physical and cultural aspects. He taught us the biological origins of the human species, illustrating his themes with priceless incursions into anthropological literature. This Negro scholar simplified to us the theses of Blumenbach and other pioneer scholars of anthropology and their contributions to learning. His explanations of how the factors of historical geology affected the evolution of man were most thrilling and fascinating. We were able to appreciate why Charles Darwin correctly thought that Africa was the cradle of the human race. At that time Leakey had not yet begun to make his voice heard.

Professor Hansberry's exposition of the concept of race, language and culture was a paragon of simplicity. We were able to appreciate the main racial divisions of mankind, their peculiarities, their distribution on the face of the earth, and the scientific attitude to race, in comparison with the pseudo-scientific views of certain 'racial' anthropologists, fathered by Gobineau and his satellites. He taught us the fallacy of wrongly mixing racial with linguistic and cultural factors. He made us read what matured scholars like Boas, Sapir, and others were thinking on these lines.

Finally, this humble teacher linked his researches in anthropology with the origins of African history. He offered courses to show the role of persons of African descent in ancient, medieval and modern history. He delved into the depths of Egyptology to appreciate what such names as Piankhi and Tirhaka meant to the xxvth dynasty of ancient Egypt. He emphasised the humanitarian influence of Ethiopian warriors, and demonstrated how it might have affected the development of the international law of war. Then he opened a new world to us in medieval history, pinpointing the role of Ghana, Mali, Melle and Songhay in the history of Africa.

In spite of this pious man's wonderful capacity for research and teaching, his contemporaries made fun of him. Some regarded him as a disseminator of fables and myths of African history. Others described him as a visionary who lived in the clouds. Even in death, one of his critics did not fail to point

out that he was not a scholar, as if the holding of a doctorate degree, the evidence of research in a special field, were the only passport to scholarship. The snubbing of Professor Hansberry and his research was almost paralleled by the challenging treatment meted to Dr Carter G. Woodson by his contemporaries, excepting that Woodson had the magic password in the form of a PH D in history from the University of Chicago. Hansberry held an MA degree from Harvard University, and while the PH D degree is admittedly a useful tool in scholarship, it has been proved not to be a *sine qua non*. At least half of the world's leading scholars do not hold doctorate degrees in their fields of specialisation. J. M. Keynes and Harold Laski are just two that spring to mind.

The tragedy of the non-recognition of Hansberry's lifework proved to be the swan song of Howard University in the field of African studies. Here was a man who, single-handedly, for forty years, laid solid foundations to enable Howard University to become the premier university in the world, so far as studies in African life and history were concerned. But the lilliputians who controlled the academic destiny of that great citadel of learning in America were so shortsighted that they lost a great opportunity. The Institute of African Studies at the University of Nigeria was named after Professor Hansberry.

In the USA today, leading universities like Northwestern, Boston, California, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, Michigan State, Stanford, Indiana, Duquesne and Lincoln (Penna.) have set up departments of African studies or certain aspects of the study of contemporary Africa. It is now dawning upon Howard University to profit from Booker T. Washington's advice: cast down your bucket where you are in order to discover fresh water instead of looking for it elsewhere.

Herskovits, Brown, Coleman, the Ottenbergs, the Bohanons and the crop of 'Africanists' have given the United States a front rank in scholarship in African studies, while Howard University, which for historical reasons should have been more actively associated with Africa, failed to read correctly the writing on the wall. It was left to the above universities to accelerate the pace set by Hansberry at Howard. Today, very few people know of Hansberry's great work. His researches

are buried in note books. All because people who had eyes refused to see and those who had ears refused to hear.

My studies in economics were concerned mainly with the effect of economic forces on the development of human personality. The emphasis in my courses was not so much on descriptive and analytical economics as on its applied forms, particularly the struggle between capital and labour, the exercise by workers of the fundamental freedom of association, the right of collective bargaining, and the ethics of the great economic systems of the world. Having been a menial worker and having associated with the unskilled workers of America, I absorbed Professor Harris's lectures and did not hesitate to follow through with a number of irritating questions in his office after class hours.

My courses in philosophy were under Professor Locke. He had just published *The New Negro* and he was sought after by many organisations to tell them the good news. His classroom lectures were usually dry but the substance was meaty. By delving into the various schools of philosophy I was convinced that although the western system was more systematic than the African, nevertheless African philosophy was practical in the sense that people did not waste time on logic and frivolous arguments. Their philosophy was more pragmatic in that it was related to the practical problems of every day life which they solved by adapting themselves to the logic of reason and experience.

Howard University gave me an insight into the biological origins of human behaviour. I took a course in psychology for fun; but I found it most instructive because it introduced me to Watson's thesis on behaviourism. Although I had opportunity to know the essentials of the other schools of thought in this fascinating field of study, I have since become a behaviourist. My keen interest in biology is probably responsible for this prejudice.

In the field of sociology, I decided to duplicate Aggrey's experience. Apart from the principles of sociology, I delved into its other facets, like social psychology, social pathology (crime, prostitution, poverty), criminology, penology, the race problem, municipal sociology, rural sociology, etc. My conclusion was that the society in which we live must be treated like

an individual to prevent it from becoming a victim of pathological factors. If we had crime, it was not because people necessarily were criminally inclined; faulty social organisation was mainly responsible. The same applied to prostitution and poverty. On the race problem, it was obvious that attitudes must be changed and compromises effected, otherwise society was bound to face upheavals.

This does not 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. Because I dabbled in writing poetry, I participated in some contests and was elected a member of the Stylus Society. Occasionally I contributed articles and poems to *The Hilltop*, the undergraduate organ of opinion.

In sports, I did my fair share to uphold the reputation of Howard University. During my stay there I was supreme in the mile run; no other athlete was able to beat me at this distance. My contemporaries then were Duhaney, Clay and Manigaulte. In long-distance running we had some very good runners like Montague Cobb (from Bowdoin), Harris and Lightfoot. These men showed me their heels during the Baltimore cross-country tiff of 1929. In swimming, I was unrivalled in the back-stroke, and was the third leg in the medley relay and in the fifty yards free-style relay. My contemporaries were 'Pete' Tyson, Nyabongo, Harris, Clay, *et al.* Coaches Watson, Burr and Pendleton nursed us like precious babies.

To summarise; at Howard, I absorbed the following as part of my equipment for the battle of life: in political science, to seek for the good life, by fighting for individual freedom, under the rule of law, in a liberal democracy where the judiciary must be independent; in anthropology, to regard no race as superior or inferior, but to understand man as the controller of his environment; in economics, to safeguard private property and, at the same time, live and let live under a system which should give scope simultaneously to individual enterprise and public welfare, under the aegis of the state; in philosophy, to be pragmatic and allow reason and experience

to influence my thinking and way of life; in psychology, to trace my mental behaviour to the workings of my biological apparatus; in sociology, to make all policies for the progress of my country sociocentric, that is, that the public welfare should be the highest law.

Howard University was founded in 1866, immediately after the American civil war. It was named after General O. O. Howard, head of the Freedmen's Bureau, which had been established to tackle the problems of rehabilitation and reconstruction among Negroes who had been emancipated from slavery. The issue was no longer whether the Negro was educable or not. John B. Russwurm's graduation from Bowdoin College in 1822 had proved the educability of the Negro other things being equal. Moreover, twelve years earlier in 1854 the oldest Negro university in the United States, Lincoln University (Penna.), had been founded.

The problem which confronted the founders of Howard University was how to establish a university which should cater for Negroes and also stay in the forefront of American universities. Up to relatively recent times, this university was *sui generis* for it was then the only American institution of higher learning supported directly with federal funds.

Today, Howard University is one of the great universities of the world. It has about ten thousand students and offers courses in the liberal arts, architecture, dentistry, education, engineering, fine arts, home economics, law, medicine, music, nursing, pharmacy, religion, science, social work, etc. It awards degrees to undergraduates as well as to graduates, including the PH D in certain fields. It is co-educational and quite a number of its students are Caucasoid and Mongoloid. Its student body is made up of students from all the states in the United States, also from Latin America, Africa, the West Indies and certain parts of Asia.

Its anthem epitomises the mission of Howard University, described as being 'clad in robes of majesty' and educating its sons and daughters for ever to battle against wrong, so as to transform the world into a better place for human beings to inhabit. I resided in this inspiring environment for three semesters and had to leave in the fall of 1929 because of lack of funds. Previously, I had worked as typist for Professor Locke;

but I found it necessary to go elsewhere, to the disappointment of my friends.

After a semester at Howard University, while I had made important contacts, tragedy also stalked my path. Babajimi had left for New York. Okokon had died. I had made friends with George Padmore, Dr Cyril Ollivierre, Simeon Bankole Wright from Sierra Leone and the Coleman family. 'Jimi', as Babajimi was endearingly called by the Americans, had kept his promise, and I took over his job at Mrs Staling's. Later, Bankole joined me there and we worked for some time before we moved to New York for the summer.

Dr Ollivierre of New York was then a third-year medical student, originally from Trinidad. He was so fascinated by my running that he became my trainer. It was a sight to see Cyril making sure that I took sufficient calisthenic exercises before embarking upon any race. He was also meticulous in ensuring that I got a good rub down after any competition. As for George Padmore, he was then known by his original name, Malcolm I. Nurse, and had just enrolled at the Howard University Law School, on a transfer from Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

The tragedy that occurred after my connection with Howard University was the death of Hogan Okokon. It was the first time in my life that I had to play the role of a chief mourner—and also deliver a funeral oration. The university community congregated at the Ranking Memorial Chapel and I was assigned the responsibility of delivering a eulogy before his body was taken to the cemetery for interment.

Okokon was born in Calabar and came to America in his late twenties. He had had a steady job in the civil service of Nigeria for some time. His future seemed to be punctuated with advancement, in view of his extraordinary intelligence. But he was not satisfied. He was ambitious but he lived in the part of the world where the African was challenged, day by day, to vindicate his social and political capacities.

He decided to save money to enable him to go abroad and better himself. He saved £80 to pay for his passage, but he was faced meanwhile with the problem of where he should be educated. He realised that in England students were supposed to be gentlemen, therefore it would be difficult to work his way through a British university.

He thought of the American universities; but because he lived in a British colony he had been miseducated to underrate America's wonderful educational system. With his meagre savings he decided to proceed to America for further studies. A letter he received from Storer College challenged him: 'If you can pay your passage to America and will have about fifty pounds when you land in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, we would help you secure employment which should enable you to earn your way through college.'

What an encouragement to him! He had received letters from Cambridge, Oxford and London; but they were too formal. They lacked the human touch so essential in education today. So he had become discouraged; but the letter from Storer College was enough to restore his self-confidence; he was inspired to become somebody. His friends laughed at the idea that he was going to an unknown college. Said one of them to him: 'I have no money, it is true; but if I have the opportunity, I am going to an English university. I will never condescend to waste my talent in an American university.'

In September 1924, Hogan Okokon enrolled at Storer College. He was nearing the age of thirty then, although he looked much younger. Among his class-mates at Storer College were youngsters varying from fifteen to twenty years of age. Okokon was placed in the senior class for the university matriculation examinations. He was a conscientious student, and at the end of the year he had matriculated and was admitted in the freshman class of Howard University.

He left Harper's Ferry with its mountains and was now a resident of the capital of the United States. A year later his pocket began to shrink and his funds ran short. He worked hard to earn a living and pay his way. At one time he was a porter at a railway station. At another he was a steward in one of Washington's hotels.

In the summer he was engaged by a brick manufacturing company as a labourer. He had a fair wage; but his earnings were barely sufficient to meet threequarters of his living expenses. Moreover, the job was a hard one. He was not particularly robust, and he became very ill and was admitted as a patient in Freedmen's Hospital, one of the largest and most elaborately furnished hospitals catering for Negroes in the world.

After prolonged treatment he transferred to a private hospital. When spring came, Okokon had passed a severe winter so that his constitution was considerably weakened. He lost weight and was attacked by a lung disease. I visited him for the last time. As I sat on his bed he asked me to draw nearer. He held my hand rather feebly and requested that in case of death his heart should be sent to his people. Then with an uncanny premonition that death was near and with a voice which was scarcely audible, he said:

'Hold the fort, Zik, do not give up the struggle. Africa must be redeemed. I have done my part.' Tight-lipped, he passed away, in the capital of the USA, 'clad in robes of majesty'.

2. THE AMERICAN ELECTIONS OF 1928

The summer rolled round once more and I was at my wits end to know my next move. Cyril advised Bankole and myself to follow him to New York and try our luck in finding odd jobs to do. We thanked Mrs Staling for giving us the opportunity to wash dishes for our board and lodging and then left for New York. On arrival we lodged at 34 Edgecombe Avenue with an affable landlady who came originally from St Croix, Virgin Islands. Here we cultivated acquaintance with the Moorheads.

After a week of job hunting we were sent by one of the employment agencies in Sixth Avenue, now known as the Avenue of the Americans, to a pharmacy situated in Park Avenue to be engaged as porters. We worked diligently and felt secure from the spectre of unemployment. After a week of steady work we were dismissed. No tangible reason was given and we were annoyed when we noticed two men replacing us.

We returned to Sixth Avenue and saw a light-skinned Negro who told us that there were vacancies for six stewards in one big hotel. I was glad to hear that. The man told us that he was chief steward there and he was asked to recruit staff for the vacancies. He added that the uniform would cost us 10 dollars, and that by arrangement with a tailor, only half of that amount needed to be paid in advance. When I asked Bankole for his opinion, he thought that the five dollars' fee for uniform was too

high; besides, if we did not keep the job, we would be minus five dollars.

I preferred to try my luck so I left Bankole, assuring him that, if I succeeded, both of us would benefit. He also left me to seek for a job, assuring me that if he succeeded both of us would benefit also. 'Let me have the five bucks, now,' was the request made by the man who claimed to be the chief steward of the hotel. I gave him the five dollars. He took me to one hotel and asked me to wait outside and he would inform the manager that he had been able to secure one steward.

I waited for about an hour and he did not return. Then I entered the office of the hotel, having decided to try my luck elsewhere and to try to recover my uniform fee. The manager, a genial Scottish-American, asked what I wanted? I told him that his chief steward had promised me a job. He called the chief steward and he was a different person altogether.

I narrated to the manager my experience with the first man, and he assured me that there was no vacancy in the hotel; if ever there was one, the hotel usually furnished uniforms, the cost of which was deducted from the worker's wages as mutually convenient between employer and employee. He laughed and told me that I had been robbed. He said that the person who committed this crime must have been an adept in human psychology. He must have spotted me as a simpleton.

I laughed at my own credulity, and I felt that Bankole had had a wise premonition. It was fun for me, as it was the first time I was victimised by an American flim-flammer! On my return to Sixth Avenue I met an old Storer College class-mate, Herbert Scotland, a native of Harlem, in New York City, where we stayed. I narrated my misfortune to him. He laughed and unfolded to me how the unemployed were exploited, not only by the employment agencies but also by some of the unemployed people themselves, who had to live on their wits.

He said that some of the employment agencies were money-making concerns. Managers would arrange with this type of agency to employ, say, ten workers weekly. These men would pay the necessary fee of five dollars. After a week or a month the worker would be dismissed and another bunch was cleverly substituted. Through this plan there was a steady labour

turnover and the manager and employment agent would share the proceeds.

I did not quite understand this system of financing, so I asked him to elaborate. 'Listen, sap,' he advised, 'twelve men who pay five bucks to an agency give that agency 60 dollars for the day. If there were six managers whom the employment agent had contacted, this means 360 dollars a day. If this kind of business happens twice or thrice a week, the agent is able to collect 720 dollars to 1,080 dollars in one week. After paying 50 per cent of the proceeds to his business colleagues, he makes from 360 dollars to 540 dollars weekly. If you compute this on an annual basis of 52 weeks, you will see that such an employment agent should make a minimum of 18,720 dollars a year, or more in case this trick works every day in the week. Sound business ain't it?'

Meanwhile, I read an advertisement in the *New York World*, a daily Pulitzer publication now defunct. The advertisement challenged the unemployed to learn an easy trade which paid a decent salary. It was the trade of a car washer which paid from 30 to 40 dollars weekly, with hours from 7 p.m. to 3 a.m. Bankole and I paid the fee of five dollars each and we spent a week in learning the job. The school agency recommended us to the manager of a garage in the Bronx. We got the job.

One of our colleagues at the training 'school' was an Irish-American who always sang 'Abie's Irish Rose' and enlivened our night work. When we reached the garage, the manager asked us if we could drive any make of cars. We answered in the affirmative, even though Bankole and I could not drive a go-cart! We had already arranged with our Irish-American friend that we would each give him a 'cut' of five dollars each week, so he could do all the driving from one branch of the garage to another. So we had the effrontery to tell the manager that we could drive!

He employed us at 35 dollars a week each. Once more we had been saved from the blizzard of unemployment. For one week we worked. The following week our Irish-American friend came to work rather late in the night and he was 'sky-high', having tasted more liquor at a 'speak easy' than his constitution could stand. The manager asked him why he was

late? He damned the manager in vulgar language. He was fired.

The manager turned to Bankole and me and asked us to drive a Buick and a Packard car respectively to the fountain, and do the necessary washing, until he could replace 'that drunkard'. Bankole and I looked at each other in bewilderment. I entered the Packard saloon. I did not know where to place my feet; I knew not what was the starter, accelerator, clutch, etc. Bankole's predicament was the same. About fifteen minutes later the manager came and asked us why we were slow. I told him that something was wrong with the car. He came in, inspected it and drove it to the fountain. He abused me thoroughly for my incompetence.

Then he turned to Bankole and said: 'I suppose something is wrong with that Buick also.' Bankole said, 'Yes, Boss.' He went to the car and drove it to the fountain. Then he said to us: 'Say, you greenhorns, why did you deceive me by telling me that you can drive a car when you can't even drive a cart? You are fired.' We begged him to give us a chance to learn. He replied: 'This ain't no place for learners. You are canned.'

Bankole is the type of friend that inspires his chum, especially in time of crisis. Having lost our jobs. I became discouraged at the rough handling I was receiving at the hands of Fate. I decided the next day that I was not going to Sixth Avenue, because the employment agencies were a sort of racket to mulct the unemployed, although some undoubtedly were honestly conducted.

Bankole decided to try his luck. His bulldog tenacity was rewarded, for he returned to say that he had been employed as a vegetable man to peel potatoes and do other flunkey's jobs at the Varick Street dormitory of New York University. He was given room and board plus 50 dollars' a month. He accepted. After all, it is the cost of living which makes existence difficult for the average African who resides abroad.

He consoled and assured me that, as soon as he was familiar with his environment, I could have my evening meals with him. Everything worked out as expected, and for the next two weeks I had many evening meals regularly at Bankole's. Of course, the whole affair was concealed, otherwise Bankole would have been disciplined.

Since I was now alone at our Edgcombe Avenue home, I had to leave and seek for cheaper lodgings. So I moved to Brooklyn and resided at the YMCA there. A few days after I had registered at the employment agency of the 'Y', I was notified that Lane Bryant, a well-known department store which catered to the requirements of plump ladies, needed a porter. I reported to the manager, who was of Czechoslovak origin. I was employed to be paid 20 dollars a week, and I had to take care of my lodging and board.

My duties consisted of using the vacuum cleaner to dust the rugs and carpets used in lining the whole store of four floors. In addition to this I had to clean all the showcases and mop all the floors and steps. The time of this job was from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m., then from 12 noon to 4 p.m. I handled the job efficiently and I was not 'fired' until one week before resumption of school, when I notified my boss that I was returning to college. He said that he was sorry to let me go.

I had not made enough money to return to Howard so I decided to proceed to Tuskegee Institute and study the art and science of printing. I filled the application form and booked my ticket from New York to Tuskegee. Since my personal belongings were left in Washington, I decided to break my journey there. On arrival in Washington I went to Cyril and told him my plight. I also informed him that I must leave Howard University due to my being financially embarrassed.

Cyril demonstrated to me one peculiar trait of the West Indian which is ennobling: humanitarianism. He had learned to regard me as his brother and he could not, he pleaded, see me leave Howard University for financial reasons. Cyril begged that I should give him three hours and he would see what could be done. I insisted that if he failed to return within three hours I would be on my way to Alabama, for I had telegraphed the Tuskegee authorities to expect me.

About an hour later, Professor Locke came to the International House with Cyril. After a few minutes' discussion, Dr Locke said that he needed an assistant who understood typing and office management. He was prepared to pay 25 dollars monthly to any student who would do the work satisfactorily, and the hours of work would be three hours daily, either from 4 to 7 p.m. or from 5 to 8 p.m.

I assured him that I could type fairly well and that I could handle his correspondence creditably, although I was not familiar with the use of the dictaphone, with which he used to dictate articles or letters when he felt like doing so and his secretary was away. This changed my plans, and also changed my life's career for, by coming into personal contact with Dr Locke, I was able to drink from the deep fountain of his almost limitless knowledge.

I enrolled at Howard that autumn and Dr Locke gave me an advance from my future salary to pay for my fees and lodging expenses at Clark Hall. Meanwhile Bankole had returned to the university. He confessed that he did not make much money during the summer. I assured him that one good turn deserved another and that I would repay his kindness to me at Varick House. The plan was that he should leave his trunk and handbag at the 'Y'. At night time he would sneak into my room and share my bed with me—and a small bed at that. My room-mate that year was Yama Yamashita of Japan, a student of dentistry at the Howard University College of Medicine. 'Shita', as his American friends nicknamed him, had no objection to this plan, so he was also an accomplice, because it was a university offence to house any person illegally in any of the university dormitories.

Immediately after the end of the first semester, I was awarded a scholarship by the Phelps-Stokes Fund which made it possible for me to pay for the rest of the school year and have some money for the summer.

Dr Locke was largely instrumental in securing this scholarship for me. During my typing service at Dr Locke's residence at 1326 R Street NW, I was able to appreciate the versatility of this scholar and his penchant for making friends, one of whom was Dr Joseph Boakye Danquah, the first West African to earn the degree of doctor of philosophy from the University of London.

Then came the American presidential elections of 1928. The Republican Party, which was in power under President Calvin Coolidge, presented a new candidate in the person of Herbert Hoover, the millionaire mining engineer from California. The Democratic Party fielded Alfred Smith, who was then Governor of New York State. Norman Thomas was, as

usual, the candidate of the Socialist Party. And a new political star on the horizon of American politics was the Communist Party, which fielded William Z. Foster.

The Political Science Club of Howard University decided to hold mock elections as a yardstick to assess the opinion of students in respect of the chances of the four presidential candidates. Some of the students majoring in law or political science or any other disciplines of the social studies were in the vanguard of the movement to crystallise public opinion at the university. The university authorities, like their counterpart in most American institutions of higher learning, gave their blessing to this idea.

Then came the electioneering campaigns. Representatives of the student body formed themselves into groups to campaign for each of the four parties. Most of the American students campaigned for the Republicans or the Democrats. Most of the foreign students, myself included, and the radically-minded American students pleaded the cause of the Socialist Party. Minority representatives of American and foreign students, led by a student from Trinidad by the name of Malcolm I. Nurse, later known as George Padmore, decided to support the platform of the Communist Party.

The Republicans based their campaign on Hoover's theme of 'rugged individualism' and played on the sentiments of the Negroes in the light of their support for 'liberal' legislation which guaranteed the civil rights of Negroes as citizens of the United States. The Democrats also based their platform on domestic issues and relied on the charisma of 'Al' Smith and the great record of Woodrow Wilson during World War I to pull them through.

The Socialists insisted on a complete break with the past. They emphasised the shifting of emphasis in the definition of economics from the welfare of the individual to that of the group. They condemned the idea of rugged individualism as a licence for constituted authorities to adopt a *laissez-faire* policy in respect of the relations of capital and labour. They advocated a new society based on the idealism of universal brotherhood and co-operation. A talk to the students by Benjamin Stolberg and an assignment of classroom work in some chapters of Laidler's *History of Socialist Thought* enabled me to marshal

facts to support my argument that a socialist state was inevitable in the evolution of political man.

The Communist Party maintained that since man's activities were motivated by economic factors, the doctrine of the materialistic concept of history was unassailable. The parallel existence of millions of workers and hundreds of capitalists predicted the existence of a permanent wage-earning class. The unwillingness or inability of the ruling class to promote liberal policies to ease the lot of the toiling masses necessitated an inevitable class struggle between the wealthy and the wage-earners. Until the latter overthrew the former and established the dictatorship of the proletariat, capitalists would continue to exploit the workers.

After the campaigns, the mock election took place and the Republicans won, followed by the Democrats, the Socialists and the Communists, in that order. When the results of the real election were announced, the presidential candidates finished in the same order. Of course, there was the usual grouse that the Democrats lost because the Republicans hit below the belt in their campaign against 'Al' Smith by intimating that if he won he would make American government safe for domination by the papacy!

The aftermath of the elections showed that the majority parties had no positive answers to the questions raised by the socio-economic problems of those days. It was not long before when Britain went off the gold standard. This was the period of the Depression. In the big cities the authorities supplied millions of unemployed with both soup and bread during the severely cold winter. The 'bread lines' and 'soup lines' lengthened. The workers were ill-organised. Thus the soil of American politics was now fertile for the 'New Deal' for the 'forgotten man'.

3. 'CULTURE FOR SERVICE TO HUMANITY'

An explosive incident was sparked off by the undergraduate members of the International Club when Sir Esmé Howard, British Ambassador to the United States, came on a visit to Howard University. It had been well advertised and the administrative and academic staff were geared to give him a

fitting reception. He was billed to address the students. An emergency meeting of the International Club was summoned by Dr Murray of Jamaica, then a fourth-year medical student.

During the meeting, Malcolm Nurse suggested that the club should not only boycott the reception but should demonstrate before the Ambassador against British colonial policy. The older and matured students advised against it, but the young 'hot-heads', who were in the majority, overruled them. Then a compromise bargain was struck: the club should co-operate with the university to play the role of an ideal host, without prejudice to its individual members taking appropriate action to demonstrate their resentment against the policy of Britain in the colonies.

Under the direction of Nurse, a statement criticising British imperialism was cyclostyled for distribution to the student body. I joined my colleagues in volunteering to distribute the leaflet, while other students developed cold feet and abstained from participating. When the British Ambassador arrived, Nurse and the younger radicals proceeded to stage a most effective and embarrassing demonstration. The university authorities maintained order and offered due apologies to His Excellency for the 'irresponsible behaviour' of some of the students; but Sir Esmé was not left in doubt that students from Africa and the Caribbean, in concert with their American counterparts, did not take kindly to the practice of the 'dual mandate' policy of Britain in the colonies.

In most American universities, the organisation of fraternities and sororities is a feature of the corporate life of the campus. At Howard University there were four men's fraternities and three female sororities. The former were Alpha Phi Alpha, Omega Psi Phi, Kappa Alpha Psi, and Phi Beta Sigma fraternities. The aims and objectives of each fraternity are clearly delineated in their charters, and so they seek for recruits among birds of the same feather.

When I was approached by the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, I asked a number of questions about the intrinsic values of such undergraduate comradeships—what type of people constituted the membership of such a fraternity, and what contribution they made to the stream of American life and thought.

I was informed that the motto of the Sigma is 'Culture for

service to humanity'. True to this motto, the fraternity had sought to encourage the cultivation of the spirit of public service among its membership. It believed that obtaining knowledge was a means and not an end in itself. It was a means to a better life for the individual and for society collectively. It believed that being cultured should enable one to enrich the culture of one's society and world culture in general.

One aspect of culture with which the fraternity was concerned was business as it affected the Negro in America. Annually it celebrated a 'Bigger and Better Negro Business' week in all its chapters in the colleges, universities and cities of the United States, emphasising the need for Negroes to establish business on a large scale and to run it efficiently. Moreover, scholarships were awarded in any of the disciplines in business studies. Through this means, Negroes were enabled to pull their weight in their various communities.

Some of the greatest Negroes produced by America were members of this fraternity. Robert Russa Moton, who succeeded Booker T. Washington as principal of Tuskegee Institute, was a Sigma man. His book, *What the Negro Thinks*, gave an insight into the aims and aspirations of Negro America. George Washington Carver was a colleague of Moton and established himself as one of the leading agricultural scientists of the world by the secrets he revealed from the humble groundnut (peanut) and sweet potato. He, also, was a Sigma man.

James Weldon Johnson was a great litterateur, poet and musician. His *Book of American Negro Poetry* was a classic. So also was his *Black Manhattan*, a novel about life in New York. He composed the 'Negro National Anthem' which was an inspirational saga of the fate of the Aframerican in the new world. Its first line reads: 'Lift every voice and sing.' Johnson was a Sigma man. Dr Alain LeRoy Locke, the first American Negro to become a Rhodes scholar and to study at Oxford University, later obtaining his PH D from Harvard, was a Sigma. He was author of *The New Negro* and a pioneer of the 'New Negro Movement' in America.

Monroe N. Work, a colleague of Moton and Carver, served Tuskegee Institute for decades. He was editorially active in the annual publication of the *Negro Handbook* for many years.

The climax of his great work was the publication of the *Bibliography on Africa*, which was a classic in its day. Finally, Albion Holsey, once private secretary to Booker T. Washington, played a leading part in pioneering the 'Bigger and Better Negro Business' movement and published a book on Negro business. Both he and Work were Sigma men.

I was very much impressed with the philosophy behind the founding and activities of the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity. Moreover, I was impressed by the work and activities of the great men whom I have just mentioned, whose life and work have become a landmark in American history and all of whom were alive when I was a student at Howard University. I asked Dr Locke, my mentor, for his advice. He was frank and told me that it really did not matter; although it was a healthy association which could not affect me adversely, nor break the friendships I had made with others who might not belong to this particular fraternity. So I decided to pitch my tent with the Sigma.

In May 1929 I had to 'walk through' the valley of the shadow, as a neophyte. After an elaborate ritual, during which my upper left breast (above the heart) was branded with the symbol of the Greek letter sigma, I became a fully-fledged member of the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity. At the conclusion of the ceremonies I joined my 'brothers' in singing the fraternity hymn, 'The Founders of Our Noble Band', sung to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne'.

Incidentally, the Sigma fraternity includes among its members at least three sometime African heads of state, the other two being William V. S. Tubman of the Republic of Liberia, and Kwame Nkrumah of the Republic of Ghana. In December 1949 I was invited to speak to my fraternity brothers in Washington, DC, in the Banneker Auditorium, in connection with the thirty-fifth annual conclave of that fraternity. I took the opportunity to explain to my audience the nature of our crusade for human freedom in Africa. Dr W. E. B. DuBois was chairman of the occasion, supported by the Liberian Ambassador to the United States, Dr Charles Dunbar Burgess King, a former President of Liberia.

4. EMERGENCE OF THE NEW NEGRO

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. This was due to a fermentation of ideas among scholars, intellectuals, writers, artists and politicians who sought for fair play and improved living conditions for the underprivileged people of African descent in all the lands of the earth. There were some pertinent reasons for this upsurge.

World War I had recently ended. While American intervention helped to swing the balance in favour of the Allied powers, yet the slogan which President Woodrow Wilson, the professor-turned-statesman, emblazoned to mankind was 'to make the world safe for democracy'. After the Treaty of Versailles, the Central Powers were thoroughly discredited and humiliated. The principle of self-determination had given birth to new members in the family of nations, who took their places in the League of Nations under the panoply of collective security.

The coloured races realised that their lot was the back-seat. Japan became involved in the race to become a world power, following its industrial revolution. China was involved in an internal convulsion which took two decades to settle; indeed it is a divided country today. The remaining parts of Asia and Africa were the footstools of the victorious powers, who now planned how to divide the spoils of war, the Americans finding a convenient shelter under the roof of isolationism.

Marcus Garvey published his *Philosophy and Opinions* and thus struck the first blow for a new Africa that would be politically-minded. Kwegyir Aggrey confined his ideas to the need for a social rebirth and a new spiritual outlook among and towards the Africans. Some African leaders, such as Casely Hayford, Herbert Macaulay, Bankole Bright and E. F. Small, prepared a blueprint for the post-war era. But it was left to the American Negro, who played a no less glorious role in the various theatres of the World War I than his white compatriot, to articulate for a renaissance in thought and in action, as far as Negroes were concerned in the United States.

Among the leaders of thought in this movement were Garvey, DuBois, Locke, Moton, Kelly Miller and Kerlin.

The National Congress of British West Africa made its presence felt under the prudent guidance of Casely Hayford of the Gold Coast, although he had to die broken-hearted because a new generation of Gold Coasters emerged and, like Pharaoh of old, knew not Joseph—and so thoroughly discredited this happy warrior of the 'twenties. Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association determined to rouse the racial consciousness of black people everywhere. He succeeded in many ways, especially among the masses. DuBois concentrated among intellectuals and started the Pan-African Movement in the attempt to co-ordinate the nationalist crusade for freedom in Africa.

In the United States itself, Kelly Miller published *The Everlasting Stain*; Kerlin published *Negro Poets and Their Poems*, turning the searchlight of critical opinion on the hitherto untapped literature of protest written by Negro poets. Then Alain Locke published *The New Negro*, which was a collection of the writings of Negro poets, dramatists, novelists, painters and sculptors, reflecting the mood of the articulate section of the American *literati*.

Miller and Locke taught at Howard University, whilst Kerlin taught at Lincoln University. Both universities became centres of a dynamic movement of thought for the rehabilitation of people of African descent. Langston Hughes, who graduated from Lincoln University in 1929, had published *The Weary Blues*; while Countee Cullen published *Colour* after studying at Harvard University. This literature of protest at the lot of the American Negro altered the attitude of those who had been taught to take the Negro for granted. It laid the foundation for the resistance movements of the 'forties, 'fifties and 'sixties.

As a young student, I was naturally affected by this intellectual ferment. Although I did not study under Professor Kelly Miller, yet I read his articles which were published weekly in the *Norfolk Journal and Guide* and other Aframerican newspapers. I have already explained my contacts with Dr Locke. The way these protests affected those of us who were putting finishing touches to our studies, both in the United States and in the

United Kingdom, is material here, because it laid a solid foundation for the life work of so many of us.

Some time in 1927, when I was a student at Storer College, I received a letter from Malcolm I. Nurse (George Padmore), who was studying at Fisk University. In it he mentioned a Liberian student who reawakened my interest in the Republic of Liberia so as to make me write a book on that independent country seven years later. This is the text of the letter from Mr Nurse:

'Despite the fact that we are unacquainted with each other, I feel that I can take the liberty of addressing you on the basis of our racial kinship, with respect to a matter that I feel is of mutual interest to us.

'Permit me, therefore, to offer to you my most sincere greetings and wish you well. I am writing to invite your fellowship and co-operation in a movement that I am hoping to work out along with Mr Davies, a student from Monrovia, Liberia.

'We are trying to lay plans to establish a political organization among foreign Negro 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.

'We anticipate that the organisation will assume certain aspects similar to the Kuomintang Party, which was organised by Dr Sun Yat Sen and Chinese students who received their education in countries of the western world. We do not expect the movement will meet with much support from the local students, who are not, as a rule, interested in the African continent.

'However, if there are any desirous of participating, provision will be made for their membership. It will, therefore, be a matter of most concern to us who are looking forward to going back to the fatherland.

'It is not easy to enter into lengthy details in an introductory letter, but I would like to draw your attention to the Firestone project in Liberia, which is only another manifestation of imperialism.

'I do not think it inopportune to start a campaign of propaganda on our respective campuses, and elsewhere, with the object of arousing public sentiment against such forms of imperialism.

'If our ideas meet with your approval, I shall be exceedingly pleased to hear from you. We take this opportunity to invite

suggestions, and shall in return send you full details as to our tentative plans, as well as a copy of our manifesto.

'I have the honour to be your brother in a common cause
'MALCOLM I. NURSE'

I replied to my friend and also to the Liberian student, Phillip Davies, who was well known to me. While I agreed that the time had arrived for the intensification of the propaganda of African nationalism, with a view to crystallising racial consciousness, yet I was of opinion that the primary task was mental emancipation. I believed in the ideas of Sun Yat-Sen and was proud to read of the victories of Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek in the attempt to unify China. But I thought that an intellectual revolution was more potent as a foundation for the superstructure that must inevitably be built. To this my Liberian friend replied as follows:

'Dear friend and countryman:

'Evidently, you have received a letter from Mr Nurse, because he said something about having an encouraging letter from you.

'Ben, he is acting on my advice; in fact, he and I had planned to make this a working organisation. I want you to feel that I am not ignorant of the conditions of our country and its peoples; that I do not know the difficult task of working with the many tribes, because I do.

'I know that Africa cannot be compared with China, in the least, because that country [China] has had an unbroken history of 4,000 years with her ethical and philosophical background.

'Our purpose is not to start a revolutionary propaganda as the "Nationalist" China, or the Kuomintang, but rather an educational propaganda:

(a) To stimulate interest among African students that they may determine more with a "dark Africa" ever before their minds.

'(b) To hasten the renaissance and to do our part in preparing our people for the inevitable factors of history.

'Somebody must make a start and I think it is our duty, as students, who have the opportunity to observe the world's economic struggles and the motive of man.

'It is a fact, considering the country's condition that we can't do much, but we can start the work for those who will follow to see it through. . . .'

Then I became interested in the Republic of Liberia and its position in world politics. I was ashamed that, even though I was an African, I knew little of the African continent gene-

rally, and the Republic of Liberia in particular. I discovered that some Americans were more familiar with the history of Liberia than most African students.

Then came my moment of self-realization. I mused that if I was willing to become an intellectual revolutionary for the mental emancipation of Liberia and Africa, then there was no reason why I should not formulate a philosophy towards the crystallisation of this dream of a new Africa. But my training was limited and I did not know much of systematic philosophy. It took a course of lectures in the subject of social philosophy under Professor Locke to guide me towards constructive and systematic thinking. At this time Dr Locke was in the vanguard of the New Negro movement.

Meanwhile, I read in the *Chicago Defender* about an African student whose personality had endeared him to the students of the University of Chicago, in the prairies. This was none other than my old teacher, Frank Akintunde Brown who, having graduated from Talladega College, Talladega, Alabama, proceeded to the University of Chicago for higher studies. I wrote informing him of my experiences in America, and, pleased to hear from me, he replied as follows:

'My dear Ben:

'Your letter was indeed a pleasant surprise. For nearly three years I have been trying to locate you but did not succeed.

'Some time ago I read your article on Nigeria in the *Journal of Negro History*. I wrote to Washington immediately but failed to get a reply.

'You can, therefore, imagine my joy when I received your letter. Now that I know where you are, I am very anxious to see you and I hope this will be possible soon.

'I remember you very well. It is impossible to forget the happy days we spent together at home. It is the vision of those days that brought us here, and I am sure we shall yet do credit to our hopes and ambitions.

'Do not think of me as a teacher, but as a fellow student, a co-worker in the cause of our beloved country, Africa. You can depend upon my help at any time you need it, it will be a pleasure for me to do whatever I can.

'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.

'We 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.

'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.

'Permit me to congratulate you for what you are doing as a student. I've heard very good reports about you and they make me feel proud. I am glad to know of your plans for the future.

'Well, my boy! the way is not smooth but the adventure is worth while; so leave no stone unturned. . . .

'I expect to get my MA degree in March (1930) and my BD in June (1930). I may continue here for my PH D or go to Columbia University Teachers College. You probably knew that I attended Talladega College and graduated in BA and BD.

'Write again as soon as you can. These are very busy days for me because of my studies, work and speaking engagements, but I shall always find time to write you, my dear friend.

'I shall speak to one of our sociology Professors concerning fellowships and will write you later. . . .

'I hope you are well. Take good care of yourself.'

The letter of Dipeolu caused me to think hard. I was struck by his ideas of race pride which made him substitute an African name for his European 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. It is true that there is nothing in a name; nevertheless, the anomaly of an African having a non-African name is not quite obvious until one goes abroad.

Amidst the conflicting ideas and ideologies of contemporary American society and the various attempts to put them into practice, I found myself in a mental labyrinth. Seeking for an outlet, I wrote in the autumn of 1929 to Ladipo Solanke, Secretary of the West African Students Union in London. After explaining the circumstances which had brought mental confusion to me, I tried to unfold to Solanke my plans and how these had been frustrated, due to lack of financial backing. Then I elaborated my philosophy of life and how I had planned to 'revolutionise African thought'. But being too overcome by circumstances, I needed a comforter, hence I appealed to him in these words: 'A sentence from you may mean a sunshine dispersing the clouds of gloom.'

Having secured an outlet for my pent-up emotions, I was

a bit relieved and I felt that there was no need for me to lose my grip on life. Rather, I should brace up and take my medicine like a man. I made up my mind that since it had now become impossible for me to return to Howard University, because I had not sufficient money to pay my bills, I would make other arrangements. So I decided to try Lincoln University, with a view to getting through my BA and probably securing employment as a university instructor.

I thought that since there was no opportunity for me in Africa, the best thing to do was to capitalise on the opportunity which was mine in the United States. Then I made up my mind to study towards the MA and M SC degrees with a view to teaching, and then saving some money, which should help me if and when I decided to return to West Africa to start a printing and publishing business.

At that time I was working in a down-town Manhattan hotel, exclusively reserved for women guests. I was one of the forty male workers in this twenty-storey skyscraper hotel; there were over fifty female workers, black and white. My task was to take care of the solarium, that is, the top floor of the hotel which was used by some of the 'idle rich' women to bask in the summer sunshine. I was also expected to use the vacuum cleaner in connection with the carpets of all the floors of the two upper storeys.

When the new school year opened, I left my job and enrolled at Lincoln. By now I had received a letter, dated October 4, 1929, from Mr Solanke, which reads as follows:

'I must apologize for the delay in sending your reply to your very interesting and most informative letter.

'I have been very busy out here in our WASU organisation. The fact is shortly this that I am sailing for Africa on the 9th instant on a special mission in the interest of our union and I am to return to this country by the end of December.

'The purpose of the mission is to go and lay before our natural kings, chiefs and people our present scheme for the establishment in this country of a hostel or club house for African students and to get their financial support for the same.

'I showed your letter to my friend and associate here, Dr O. Ajibade, who is also doing his best to assist us here in putting over the programme, and he was very pleased with it.

'Professor Alain Locke is one of the best friends of our union and he is my personal friend. . . .

'I suppose you know one Mr Ered E. Ebitu who is here now pursuing his English Bar Examinations. . . .

'LADIPO SOLANKE'

The exchange of correspondence with Nurse, Davies, Dipeolu and Solanke started a chain reaction in the fermentation of ideas which ultimately crystallised into the struggle for the complete emancipation of the African colonial territories from European imperialism. It led, too, the movement in Liberia for reforms in many aspects of that nation's life. It also fertilised the soil for the great 'marches' of the Negro to Washington, the civil disobedience movement of Martin Luther King, the agitation for civil rights by the Congress of Racial Equality, the rise of the Black Muslims, the emergence of Malcolm X, and the birth of the 'Black Power' movement.

Nurse left Howard University and went to Moscow, where he changed his name to George Padmore and joined the Comintern. He later moved to Germany, but when the Nazi Party came into power, with its anti-Negro programme of sterilisation, Padmore transferred his activities to Copenhagen, then to Paris, and finally to London. Phillip Davies finished his studies in America and returned to Liberia, pulling his weight confidently and surely. Dipeolu transferred from Chicago and enrolled at the Teachers College of Columbia University for his doctorate. He died before obtaining that degree. Solanke visited Nigeria and returned to London where the West African Students Union (its abbreviation WASU is a Yoruba word meaning 'to preach') became the nursery of West African nationalism.

The New Negro movement started by Garvey, and garbed in the robe of intellectualism by Locke and DuBois, like the mustard seed had sprouted many times over and extended to Africa. Here Casely Hayford, Herbert Macaulay, Horatio Jackson, Kobina Sekyi, Dr Danquah, Bankole Awoonor Renner, Wallace-Johnson and many others cross-pollinated the idea of national self-determination and gave impetus to the crusade for African freedom. Eyo Ita returned from America in 1933, having been educated at the Teachers College of Columbia University. He founded the Nigerian Youth League Movement. At the same time, Dr James Churchill Vaughan, Ernest Sissei Ikoli and Samuel Akisanya, among others,

founded the Nigerian Youth Movement to lay a solid foundation for the development of the nationalist spirit in Nigeria.

Thus the idea of a new Negro evolved into the crusade for a new Africa. In America too, miracles have been happening in the realm of race relations. Thurgood Marshall was appointed an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court; a Negro who made history as Attorney-General of Massachusetts became a Senator for the first time in ninety years. Another Negro became the Mayor of Cleveland to make history. The New Negro movement marches on as the new Negro emerges wherever people of African descent inhabit on the face of the earth.

CHAPTER VII

'THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE'

*The mental emancipation of a young crusader in the historic
struggle to safeguard fundamental human rights*

'There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done", and you'll do it.'

EDGAR A. GUEST

I. CLASS-MATE OF THURGOOD MARSHALL

During the summer of 1929, when I realised that I could not return to Howard University for financial reasons, I applied to Lincoln University for admission into the senior class to enable me to earn my BA and graduate in June 1930. Dr W. H. Johnson, President of Lincoln University, replied to me as follows:

'We should be interested in having you come to Lincoln University and could give you some aid from scholarship funds to supplement the help of which you speak in your letter. . . .

Hoping that the way may be open for you to come to Lincoln University in September . . .'

An application form was sent to me from the university authorities and I was asked to write an essay on the subject 'Why I desire to enter Lincoln University'. This essay requirement was obligatory for all new students because it enabled the university to appreciate the philosophy of life of the students. The essay had nothing to do with the academic requirements of the university. The following is the text of my essay, dated

August 3, 1929, and written in my room at the Brooklyn YMCA Hostel, Carlton Avenue, Brooklyn, New York:

'I am a native African of Nigerian descent. At the age of seventeen I had a burning desire for higher education and, despite the fact that I was financially handicapped, there was the urge to go forth and see what the end will be.

'I arrived in the USA in the fall of 1925 and in the following year graduated from the academic department of Storer College, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia.

'Having completed my freshman year with an "A" average, I was forced to be out of school for nine months, and when the immigration authorities threatened to deport me, I entered Howard University in the spring of 1928 and stayed there until June 1929.

'My philosophy of life is built upon a spiritual foundation. I believe in culture for service and service for humanity.

'My aim in securing a higher education is not necessarily to acquire an academic training and a cultural background; but education, to me, is social contact and mutual understanding.

'I, therefore, desire to enter Lincoln University since its purpose is to communicate a liberal education and Christian ideals to future leaders of the world.

'The contact at Lincoln with the Christian ideals and noble purposes upon which this great institution was founded, will be worth more to me than all the academic training I may hope to obtain elsewhere.'

Dr George Johnson, Dean of the College, wrote and informed me that I had been accepted at Lincoln. When September came round I entrained for Lincoln University. Then I wrote to some of my valued friends and informed them that I had transferred to Lincoln. One of them, Dr Durkee, replied to me as follows:

'I have just received your second letter from Lincoln, telling me that you have made your final transference and are there at Lincoln University.

'I could wish you had fought yourself through at Howard, for there is the place for you to get your standing and a great start for the future.

'However, having made the transference, you are at Lincoln and I trust you will fight your way through. The open road is yours. It's a hard road, as I told you at the beginning, but having succeeded thus far, you will still succeed, I am sure.

'Every heartiest cheer to you in your work.'

Founded in 1854 as Ashmun Institute, Lincoln University is a private institution operated under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church, although it is partly subsidised by the State of Pennsylvania. It is forty-five miles from Philadelphia, and sixty miles from Baltimore on the Lincoln No. 1 highway. Its student body in my days used to be restricted to males; but this puritan rigidity has been relaxed so that it is now co-educational. It has a reputation for encouraging personal contact between the teacher and the taught. Professor Harry T. Baker's views on this issue are pertinent:

'College teaching is primarily a matter of impact of personality upon pupils. Mere scholarship, especially of the PH D variety, is not enough.

'Too many college professors teach by cold light; they illuminate, perhaps, but they do not warm. This is the academic temperament.'

Based on my transcript and due to my desire to graduate in June 1930, I was placed in the senior class; but there was doubt whether I would be able to do the required extraordinary studies so as to be able to satisfy all the requirements for graduation. I studied hard and, at the end of the first semester, I was able to rank in the first group on the class roll. This also entitled me to a special scholarship.

Life at a men's institution was different from that at Howard University, which was co-educational. The 'bull sessions' at Lincoln University maintained the same intensity as was the case in Washington, but the boys at Lincoln were famous for their ability to 'woof', not minding whether they were loud and wrong. At times it became a matter of who made the loudest noise, interspersed with solid argumentation. Some of my class-mates were in the front rank of scholarship, but when it came to 'bull sessions' they did not allow themselves to be out-woofed by anybody.

Our class president was Professor W. T. V. Fontaine, who made history by piercing through the colour barrier to become one of the first persons of African descent to be appointed Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. 'Footney', as we called him, was one of the prized students of Dean Johnson's philosophy class. After leaving Lincoln he earned his master's degree and the doctorate at

that Quaker institution. He and my anthropology teacher at Penn, Professor A. I. Hallowell, were delegated by the University of Pennsylvania to represent it during my inauguration as Governor-General of Nigeria in November 1960.

The other product of our 'bull sessions' who, like the rest of us, has also 'bulled' his way to the top, was Thurgood Marshall, who made history in the desegregation case before the United States Supreme Court in 1954. As special counsel of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), Thurgood hardly realised that in thirteen years he would adorn the highest judicial bench of America. Yet he got his early practice in the 'bull sessions' at Lincoln. In 1954, when Howard University honoured both of us by conferring on us the honorary doctorate degree in law, we sat next to each other at the special dinner arranged for that occasion. Unlike our experience at Lincoln a quarter of a century earlier, our table manners were impeccable.

Apart from Fontaine and Marshall, my class-mates included many who have since become physicians and surgeons, lawyers, ministers in holy orders, civil servants, journalists, etc. Mervyn Jones, Maynard Law, 'Bus' Longshore, A. B. Lee, McFall, 'Rusty' Reed, Young, Dwiggin, etc., specialised in handling the scalpel. Valdez became a dentist. Herbert Harris and Jacques Isler became lawyers. Corey Mitchell, Dr T. B. O'Daniell and Alonzo Kelly took up the teaching profession. Frank Mitchell, O. D. Stanley, my 'old lady' (room-mate), Dr Oscar Lee and 'Kid' Snowden turned their collars round.

At my inauguration, in 1960 some of my class-mates came to Lagos as official guests of my government, and among them were Harris, Valdez, De Kalb, Isler, and Snowden. When we had a *tête-à-tête* in one of the suites at State House, we remembered good old Lincoln and rehearsed our 'bull sessions' as only Lincoln men could do it. I reminded Rev. Snowden of the time he was 'Kid' Snowden and made a record as a first-rate middleweight boxer, when he was working his way through college with his fists. My pugilistically-inclined class-mate replied, 'That's true, Zik, but now I am knocking the hell out of the devil with my sanctified tongue and the holy book.' We abandoned all protocol and tried to out-roar each other in a typical Lincoln hilarity.

After the first semester, I wrote to Dr MacDonald informing him of my experiences at Lincoln. He replied and agreed with me that I should return home as soon as it was practicable to do so. Because most Americans of that time thought foremost of Liberia whenever Africa was discussed, Dr MacDonald confused my nativity. His first letter, dated February 10, 1930, reads as follows:

'My dear Azikiwe:

'I am glad to have the good news as to your success at Lincoln and I am also interested in the comments you make as to the spirit and worth of the college.

'After all, the big thing in life is the training of men and women to see straight and to act in accordance therewith.

'I believe that Lincoln University comes as near to helping men to see and think straight as any institution in the country.

'I am wondering what your plans are as to the future? I am supposing naturally that you will return to Liberia. It will be fine for you to be able to go back to your home people and help them.'

In his second letter, correcting himself, Dr. MacDonald added:

'I agree with you that by all means you should return to your native land, Nigeria. I judge I said "Liberia" in my former letter when, in reality, I meant your homeland. . . .

'I hope you will not fail to keep me advised as to your movements, because I shall always be interested in your progress and life's work.'

One month before I graduated from Lincoln, I received a letter dated May 18, 1930, from Akintunde B. Dipolu, of the University of Chicago. His letter read thus:

'*Ore mi owon:*

'This invitation brings to you the news of my second graduation this year. On the 4th of June I shall be conferred the degree of Bachelor of Divinity from the Theological Seminary of this University.

'This brings to completion the work of three years. There is one mileage yet to reach in this process of formal education, viz., my PH D, which I expect to get in 1932, either in this university or in Columbia University.

'I want to thank you for your nice letter of April 30. Thanks also for your congratulation on behalf of my MA. I need to congratulate you too for the splendid work you are doing.

'I like your article in *The Crisis* about the situation in Nigeria. *Gbere re!* I know you will continue to prepare yourself. Don't let anything discourage you.

'Upon us depends the future of our beloved Africa and we must give to her a leadership that is second to none.

'I also congratulate you in advance for your coming graduation in June.

'Where are you going to spend your summer vacation? I am anxious to know about your plans for Cornell or Columbia. What line of study are you going to pursue? Have you secured a scholarship?

'Oh Ben, I am so anxious to see you and talk several things over with you about our work in Africa. I hope we shall be able to get together soon.

'What other students from our country have you come in contact with? Where are they located? I think we ought all to get together somehow.

'There used to be a flourishing organisation of African Students at Hampton Institute, Virginia. I understand there is one in New York now. I am going to correspond with the leaders during the summer and see how we can combine to help one another.

'Two of my brothers send greetings to you. Take care of yourself and remember how glad I am always to hear from you.

'I am enclosing a copy of the organ of the International Students' Association, of which I am a member.

'Your devoted one,

'AKINTUNDE B. DIPEOLU.'

As June drew near we continued to study for our finals, and when they were over I felt relieved. When the results were published I was listed to be conferred the BA degree *cum laude*. On that never-to-be-forgotten day I found myself realising my immediate dreams. Oh how happy I was that day!

As I put on my gown and hood, rested the mortar board on my head, and strolled along with my class-mates in the academic procession to the Commencement Exercises, or what we call Convocation in Nigeria, to be diplomated, one could imagine how my soul revelled in ecstasy! I was happy that all my toils at Storer College, all my sufferings in Pittsburgh, all my travails in the coal-mines, in the road gang, at the dishwasher's sink, in the janitor's store, in the women's hotel, and all my experiences at Howard University, had not been in vain.

When the supreme moment arrived, and I received my BA diploma, enc scrolled in Latin, from Dr Johnson, President of Lincoln University, a new light dawned on me. Ah yes,

it was 'Commencement', the beginning of a new era in my life. I thanked God I had tackled 'the thing that cannot be done', and I had done it. I tucked my BA diploma safely under my arm and, after the convocation exercises, graced with a chorus of congratulations from admirers of different races and nationalities, I entered my 'dorm' and unfolded the testimonial which read:

'Praeses et Curatores, Universitatis Lincolnensis.

'Omnibus has literas perlecturis, salutem in domino.

'Notum sit quod Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe ornare placuit et pro meritis titulo graduque Artium Liberalium Baccalauri condecorare.

'Eique donavimus potestatem amplissimam privilegus omnibus, immunitatibus, et honoribus fruendi, quae ubique gentium ad gradum eundem pertinent.

'Cujus sigillum publicum nominaque nostra testimonio sint.

'Datum ex aedibus Academicis Pennsylvaniae die Junii III anno salutis humanae MCMXXX.

'W. Hallock Johnson, *Praeses.*'

After enjoying the day of achievement with my class-mates and friends, we bade each other farewell until 1940, when we should have a class reunion and take stock of our fate in life—those who had died, and what those who were alive had been doing in their various spheres of activity. We vowed to try to meet each other on Lincoln University's hallowed ground every ten years, no matter where we might be, until death should separate all of us into eternity. Then we parted, each his own way, after singing:

Goodbye, Lincoln,
 Goodbye, Lincoln,
 Goodbye, Lincoln,
 We're going to leave you now.
 Sadly we go from you,
 Go from you, go from you,
 Sadly we go from you,
 Out, out, in the cold, cold world.'

At Lincoln University I participated in the co-curricula activities, especially in the literary and sports sectors. I contributed articles and poems in *The Lincolnian*, the undergraduate organ of opinion. My poem 'To Lincoln', which originally appeared in *The Lincolnian Year Book* of 1930, was selected for inclusion in the centenary publication entitled *Lincoln Poets*,

published in 1954 under the editorship of Langston Hughes and Cuney. On my visit to Lincoln during the commencement exercises of that year, I recited this particular poem at the centenary tree-planting ceremony.

In the field of sports, I helped to maintain the prestige of Lincoln University in track and field athletics. My team-mates in athletics included the Rev. Frank Mitchell, Vernon Bradley, Jim Bird, Grigsby, Ronald Derry, Moultrie, Luke, Nelson, Preston and Wilson.

Mitchell, Bradley and Grigsby were great milers; Bird was excellent in the half-mile. Derry, Moultrie, and Luke were brilliant quarter-milers; Nelson was a very good hurdler, while Preston excelled in the long jump. Dr Bradley is now a famous urologist at the Meharry Medical College. Dr Bird maintains a lucrative practice in dentistry; Ronald Derry, who attended my inauguration in 1960, has retired from the welfare department of the Los Angeles municipal service. Our paths crossed in Martinique, when our ship stopped there during my health cruise in December 1965.

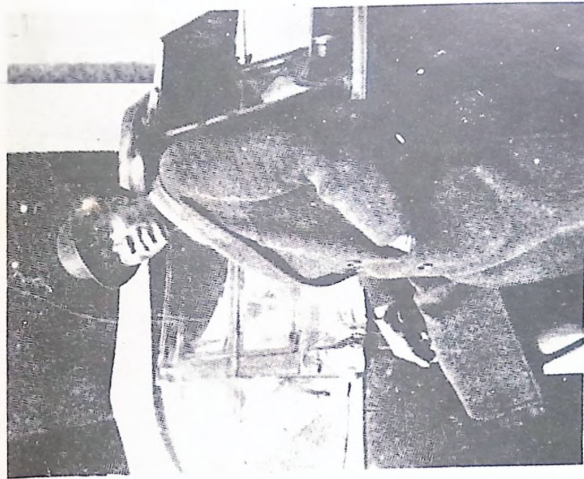
In soccer, we had a fairly good team which maintained a decent record in competition with university and local teams. In 1930 I was elected co-captain with Hobson of North Carolina, and we had a good season in a team of eleven comprising five internationals and six Americans. I was happy to note that, in 1963, my half-brother, Ernest Onuora Azikiwe, then a junior, was elected captain of the Lincoln University soccer team, just as my third son, Nwachukwu, in 1967, his senior year, was elected captain of the Harvard University soccer team—to keep the family record intact!

In cross-country, the above middle-distance runners were trained to practise in the longer distances so as to develop strength and endurance. We participated in the cross-country marathons organised by Baltimore and Richmond health week promotions, in addition to the Middle Atlantic championships of the American Athletic Union. Our runners were point winners in all of these competitions.

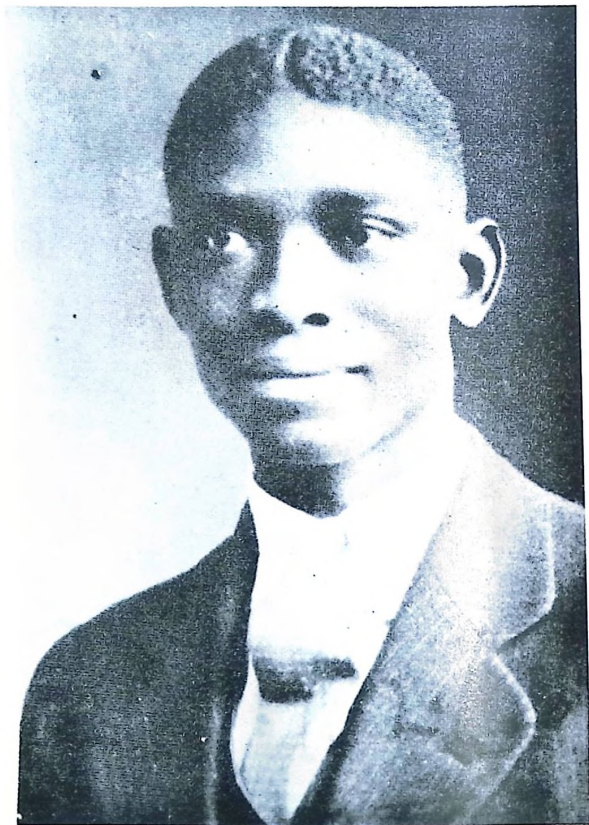
One of my preoccupations at Lincoln University was the news bureau, which I operated. As correspondent of the *Afro-American* of 628 North Eutaw Street, Baltimore, and the *Philadelphia Tribune* of 526 South Street, Philadelphia, I kept



4. Playing American football, Storer College, 1926.



5. Instructor in political science, Lincoln University, 1933.



6. The author while at Lincoln University, 1931.

the columns of these two weekly newspapers filled with news of occurrences at this university community. I also distributed the newspapers to the subscribers and collected my commission from the newspapers concerned. The bureau did quite a brisk business because I realised that, since faculty members and students liked to see their names appear in the newspapers, I cashed in on this trait of human nature.

During the football season I ran *The Daily Bulletin*, which was a hand-written news letter to keep the student body informed about what was happening around them and to pep up the members of the football team. It was usually posted on the notice board at the entrance of Cresson Hall, where students had lots of fun reading some jokes about how certain unnamed ladies visited certain unnamed gentlemen during the week-end and from what nearby cities they came. In any case my newspaper activity helped to enliven our corporate life on the campus.

When the effects of the New Negro movement began to be felt in our campus, some radical students, aided and abetted by younger members of the faculty, began to ask embarrassing questions—why the oldest Negro university in the United States did not have one Negro professor, but many Negro instructors. Some senior students and some members of the faculty wrote articles and passed them to me for transmission to Carl Murphy, the President of the *Afro-American*. His confidence was won, so the articles were published.

At the material time the students, under the leadership of Laurence D. Howard and others, staged demonstrations against their food; but their main grouse was the anomaly of a university predominantly Negro being unwilling or unable to employ Negroes as professors. The Board of Trustees of the university conferred and, true to the liberal traditions of this important landmark in the annals of American universities, the first Negro professor was appointed. He was John Newton Hill, Professor of English. He was an alumnus and this gesture placated the alumni, the student body and the radical element. With this 'break-through', Lincoln University radically modified its recruitment policy so that professors and instructors were engaged strictly on merit, irrespective of the racial identity of the candidates.

The motto of Lincoln University is 'The Truth Shall Make You Free'. It is an excerpt from St John's Gospel, chapter 8, verse 32: 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' The mission of Lincoln University had always been to disseminate the truth of knowledge, to enable its students to be well armed for the battle of life. In Dean Johnson's courses in philosophy, he was always fond of referring his students to the Greek philosophers who emphasised truth as the basis of the good life. If I learned anything at Lincoln it was to admire the truth and to stick to the truth, irrespective of the consequences.

Meanwhile, I had begun to make plans for the summer in order to decide whether to continue my academic studies elsewhere or whether I could obtain a teaching position to help keep body and spirit together. By virtue of a scholarship from the Phelps-Stokes Fund, I enrolled at Columbia University that summer and began theoretical studies in journalism. I took three courses there: international law, labour problems and principles of journalism.

The course in international law was exciting. My professor happened to be one of America's leading authorities on political science, Dr J. W. Garner of the University of Illinois. The course in journalism was an eye-opener to me. One of its requirements was the production of a standard newspaper, under student management. I was selected, on the basis of our class work, to be associate editor of the Columbia University *Summer Session Times*, the name of the newspaper. I was the only black student in the class

2. INSTRUCTOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

As the summer session neared its end, I was obliged to think of the future. It was not possible to continue my studies at Columbia University because I had no funds to pay the fees, or to continue to stay in my temporary residence. I decided to write to Lincoln University and ask if they would require the services of a graduate assistant in any department of my specialisation. If so, I expressed a desire to do graduate work towards the master's degree both at Lincoln University and at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Lincoln University had always employed the services of graduate assistants and instructors, while the persons concerned continued their graduate studies either at Lincoln or at a nearby university. My application was favourably considered. My job was to be part-time and I had to assist the professor in charge in doing some classroom work and in the marking of papers in the departments of political science (under Professor Walter Livingston Wright) and sociology (under Professor Robert Fleming Labaree).

When we returned to the campus, I discovered that two of my class-mates were also given assignments to teach as graduate assistants. Fontaine was assigned to the department of philosophy and Corey Mitchell to the department of psychology; all of us registered at the University of Pennsylvania for graduate studies in our fields of specialisation. I decided to delve more into anthropology; and so I chose it as my major field of concentration, and political science as my minor field, for the M SC degree.

To kill two birds with one stone, I also enrolled at Lincoln University as a graduate student for the MA degree with my major in religion and minor in philosophy at the Theological Seminary of the university. Professor George Johnson was my adviser in philosophy and Dean Ridgley advised me in religion. My schedule was fairly heavy, but it was well distributed so that I was able to work and study and, at the same time, enjoy some leisure. While in my senior year I had stayed in Cresson Hall with O. D. Stanley as my room-mate, now I had to shift to Houston Hall with Wilson, the sprinter, as my new 'old lady'.

The courses I took at the graduate level at Lincoln University included ancient, medieval and modern philosophy, church history, church doctrines, systematic theology, and biblical archaeology. Having satisfied the academic requirements, I submitted my thesis entitled: 'A Critique of Polygyny from the Historical and Theological Points of View.' I made 'A' in all my papers. In June 1932 I had the MA degree conferred on me.

In the summer of 1931 I had enrolled again in Columbia doing graduate studies in political science for candidacy towards the doctorate of philosophy degree. Having satisfied

some of the preliminary requirements, I was accepted as a candidate with Professor Parker T. Moon as my faculty adviser. In consultation with him, I selected as my doctorate dissertation 'Liberian Diplomacy, 1847-1932'. He then advised me to scour the library of the Columbia University Law School for relevant documents on international law and diplomacy, in addition to the 42nd Street Public Library, in New York, and the Congressional Library in Washington, DC. These started me on my research work on the role of the Republic of Liberia in world politics.

During that same summer, E. A. Schandorf of Accra arrived in the United States to study at Lincoln University in preparation for a medical course. He lodged with me, and when we returned to the campus he enrolled as a freshman. He graduated in 1935 and qualified later as a medical practitioner, practising in the state of Florida for many years before returning to Ghana. Some time in 1964 he visited me in the State House and we had a grand reunion. He was then personal physician of President Kwame Nkrumah.

In the meantime I was making good progress in my graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania. In anthropology, I did detailed studies of various aspects of cultural and physical anthropology, as they related to ethnology and ethnography. I studied American Indian linguistics and noticed certain similarities with African linguistics. My studies in ethnology included a range of researches in the writings of leading anthropologists, including Blumenbach, Ratzel, Haddon, Seligman, Boas, Kroeber, Dorsey and Marett.

In the field of ethnography, we investigated the field studies of Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski, Margaret Mead, Speck, Thomas, Talbot and Ruth Benedict, among others. My thesis was in the field of folkloristic literature and I based my research on the myths and folk-tales of the Onitsha people. To give it a respectable and dignified name, the thesis was entitled 'Mythology in Onitsha Society'. I based it on the theory, popularised by Professor Malinowski and his school at the time, that myths and folk-tales have functional values in non-literate societies; and I was able to prove it with illustrations from the experience of what obtained in Onitsha society. Professor Franklin G. Speck, well known authority on American

Indian ethnography, was head of the department of anthropology at Penn.

In the field of political science, I took advanced courses in international law, international relations, and the British Commonwealth, in addition to courses in comparative government at the Wharton School of Finance in association with the Graduate School. The latter course was the responsibility of Professor Maxson, who testified that my term paper on the subject of comparative government ancient and modern was the best he ever had. The international law courses were offered by Mr Morris, head of the law firm by that name. At the end of 1932 I had virtually completed the requirements for the master of science degree, which was conferred on me at the February 1933 convocation exercises of the University of Pennsylvania. Again, I scored high grades, making 'A' or 'B' in all my studies.

After I obtained the MA and the MSc degrees, Lincoln University confirmed my appointment from part-time instructorship to full-time. So in the fall of 1933 I worked full time and had to devote my leisure exclusively to teaching. Because some of the professors were on sabbatical leave, I had to 'pinch hit' for them, especially in the department of history, where I offered general courses in ancient, medieval, modern and English history and African history. The last course almost caused an uproar at Lincoln University, because some of the professors felt that the African had no history worthy of academic attention.

In response, I prepared a syllabus for African history and demonstrated the rich literature that was available in this field, thanks to the pioneering researches of Professor Hansberry of Howard University, Dr Woodson, W. H. Ferris, J. A. Rogers and others. I persuaded the authorities of Lincoln University to invite Hansberry to come and lecture our congregation on 'African Historiography from Ancient to Contemporary Times'. It was an original lecture and it opened the eyes of many to the possibilities of African history and its affinity with the origins of the American Negro.

The life of a university instructor is almost ideal, especially to a young man or woman with literary taste and aptitude. One comes into contact with youths and older people of differ-

ent temperaments, ideas and outlooks, who are uniformly ambitious to make a mark for themselves in the world. I noted that some of the young matriculants, after spending a year or two at Lincoln University, became intelligently articulate and forceful in their expression, manner and quest for social justice, and I realised why university education anywhere enables an individual to discover himself.

Noticing how students of African descent, American, British or otherwise by nationality, were ignorant of their past, it dawned upon me that research into the origins and development of the African in the stream of world history should be a definite contribution to the field of learning. So I intensified my research on 'the African in History'. Whenever I was not engaged in lecturing to my classes, I was busy doing research on Liberian diplomatic history on the one hand, and probing the dark mist which hung over the history of African peoples on the other.

Then I began to consider the life of an instructor in an American university: a good salary, a comfortable residence, reasonable perquisites, three months' holiday annually which might be used for further studies or for the purpose of travelling abroad. My salary was 1,000 dollars per annum. The university was responsible for my lodging, board and laundry, which therefore cost me nothing. Since these items could have amounted to about 720 dollars a year, I did not think it was a bad bargain. Whatever I earned was used in repaying my old debts, purchasing books and meeting my travelling and other incidental expenses.

Because the subjects of history and political science had human appeal and were challenging in their relevance to contemporary life, some of my classes were overfilled with zealous and eager students. There were fifty-six students in my class on international relations. Most of them were third- and fourth-year BA students. The class in international law drew forty senior upper class men. Political theory from Plato to the present drew twenty-five senior students who were majoring in political science; labour problems and the seminar in Aframerican business drew nineteen advanced students.

When I reminisce on the past, I feel happy that some of the 'freshies' who were tutored by me and encouraged in the

study of political science, studied law elsewhere after graduation at Lincoln University and are now practising attorneys. I have in mind Cornelius McDougald, Barrington Parker and Waddy. McDougald attended my inauguration. Waddy is now a municipal judge in Washington, DC. Others, like Tomlinson Todd, broke new ground in broadcasting, while others have gone to their homes either in Africa or in the West Indies or in Canada, and are playing an active part in the social reformation of their communities. Dosumu Johnson, then a student from Sierra Leone, is now Adviser on African Affairs in Liberia.

Realising that it would cost me a lot of money to fulfil the residence requirements for the doctorate, I decided to capitalise on my research on Liberia and abandon studies for the PH D, since I could not possibly earn enough within the limited time at my disposal. This resulted in the change of the title of my original thesis to *Liberia in World Politics*. Two factors were responsible for my decision. First, the international community were doing their best to discredit the Republic of Liberia in the family of nations (labour for the Spanish island of Fernando Po was being recruited in Liberia by dubious means), and I felt that a book which dealt academically with Liberian diplomacy could aid in stemming the rising tide of international intrigue against that black republic. Secondly, I was becoming home-sick, and whenever I received West African papers like the *Gold Coast Spectator*, *Sierra Leone Guardian*, *Nigerian Daily Times*, *The Comet*, *Nigeria Gazette*, *Nigerian Daily Telegraph*, *West African Nationhood*, *Sunday Digest*, I longed for home.

I thought of the opportunities I would have in America if I obtained the PH D and had a lifelong job of teaching and inspiring young people, rubbing shoulders with the best brains of the world, and hobnobbing in the academic cloister. I also thought of the difficulties facing my people in Africa: their inability to appreciate their unlimited opportunities; their ignorance of their latent giant's strength; and their innocence of the fact that their homeland seemed to them a paradise contrasted with the homeland of their rulers who lived in the temperate zones, where life was one continuous struggle for existence and survival.

I took into consideration the experiences of some African scholars who had previously found themselves in the same dilemma as myself. I thought of Kwegyir Aggrey of the Gold Coast, who spent twenty-two years teaching and preaching after his graduation from Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina. I thought of Professor Orishatukeh Faduma of Sierra Leone, who also taught in the school system of North Carolina for over twenty years. And I remembered my contemporary, Professor Ross F. Lohr, of Sierra Leone, who was then lecturing in education at Hampton Institute in Virginia. These men had made names in the academic field, to the glory of Africa.

Then I made my decision to return to Africa. I was ready to continue suffering personal inconvenience, if need be, in order to do for Africa what that continent needed for a renaissance in thought and action. My problem was how to secure employment to enable me to make this dream come true. Motivated by an inner force which had enabled me to succeed thus far, I was resolute in my determination to press forward towards a new Africa.

3. THE REALITIES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

It was Frank Buchman who once said, 'People everywhere are trying to find the good road that will lead them to security.' It was in 1947 that he made this remarkable statement. Two years later he elaborated by adding: 'What man wants is security: a hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world. The bottleneck is that people say that human nature cannot change. But human nature does change, and the nature of nations can change too.'

At the climax of my academic adventure in America, I realised 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.

My problem was to find the good road that would lead me to economic security. Before winning the academic honours which adorned my brow, I had had a foretaste of the diffi-



7. Reception for author by Onitsha Improvement Union in Lagos, on his return from the U.S.A., November 1934.



8. The author's marriage to Flora O. Ogoegbunam, April 4, 1936.
Seated on the author's right is his sister, Mrs Cecilia Arinze.

culties that would confront an African intellectual, educated abroad and desirous of serving his country alongside his European counterpart. I had applied to the British Colonial Office for appointment in the Education Department of Nigeria, preferring to be seconded to 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'. I submitted that in case there was no higher appointment available in the Education Department, then I should be considered for any appointment in the Secretariats or the Police Department. A reply informed me that my letter had been forwarded to the Governor of Nigeria for necessary action.

Later, I was privately informed, that I would be offered appointment as an assistant master at King's College for £90 per annum. I thought that it would be ridiculous and a waste of my time abroad if I were to return home and accept an inferior appointment which did no credit to me or to my race. If I did accept it, a dangerous precedent for other Africans would be established. Without hearing officially from the Nigerian Government, I withdrew my application with the excuse that the Phelps-Stokes Fund had awarded me a scholarship to gain more academic distinctions.

Also, I had previously written a straight-from-the-heart letter to my boyhood hero, Herbert Macaulay, pleading that he employ me in the *Lagos Daily News* or in the Nigerian National Democratic Party. I submitted that he should give me the opportunity to use my university training to reorganise the NNDF along modern lines.

The following are the pertinent extracts from my letter to Herbert Macaulay, dated April 30, 1929, from 'African Klub', Howard University, Washington DC:

'... With respect to my philosophy, I believe in the sanctity of human freedom, and I am prone to be more pragmatic. . . .

'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.

'I believe in the dissemination of light to my people, leaving them to find their own way. . . .

'I believe, sir, that you need my services. I also believe that Nigeria and Africa need me as a budding leader. I believe in action for the good of the public.

'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.

'I esteem Gandhism, but unfortunately, I am not fully convinced that Gandhism is the refuge of minority races.

'On the other hand, I adore Garveyism—let us grant that his approach was fantastic and utopian—nevertheless, the philosophy of Garveyism, with its elements of race pride, race consciousness, nationalism and its correlant of economic stability, appeals to the modern political enthusiast, who keeps his head clear and steers away from chauvinism or ethnocentrism; for it will aid in ameliorating various political, economic, social and other problems which afflict this modern age. . . .

'I respect the King and will continue to do so on my return. 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.

'Nevertheless, I am returning semi-Gandhic, semi-Garveyistic, non-chauvinistic, semi-ethnocentric, with a love for every one, of every clime on God's earth.'

Not having received any reply from my boyhood hero, I decided to communicate to certain Nigerian financiers and banks which might be interested in my business proposition. In my letter I explained that I was 'busily mapping out my business plans, but needed substantial capital with a view to realising my dreams'. The capital I needed, I submitted, was £5,000.

Parts of my letter read as follows:

'I plan to publish a modern, non-partisan daily newspaper and a monthly magazine of high grade quality. This will entail efficient organisation, business technique, plus the utilisation of an up-to-date machinery for printing, linotyping, lithographing and picture engraving.

'It is my sincere desire to revolutionise West African journalism. You will agree with me that, in this instance, we are still centuries behind the modern world.

'Supplementing the above, I desire to establish as a collateral to my newspaper venture a public library in Lagos and a few provincial centres on a purely commercial basis at first, and

gradually withdrawing the same for purpose of philanthropy, that is, making them free for all. . . .

Neither of the two African financiers immediately replied to my request. The London branch of the banking firm replied, under date of September, 12 1929, as follows:

'Your proposal that the bank should grant a loan of £5,000 to enable you to establish a publishing and library business at Lagos is not one which is attractive, and it appears to my Directors that a new venture of this kind is one which should be supported by the provision of actual capital.

'If you do succeed in making arrangements to carry out your plan, I hope you will be able to make it a real commercial success.'

The insurance company also replied in the negative. Then I made efforts to interest some people of substance to be interested in aiding me to start a printing and publishing business. Some of them replied discouraging me from daring to be a journalist, in view of the pitfalls surrounding that profession in West Africa. Some did not reply at all, But I made up my mind that no matter what happened I would see my way through and that I would yet found a printing and publishing business which should be worthy of the name.

Meanwhile, I was a very disappointed young man. I felt discomfited at the nonchalance and lack of interest of those who were wealthy and were not prepared to render financial help in a commercial venture of this nature. Thus I became disgusted with man's social economy and modern economic society. The truth was that I was in mental confusion.

By the end of September 1930 I had received a letter from P. J. C. Thomas, of 1 Williams Street, Lagos, in reply to my request for advice and assistance regarding my future career in printing and publishing. His letter was so inspiring that I must confess it quickened my decision to return to Africa. It reads in part:

'I would suggest however that you try and get employed in some first-class newspaper establishment to acquire practical experience and also to provide from your earnings the nucleus for obtaining the plant you wish to come out with to set up in your homeland.

'I am very glad indeed that you have persevered thus far. Rome was not built in a day and wishes are not horses; but every man, by patience, hard struggle, doubting nothing, and

asking God to direct his wish and increase his faith in Him over what he struggles after, eventually attains it.

'I have said here "asking God to direct his wish" that his wish may be in accordance with God's plan and not merely his own human desire, which he does attain if he struggles persistently for it, believing in it, but then he attains it only to find it would have been better for him without it.

'That is how I have struggled through life daily, from my earliest consciousness and from nothing, and still struggling on through this life bristling with thorns—not roses. If roses are to be reaped at last, a man's journey through rugged, winding, narrow paths of service . . . is to be for God's glory and not merely to please himself or mapped out merely to win applause of a crowd who suffer with us in the end.

'A good deal of that is what our race is after.

'God grant that you will strive against that and so help truly for the redemption of our race and mankind by our own uplift.

'With sincerest good wishes,

'Yours truly,

'PETER J. C. THOMAS.'

Liberia was then the cynosure of international searchlight. In view of my studies in its diplomacy, I had learned to appreciate that republic as a growing factor in contemporary international affairs. In a letter dated January 27, 1931, I had applied to that republic for appointment in its diplomatic service, at home or abroad, in these words:

'I am a graduate of Lincoln University, *cum laude*, and I expect to be conferred the degree of Master of Arts, *in cursu*, in June 1931.

'At present, I am engaged here as an Instructor in Political Science. . . .

'My original home is Nigeria, British West Africa. My age is twenty-six and I am a Christian. My interest in the field of scholarship is the science of government and contemporary politics.

'During the summer of last year; I studied the principles and problems of international law and diplomacy at Columbia University, New York.

'Ever since I was old enough to appreciate political realities, I have always believed that Liberia is the only hope for young Africans, politically speaking.

'I still believe that Liberia is the only country, excepting Abyssinia, where the sincere Negro could aid towards a reconstruction policy, to prove to the skeptical world the political acumen of the Negro. . . .

'I have completed one-third of my studies in American Law and Procedure under the aegis of La Salle Law School of Chicago,

and I also have a diploma in the theory and practice of journalism.

'I am enclosing herewith my photograph and copies of my letters of reference. May I add, Your Excellency, that I shall be available for appointment after June 1, 1931, when my teaching contract shall have expired. . . .

In a letter dated March 25, 1931, signed by John W. H. McClain, 'Colonel, Liberian Army, Secretary and Aide-de-Camp', my application was answered as follows:

'I am directed by His Excellency the President to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of Feb. 27.

'The application made therein has been carefully considered by His Excellency, who is agreeably impressed by the excellent references from noted divines and educationists which you attached for his information.

'His Excellency regrets, however, that the present financial depression in Liberia will not allow him to utilize your services, as under more prosperous circumstances, he would be pleased to do.

'Perhaps I may be allowed to observe that the Government would much prefer to appoint to diplomatic and consular positions abroad, Liberian citizens thoroughly familiar with conditions at home; or failing them, to those members of the race anywhere in the world, whose accomplishments and love of race would entitle them to this consideration.

'Lacking the financial ability to do this, however, the procedure of appointing wealthy and qualified foreigners, interested in the country and desirous of the honour, is the only alternative.

'With assurances of my highest esteem. . . .'

Indeed, the letter was very challenging, For once in my life I realised that I was a 'foreigner' even in Africa. I also realised that, unless I was wealthy, I could not enter the diplomatic service of this African state, the only opportunity of its kind, outside Ethiopia, for any person who has pursued my line of study. Therefore I vowed to study Liberian history and diplomacy, and to understand them in such detail, without ever stepping on the shores of Liberia, that Liberians themselves would marvel at this feat!

But practically I was in a dilemma: whether, in view of these discouragements, I should return to practise journalism or make teaching my life's work. I realised that I could not claim to be a professional educationist, since I was not a diplomate in education, despite the fact that I had almost

reached the top of the ladder of education by virtue of my undergraduate training and association with the teaching faculty of an accredited university.

On second thoughts, I re-evaluated the opportunities in journalism, a profession which is a key to all professions of the whole world. Monarchs and heads of state and government, statesmen and diplomats, lawyers and politicians, physicians and surgeons, engineers and surveyors, architects and valuers, farmers and agriculturists, business executives and bankers, teachers and educators, and other professionals, depend upon the journalist in order to gain the goodwill of the people, who are the mainspring of the professions and vocations, since their patronage enables them to live and enjoy life.

True, I could claim to be a professional journalist; nevertheless, I had the mortification to realise that, despite my academic qualifications, I was, from the point of view of practical economics a serf. Then it dawned on me that it might be impossible to make my way in Africa, journalistically speaking, unless I was in position to purchase my own printing machinery and equipment or unless I was lucky to persuade any businessman to underwrite the purchase.

I now thought of contacting the missions in America and Europe, to see if they could give me the opportunity to add whatever humble contributions I might make to the sum-total of social progress in Africa. I confided in my Pittsburgh friend, the Rev. Dr Lamb, and asked for his advice. He suggested that I should write to the various missionary bodies to seek for an opportunity to be of selfless service to my people. I wrote, and the lesson I learnt from all the replies gave me a rude shock and made me reassess the role of missions in the contemporary history of the African continent.

The Methodists of Britain hedged. The Anglicans of Britain dodged. The Presbyterians of America gave me the cold shoulder. The Baptists of America referred me to several 'conventions', north and south of the Mason-Dixon Line. At long last, Rev. Lamb informed me that the United Free Church of Scotland (Presbyterians) had offered me the post of Supervisor of Schools in Calabar Province, at a salary of £120 per annum; but there was no board and lodging attached to the emolument.

I suggested to Rev. Lamb to plead on my behalf that, being an old student of the Hope Waddell Institute at Calabar, I knew that the European and West Indian missionaries were provided with accommodation. Therefore, accommodation should be provided and I would take care of my board. I also wished to be assured that the tenure of my office would be secure. Even though missionary life was one of sacrifice, yet I wanted to know that provision would be made for me intermittently to increase in stature financially.

The reply was not encouraging: the offer was for me to accept or reject, without modification, so naturally I rejected it. After considering all these factors, I decided to try the missions in Liberia. The American missionary bodies which operated there were Methodists and Episcopalians. They told me bluntly that they preferred native Liberians, because they would work at very cheap salaries; moreover, they understood their own people better.

I then wrote a very frank letter to Reverend Fraser, Principal of Prince of Wales School, Achimota, pouring out my soul and explaining my desire to be of service anywhere in Africa. In writing to Achimota, I was aware of the experience of Dr Aggrey; not only had his American academic qualifications been scorned by his colleagues there, but he was appointed *Assistant Vice-Principal* of Achimota.

Reverend Fraser replied that it was the policy of Achimota to give preference to Gold Coast nationals, especially old Achimota students who had gone to Britain on scholarships for study in British universities. As I understood later when I resided in Accra, this statement was misleading, because three Gold Coast scholars, one of whom was BA (Dunelm), another a BSC with honours in agriculture (Oxon.), and another PHD (London), were refused the opportunity to teach at Achimota.

However, I decided to return to Africa and establish a school of my own, which should be a nucleus for a university of Nigeria. I had two plans: first, if I could persuade philanthropically-minded Americans to supply me with ample funds, then I would proceed to Monrovia and found a university of Liberia which would throw its doors open to students from all parts of Africa. Otherwise, I would return to Nigeria and establish a

university of Nigeria, relying on the patriotism of Nigerians to consummate the scheme.

I made plans for the establishment of the university of my dream. I reasoned that with the university graduates which West Africa had produced, it was possible to found a university in West Africa where several faculties could be incorporated. From this line of reasoning I decided that the university should have the following faculties: liberal arts, agriculture, commerce, dentistry, education, engineering, graduate studies, journalism, law, medicine, music, pharmacy, and technology.

Such a university, I soliloquised, should thus be able to confer the following degrees locally: BA, B SC, B ED, B AGRIC., B COM, LL B, B PHARM, B LITT, B TH, MA, M SC, M ED, M AGRIC, M COM, LL M, M PHARM, M LITT, M TH, PH D.

My next problem was to secure professors, lecturers, a library, laboratory equipment, buildings and land; then I stumbled on a unique way of realising my dream. As I pondered how money could be raised so as to establish a university either in Liberia or in Nigeria, it occurred to me to study the technique adopted by Wilberforce University of Xenia, Ohio. This university conducted a campaign over the forty-eight states of the USA and had a big book, entitled 'Wilberforce University Roll of Honour'.

In this book, donors gave whatever they could, but not less than one dollar each. Space was provided in the book for names and addresses of the donors to be incorporated for posterity to appreciate those who had sacrificed in order to prepare a heritage for others. Through this means Wilberforce University raised a substantial sum which enabled it to expand its plant and faculty. It was also able to extend its curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

I calculated that if one million Nigerians subscribed one pound each on the average, then one million pounds would be available as a permanent endowment for the university which I pictured. With this money deposited in a reliable bank, and with an interest of 5 per cent, the university should have an annual income of £50,000 to be administered by a self-perpetuating board of trustees.

My next problem was how to have a working capital to make necessary preliminary arrangements for obtaining land;

erecting buildings; negotiating with Africans, West Indians, Aframericans, Europeans, Americans, Asians, Australians, etc., to serve as professors, lecturers and demonstrators; constructing a library building and furnishing it with books; and providing completely equipped laboratories for the science courses and furnishing them with apparatus.

I decided to appeal to Americans in raising capital for the preliminary expenses, which I estimated at about £50,000, to be supplemented by an endowment fund and the fees payable by the students. I calculated that on this basis it was possible for students fees to bring in a total of, say, £20,000 a year, if five hundred students enrolled in the university. Fortified with this desire to revolutionise African intellectual life, I wrote a circular of appeal to some American friends, explaining to them my ideas in these words:

'My dear friend:

'May I enlist your support in the cause of African education? For eight years (1925-33) I have laboured and struggled in the United States to secure an education for service to those who are not privileged as I have been.

'My tutelage is invaluable and I feel that no greater service could I render to African youth than to share with them the joys of my new life in the west.

'Towards the realisation of my aims and dreams, it is proposed to establish an institution in West Africa for the intellectual and manual education of Africans, male and female.

'Unfortunately, the education of Africans has been regarded as a problem. This is due to the fact that the type of training which the average African receives tends to alienate him from his indigenous environment.

'Invariably, he becomes a misfit. He despises African institutions and glorifies the social and material cultures of other peoples.

'There is need in West Africa for an educational centre which would select the more constructive concepts of the west to modify the outlook of the African, based on African culture and social organisation.

'Therefore, it is planned to establish an institution whose fees would be reduced to the minimum in order to popularise education in West Africa. It will begin as an elementary school, gradually to develop into university status.

'In order to carry out this programme it is necessary to raise a working capital. The other funds will be contributed by native Africans and interested friends.

'This appeal comes to you as a friend of popular education.

Will you be kind enough to contribute whatever you may feel convenient to offer, to aid this ambitious plan of the African to educate himself, in Africa?

'For reference, I suggest Rev. Dr W. H. Johnson, President of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania.

'Respectfully yours,

'BEN N. AZIKIWE,
'Instructor in Political Science, Lincoln University,
Pennsylvania.'

I received many replies. Some were filled with platitudes commending me to the care of God and hoping that my people would appreciate my great dream. Some friends sent money; while some pledged to help if and when the native Africans were able to help themselves. In view of the fact that I collected less than £40 cash within six months, I was painfully discouraged. So I was obliged to refund the money collected to the several donors. Thus ended my pet scheme for the founding of a university of Nigeria.

Having been rebuffed in my dream for the establishment of a university, I turned my attention towards earning a livelihood elsewhere in Africa. I wrote to His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, and offered my services as an expert in political science, to assist in safeguarding his territory from aggression. Having noted the lavishness and splendour which characterised his coronation in 1930, I was apprehensive that certain interested colonial powers might have an eye on this great empire.

I applied to work in the Ethiopian Foreign Office at Addis Ababa to enable me to try to interest Japan in fostering economic and military co-operation with Ethiopia. His Majesty regretted that it was not possible to offer me a position with the Ethiopian Government and wished me success in my endeavours to serve Africa.

I was flabbergasted because I knew that both the Ethiopian and Liberian Governments had in their employ some European and American advisers who earned attractive salaries. I was aware that the Ethiopian Government engaged a Swedish colonel as its military adviser. I knew also that the Financial Adviser of Liberia and his staff, together with certain high officials in the Treasury Department, were non-Liberians; and that their salaries were princely.

However, I received another personal letter from Dr Edwin Barclay, acting President of Liberia, who encouraged me to continue my researches. He made personal and material sacrifices to encourage me and to demonstrate that he was interested in patronising my efforts; he also graciously granted me permission to dedicate my book to him, and assisted me by instructing his Department of State to make certain official documents accessible to me, in order that I should not be inaccurate in some of my observations and conclusions.

I thought of any other country which would be interested in my line of work. Turkey, then undergoing a revolution under the leadership of Kemal Atatürk, came to my mind. So I applied to that country, hoping to emulate a Nigerian soldier who was said to have made good in the Turkish army and lived there as a highly respected military officer. The reply was the usual regrets and wishes of success elsewhere.

At twenty-nine years of age I found myself in a quandary: either to forget about selfless service to mother Africa and seek to live in luxury for selfish aggrandisement; or to return to Africa and possibly live in penury. I decided on the latter course. Steeled by my experiences in America, I was prepared to bear my cross alone, hoping that providence and history would ultimately vindicate my decision.

My education, hitherto, had fitted me for three particular professions: teaching, statecraft and journalism. As a teacher in America, I could be satisfied and happy, but as a teacher in Africa, I could imagine, if not predict, the ignominious experiences awaiting me, especially as I was without funds. Also I was sensible enough to realise that, outside of Ethiopia and Liberia, no African political scientist could expect to have an administrative position, except in the United States or the Secretariat of the League of Nations (to which, by the way, I also applied, receiving a reply of 'no vacancy'), because the colonies were not expected to be a haven for the African intelligentsia.

Instead of passing peremptory judgment on those who discouraged me from securing employment under their auspices, mature judgment dictates the reasonableness of appreciating the factors responsible for my plight.

My prospective employers fell under five categories: the

civil services of the colonies and protectorates of British West Africa; the diplomatic and administrative services of independent African states and Turkey; the Secretariat of the League of Nations; the newspaper enterprises in Nigeria; and the missionary organisations in Nigeria and their overseas head offices.

The civil services of British West Africa were controlled then by a European élite which rigidly closed the doors of opportunity for the employment of indigenous West African university graduates, some of whom were engaged only under the most humiliating conditions of service and at parsimonious salaries, on the basis of racial discrimination and segregation. Therefore, the main reason for refusing me suitable and respectable employment in this sector of the public service of my country and in my part of the world, was not because I did not have a suitable qualification or because I was not a desirable character, but because of the colour bar. In other words, this attitude was an aspect of economic imperialism, whose policy was to create and restrict higher employment opportunities in the colonial territories exclusively for nationals of the colonising powers.

The diplomatic and administrative services of Liberia, Ethiopia and Turkey were also reserved exclusively for the nationals of those countries. This could be appreciated, provided enough qualified nationals were available and provided there was no element of discrimination. Otherwise, it would be fair to conclude that, in Africa at any rate, such a 'closed door' policy, while desirable from a purely nationalist standpoint, would fall short of what people of African descent, living under colonial rule, could expect from their 'brothers'. Clearly this was a policy of economic nationalism and, to the extent that I have analysed it, it was most undesirable at that time.

As for the Secretariat of the League of Nations, the only plausible excuse was that it was a creation of colonialism, as a result of factors responsible for the remote and immediate causes of the World War of 1914-19. Thus, to employ a colonial in the administrative set-up of the Secretariat of the League was bound to embarrass the colonial powers. One could imagine a man like me working under the auspices of the League and coming into contact with, say, Lord Lugard in the Mandates Commission. Not only would his lordship have blushed,

but His Majesty's Government of the day would have blustered in accordance with the conventions of those times.

The newspaper enterprises in Nigeria were operated on a shoe-string. Their circulation was very small. The weeklies circulated one to three thousand copies and they cost from one penny to threepence each. The dailies circulated about one thousand at a penny each, except for the *Nigerian Daily Times* which hit five to six thousand. Advertisements were few and hardly remunerative. Therefore, due to economic stringency, the newspapers could not afford to engage highly qualified executive staff.

Nevertheless, this was no excuse for the unbusinesslike behaviour of some newspaper executives in not replying to letters addressed to them and informing applicants of note that there was no suitable vacancy to which they could be appointed. The irony in this situation is that highly qualified staff is very desirable if newspaper publishing is to be made a profitable concern. Otherwise, it stays in a rut.

The missionary organisations depended upon the charitable disposition of their adherents and supporters to keep alive. Their funds were strictly limited to collections and donations received from their converts, most of whom lived under conditions of abject poverty. Naturally, the economic policy of the missions had to be austere, especially in those days when colonial governments provided very meagre grants for schools and none at all for hospitals.

However, the missions should have taken into consideration that some of their products were bound to become university graduates, who would like to serve them and thus demonstrate the efficacy of the training they had received from the missions. As a product of missionary schools, I would not have liked to work in an atmosphere where my colleagues would be employed under better conditions of service, simply because they were expatriates. I realise, of course, that expatriates make certain intangible sacrifices and so should be provided with accommodation; but surely some sort of accommodation could also be provided for their indigenous colleagues. Now it is being done; but in those days it was not, and the missions thus lost the services of some of their most devoted sons and possibly daughters.

Now that I was faced with disappointment almost everywhere, I questioned, in my righteous indignation, the mentality of the African and why, after all these years of our contact with western peoples, we had not seen fit to create an economic heritage for posterity. I reasoned that if our fathers had pondered fully what economic insecurity implied for the African, they would have made provision to utilise trained Africans with character as soon as they were available.

Then it dawned on me that one of my great tasks on my return to Africa would be to lay a solid foundation towards economic independence. I resolved to make preparations to absorb trained Africans so that they would no longer be confronted with the ogre of unemployment when they returned to Africa from abroad, as was my unfortunate experience. Thus I made a vow that my psychic motivation in Africa must be essentially economic; and that, as soon as I found it possible, I should begin on a moderate scale to create employment opportunities to enable Africans to stand economically on their feet, instead of crawling on their bellies.

On the last day of the year 1933, the realities of unemployment inspired me to make a new year resolution in the form of a solemn vow, made up of five points. Here is the text:

'Having ardently sought for the opportunity to better my lot in life;

'Having bravely crossed the Atlantic Ocean in quest of knowledge and wisdom;

'Having passed through the crucible of unemployment and worked hard as an unskilled labourer and a menial worker;

'Having worked and whistled my way through the university, partly because of my faith, perseverance and diligence, and partly on account of the charitable disposition of kind-hearted human beings;

'Having succeeded in realising my dreams for academic honours, because of my supreme determination, resoluteness and will power, in spite of man-made handicaps and other imponderables of human life;

'I, Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe, hereby make this solemn vow, before God and man:

'First, that, henceforth, I shall dedicate my life to the emancipation of the continent of Africa from the shackles of imperialism, and to the redemption of my country from the manacles of foreign rule.

'Secondly, that in order 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.

'Thirdly, that, henceforth, I shall utilise my earned income to secure my enjoyment of a high standard of living and also to give a helping hand to the needy.

'Fourthly, that, henceforth, I shall be charitably disposed towards all human beings and do all I can to be philanthropic so as to make life less irksome for the underprivileged.

'Finally, that, henceforth, I shall strive, to my utmost, to live as a true Christian: forgiving those who offend me, forgetting the evils perpetrated against me, and praying fervently to God to forgive my sins and to forget my shortcomings.

'Made at Houston Hall, Lincoln University, December 31, 1933.

'BENJAMIN NNAMDI AZIKIWE.

4. BENEFACTORS WHO CAME TO MY RESCUE

It was now clear that all regular avenues for employment conventionally open to indigenous university graduates in West Africa were closed to me. The civil services of Nigeria, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone had no berth for me. None of the missions operating in West Africa needed my services, excepting the Presbyterians, whose conditions of service were not equitable. The European mercantile establishments were out of the question for, in those days, they had no use for university graduates.

Two choices were open: either to start a newspaper business of my own or to seek employment as a newspaper editor from one of the locally-established newspapers, on the one hand; or to seek employment as a graduate teacher in any school that would be prepared to accommodate me at a salary it could afford. In view of the experiences of Ikoli, Braithwaite and Savage, it was possible for any journalist to start a newspaper, without necessarily owning the plant and machinery used for printing such a newspaper. I tried some of the local printers in Lagos and they gave me quotations: it was rather expensive, and I was not certain that I would be able to raise the initial capital.

Since the teaching vocation was regulated by the Education Ordinance under the control of the colonial administration,

where no Nigerian was deemed to be qualified or experienced to hold a position of trust or responsibility, it meant that one was bound to be confronted with humiliating offers, bearing in mind the sad experience of Paul O. Cardoso with his MSc (Hons. in Agriculture) degree from Cornell University.

Thus I turned towards my original profession, journalism: that which had first drawn me to the United States. I mused that if I could not afford to purchase the printing plant and machinery, I could still earn an honest living as a working journalist, at least as an executive journalist of an editor's calibre. Prudence, therefore, dictated that, other things being equal, this was the only opportunity I had of breaking ground for the assault on unemployment and potential poverty which stalked my way and threatened to vitiate the realisation of the solemn vow I had made as my new year's resolution for 1934.

Having applied to the *Lagos Daily News*, *Nigerian Daily Telegraph*, *Lagos Weekly Record*, and the *Nigerian Pioneer* for an opportunity to serve, either as editor or deputy editor, I awaited for response from Nigeria. The replies came. Not one of them had any suitable vacancy for me. The *Lagos Daily News*, for which I had special affection, because the magic name of my boyhood hero was attached to it, did not even acknowledge the receipt of my application. Disappointed by my own people, I decided to try my luck in the Gold Coast, which I did successfully.

With these sad experiences in mind, I wrote an application to Mr A. J. Ocansey, proprietor of the Ocansey Stores, Palladium Press, *Gold Coast Spectator*, Accra Cinema Palladium, and cinema houses at Nsawam, Suhum, Koforidua, Kumasi, Sekondi and Cape Coast. I advised Mr Ocansey that a daily newspaper, edited by me, ought to be a profitable venture for him financially, and that I had confidence in my professional ability to make good.

I knew that the only way to impress any financier, whether African or non-African, was to show how profits could be made at less expense; and I lost no time in using high-pressure salesmanship to sell this idea to Mr Ocansey. This is one practical application of business psychology! Once he was convinced that the enterprise would be financially successful, and that it would entail minimal expenditure, the next thing

any financier thinks of is whether he can obtain economic labour in order to peg recurrent costs down to a reasonable level.

As if I were a prophet, I got a favourable letter from Mr Ocansey, welcoming my suggestions and assuring me that he was prepared to engage me to edit a new daily newspaper at a salary of ten pounds monthly, without room and board, plus 10 per cent on the annual net profit of the newspaper. I was expected to pay my passage from the United States to the Gold Coast.

I was at first shocked by the offer, but remembering that this was one favourable response out of thirty applications for jobs, I cautioned myself to be discreet. Appreciating the economic problems which faced most Africans after their education abroad, I made up my mind that unless I was able to prove my worth practically by gaining the confidence of the West African public, I could not impose unreasonable terms on this African financier.

However, I replied to Mr Ocansey and suggested that the £10 monthly emolument was tentatively accepted until my arrival in Accra when I would discuss commission on circulation. He replied by cable confirming my terms and urging me to return to Africa immediately so that the newspaper might begin publication. As I began to make preparations for returning home, tongues started to wag throughout West Africa about my pending arrival to assume the editorial chair of a daily newspaper in Accra.

I must confess that certain factors had tended to alienate my affections from journalism during my stay at Lincoln University. Most of my friends in Freetown, Accra and Sekondi, and in Nigeria, had warned me not to return to Africa as a journalist because of the hazards involved. Some referred to illustrious names in the annals of West African journalism whose reputations had been besmirched because of their efforts in a thankless cause.

I was also warned to remember that in West Africa an editor had only one foot in his office; his other foot was always in prison. I welcomed these suggestions; but I reasoned that if our fathers, in the light of their knowledge, had failed as journalists, that did not mean that their children would

necessarily follow suit. Then I argued also that if our fathers, as journalists, lived in an atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion with the European officials and merchants, that was a challenge for their successors to adopt a policy of conciliation and co-operation.

Going to prison meant nothing to me, I concluded, because if that was a criterion at all, then it was a symbol of greatness, since the greatest leaders of the world were former prisoners: even Jesus of Nazareth was imprisoned. Thus I decided to return to Africa and practise journalism on the Gold Coast, which had given me the opportunity to prove my worth in life, undeterred by the real and imaginary difficulties awaiting me in my tropical homeland.

Meanwhile, I had written a letter to Dr Thomas Jesse Jones, Educational Director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, informing him that I had decided to return to Africa. He replied me as follows:

'Dear Mr Azikiwe:

'Your letter of February 20th has awaited my return from the south. I congratulate you for the continued success in your studies.

'I am very glad to know that you are planning to return to Nigeria. Service in Africa is, of course, your ultimate objective. I wonder whether you have been corresponding with the Government officials as to possibilities of service?'

I replied and informed him that I had written to three British colonies seeking for higher appointment in the education or administrative departments and that all had replied in the negative. I also narrated my experiences with the Liberian and Ethiopian governments. Then I added a sort of valediction in these words:

'I have come to the end of the road. I now feel that I could move from place to place without hanging my head in shame.

'I am now a free man and no longer a debtor, in all respects. You see, Dr Jones, I had planned to leave last summer [1933] for West Africa.

'But I was indebted not only to the university but to certain financial organisations whose loans had enabled me to complete my studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and also last summer's course at Columbia University.

'Now that my outstanding obligations are almost cleared,

I feel I should leave the PH D will-o'-the-wisp until I am both financially and physically able to undertake the same without undue inconvenience.

'I am planning to leave the United States by the middle of August, this summer, bound for British West Africa. Whilst on the spot, I will adjust myself accordingly.'

Then Dr Jones asked me to give him more facts regarding my academic vita and also my aims and objectives in life. I replied quite frankly in these words:

'I have been a student in the United States since October 1, 1925.

'During this period I have studied at Howard, Lincoln, Pennsylvania and Columbia Universities. I hold the AB and AM degrees from Lincoln, and the M SC from the University of Pennsylvania.

'I have completed 23 points out of the 30 points for the PH D degree at Columbia. Financial difficulties necessitated my withdrawal from Columbia.

'My immediate aim is to aid in bringing about mutual understanding between the people of Nigeria and the British Government.

'Towards this end, I have thought of returning home to establish a private (educational) institution. For financial and practical reasons, this has not matured; nevertheless, it might be of advantage to join hands with the efforts of the government and missions.

'This seems to be practicable because such a connection should benefit the Africans. In the past, I must confess that I had doubted the possibility of such a programme. Probably the flame of youth was responsible.

'But with the passing of the years and as one grows older, it becomes evident that the only practical and workable way is the co-operation of the kind advocated by the late Booker T. Washington.

'I sincerely believe that I will co-operate fully and can be used as a means of better understanding between the indigenous Africans of my country and the various agencies of the British Government and missions in Nigeria.'

Dr Jones was clearly discouraged that, despite the efforts to influence colonial administrators to co-operate with educated Africans of good character by offering them higher appointments, when they were qualified and there were vacancies, it had not been possible. When I told him that I had arranged to assume the editorship of what later became *The African Morning Post*, he was discomfited and pooh-poohed the idea, on the ground that Africa needed me more as an educator than as a

journalist. He said he would write a letter to Mr E. R. J. Hussey, Director of Education in Nigeria, a copy of which he sent to me, thus:

'Dear Mr Hussey:

'May I take the liberty of writing to you on behalf of a very fine student from Nigeria who has been in this country for a number of years and who has achieved a very fine record in the schools and colleges at which he has studied.

'Unfortunately, I do not have the details of his record before me, and I am writing hurriedly in order that we may have some idea of possible positions in the educational service of Nigeria.

'The main facts are as follows:

'Name: Ben N. Azikiwe, a native of the Ibo tribe, born in or near Onitsha where his father still lives.

'Officers of the Church Missionary Society can doubtless give you information as to his boyhood and early training.

'He came to this country and has studied at several schools and colleges. A year or two ago he received the degree of MA from the University of Pennsylvania.

'For about two years he has been an instructor at Lincoln University. During his service at Lincoln he has been carrying on his studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

'He has a fine physique, a very pleasing personality, a keen mind, and is altogether a man of unusual promise.

'It seems very important that Mr Azikiwe shall return to his native country at the end of this school year.

'Will you please let me know at your early convenience whether you have any position to offer to Mr Azikiwe?

'With appreciation of your co-operation,
I am, very sincerely,

'THOMAS JESSE JONES.'

Whilst I appreciated the interest of Dr Jones in me and his efforts to dissuade me from embarking upon a journalistic career, yet I predicted that Mr Hussey (or rather the Education Department) would not encourage the staffing of its personnel with an educated African, in view of the distrust and suspicion of that species which then pervaded the atmosphere of colonial policy.

I told him that I had almost lost confidence in the colonial administrators when it came to the matter of fair play for the educated African, because racial factors influenced their policy. But I admitted that where a Governor and his immediate lieutenants were broad-minded enough to appreciate the rights

of the educated and the uneducated African, then it was possible for Africans to gain recognition without cringing and becoming eleemosynary. I added that, throughout Africa, the native who was educated in America was regarded with suspicion, and such persons were generally assumed to be disloyal and anti-British.

I reminded him that the scar of 1776 was to be likened to the differences between two friends: like chinaware, it might be patched up, but it was always visible. The scar of 1776 was the price the African who was educated in America was bound to pay for having dared to proceed to America where one could imbibe the spirit of 1776. While I admitted that an African who got his MA from Columbia University was an Assistant Director of Education in Freetown, yet I informed Dr Jones that this appointment was due to the personality of Mr Keigwin, Director of Education, Sierra Leone, who appreciated the merits of the American educational system as a basis for education in Africa.

I also remarked frankly that the late Dr Aggrey was welcomed to Achimota more because of his religious zeal and inter-racial philosophy than for his educational qualifications *per se*. Readers of his biography by Edwin Smith would bear me out on this particular point. Then I concluded by telling Dr Jones that, had Aggrey not accompanied him on the Phelps-Stokes Educational Commission to Africa, the chances were that he might have continued to teach at Livingstone College, unknown and probably unsung.

This impasse in the relationship of the educated African with colonial administrators made a deep impression on the mind of Dr Jones, especially when I predicted that Mr Hussey would reply in the negative, and when I told him that I had made up my mind to use my training in journalism for the re-education of our colonial administrators on the necessity for discarding distrust and suspicion and prejudice in favour of genuine inter-racial co-operation, which should be based on mutual respect, fellowship and goodwill.

I was now expecting to have my book on Liberia published. When my publishers now informed me that they would rush the printing so as to make the complete proofs available for my approval within three months, I decided to spend the sum-

mer of 1934 in England for two reasons. First, I wanted to do three things: to read the proofs of my manuscript; to study Egyptology, almost at first hand, in the British Museum; and finally, to live in England, to appreciate British life and to try to understand the Briton.

During one of the university chapel hours at Lincoln University, when it was my turn to officiate, I selected the hymn 'God Moves in a Mysterious Way', and proceeded to exegete it as my morning message to the university congregation. I narrated a few incidents in my life to portray why I had decided to return to Africa. Then I challenged the students to return to their various homes in Virginia, New York, Missouri, Ohio, California, Montana, Idaho, Wisconsin, Georgia, Alabama, Trinidad, British Guiana, Alberta, Barbados, Nigeria, Gold Coast or Sierra Leone and begin the leavening process which must come in order to revolutionise the spiritual experience of nations.

It was a revolutionary address but it was couched in such language that, although it made my fellow lecturers blink, especially the elderly ones, I calmed them by suggesting that the way to realise spiritual revolution was to put the doctrine of the Nazarene into practice. After chapel, some of the students clustered round the campus and discussed some of the issues I had raised, especially my suggestion that the darker races were being faced with the stark reality that the practice of Christianity was basically racial. Some thought it was not correct, in view of the sacrifices of some missionaries, who forgot their racial classification in their dealings with the benighted souls of the backward peoples. Others thought that the inhumanities committed against the darker races constituted a breach of faith in the life and teachings of Jesus.

I was also subjected that morning to a barrage of questions after my lecture to a group of 'theologs' in my class on Christian sociology. This class consisted of graduate students who were studying for the degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology, most of whom already held the BA degree. The subject-matter of my class lecture was 'Possible Solutions to the Race Problem'. I had posited that the solutions confronting humanity in this respect were accommodation, assimilation or amalgamation.

Accommodation implied tolerance and a parallel bi-racial existence, based on mutual goodwill and friendship, with each race enjoying a separate existence. In other words, members of both races lived each in a world of their own; but when secondary group relationships made it necessary for both to come into contact, they accommodated themselves as separate entities.

Assimilation implied the super-imposition of the culture-complex of an alleged superior race over an alleged inferior race and ultimate disappearance of the native culture of the underdog race. In other words, assimilation enabled both races to modify their cultures and institutions, although their separate entities were not affected thereby.

Amalgamation implied the intermixture of the races so that the dominant characteristics of the one overshadowed and finally obliterated the recessive characteristics of the other. In other words, the destruction of racial barriers, socio-biologically, and the fusion of the races of mankind into one basic human race. These possible solutions would also involve possible racial conflicts.

Naturally, the lecture elicited criticisms, and the students were anxious to know why I posited that racial prejudice affected Christianity adversely. I lost no time in informing them that if Christians tolerated the existence of separate churches, cemeteries, railway coaches, buses, hospitals, theatres, hotels, restaurants, hostels, schools, colleges, universities, etc., according to racial affiliation, then there must be several gods and compartments in heaven to accommodate the several races of mankind. This would be heretical according to Christian beliefs, I submitted, since it was written: 'Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God' (Romans III. 29).

The students began to argue among themselves on the justice or otherwise of having racial discrimination and segregation among Christians in their communities. And I was satisfied that the candle had been lit! In the words of William Cowper:

'Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.'

In January 1934 I had successfully appealed to the Lincoln University authorities to grant me permission to offer a course of lectures entitled 'The Negro in History'.

The course drew seventy students and it was easily the most popular subject that semester in the university. In the cyclostyled syllabus, which I distributed to the students, the following constituted the exordium of the series of lectures.

- '(1) to present the history of the Negro on the basis of his past;
- '(2) to develop racial pride and consciousness in the role of the Negro, both in American life and in the stream of world history;
- '(3) to show the part played by the Negro during past civilisations in order to counteract the stereotyped attitude of critics as to the inconsequential nature of the Negro in history;
- '(4) to make a factual presentation of the achievements and accomplishments of Negroes (whether good, bad, or indifferent), treating the Negro as a human being and not as a problem of human society;
- '(5) to inspire racial self-respect and breathe ideals of manhood and the creative spirit in the Negro, with the hope that he will, in turn, inspire his posterity towards a realisation of the fact that his contemporary history depicts a decadent stage of his illustrious past.

'This course is not necessarily aimed primarily at alienating and isolating the Negro from the other races; the history course offered at other institutions of learning are mainly expositions and narratives of the exploits and achievements of the Caucasoid and Mongoloid groups.

'In order to hasten better inter-racial relationship in the world, a course of study on the role of the Negro in the stream of world history is an imperative necessity, at least to the "new Negro".'

'It is unnecessary for me to apologise for offering this course, which is a result of my researches in the fields of geology, archaeology, anthropology, Egyptology, and history; if European or American history is essential to the average Caucasoid because it affords a kaleidoscopic background of his past, then I see no reason why Negro history is not essential to the average Negroid. So woefully ignorant are Negroids and their Caucasoid friends with reference to the cultural influences of the Negro that such a course of studies is usually minimised, derided and ridiculed, so far as incorporating it in the university curriculum is concerned...'

Now that the second semester of Lincoln University was drawing to a close, I began to make arrangements for sailing, homeward bound, via London. Some of my students and

friends who were interested in me and my philosophy of life, apparently due to their contacts with me on the campus and in the lecture rooms, decided to give me a 'send-off' party. One evening I was asked by a member of the University Student Council to meet a group of students at Rendall Hall. I was surprised when I got there to find over a hundred students seated on chairs, couches and everything they could crowd on to.

Their president delivered a short address and reviewed my academic career in America and my efforts to instil in students those ideals which made for the cultivation of good character. On behalf of the student body of Lincoln University, he presented me with a Gladstone portmanteau and a briefcase to match. I was emotionally overcome and unable to speak. All I did was to express my gratitude to the students for their kind appreciation of my humble efforts. I ended in words like these:

'If, in the years to come, the seed which we are now planting should sprout and extend its branches towards the sections of the world to which we belong individually, then our efforts would not have been in vain.

'Give me the assurance, as I now give you mine, that, as long as you live, your supreme task would be to aid in the spiritual regeneration of mankind, and we would have played our part for our generation.

'God grant that as I leave the sacred precincts of Lincoln University, I would be true to the ideals of Lincoln and inspire more students with ambition to come to Lincoln and to drink out of the fountain which has nourished me all these years.'

With unrestrained tears, I bade farewell to my students, shook hands with some of them, and left Rendall Hall with my new presents.

While on the last lap of my stay in America, I began to think of my accomplishments through the efforts of humanitarians and philanthropists, for which I am very grateful. I thought of Miss Ellen Winsor, of Haverford, Pennsylvania, whom I met when I delivered a lecture on 'The Technique of Onitsha Folkloristic Literature' at the home of my friend Dr Hallowell of the University of Pennsylvania. This lady was so interested in my future that, during one of her travels in Europe, she sent me a cheque for 50 dollars to help me in my researches.

Then I remembered Mrs Edward Morrell of Torresdale, a suburb of Philadelphia, who twice sent me a cheque for 100 dollars to help me realise my dreams of service to Africa. Mrs Morrell had never seen me all her life, and even now I don't know her; yet she was interested from what she learnt of my efforts at Lincoln University. The American Friends Service Committee of Philadelphia made a bursary available to me in the summer of 1932, when I attended a conference on international relations at Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

While reflecting on those who came into my life, due to their philanthropic disposition, I could not possibly overlook the leaders of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, of 101 Park Avenue, New York. By inspiring letters, by words of encouragement, by deeds of love, and by gifts of money, they guided me through the shoals of American experience and then left me to become a living testimony. For three successive years, the Fund made available to me scholarships and bursaries, varying from 100 to 250 dollars. Without this timely financial aid, God knows what might have happened to me.

When now I began to reflect on how American philanthropy had enabled me to realise my dreams. I could not but think of the last words of Dr Thomas Jesse Jones to me, when I visited him before sailing. He spoke to me in words like these:

'Mr Azikiwe, you have reached the end of the trail and you are returning to your native land for service.

'If this organisation has taught you nothing else, always remember to help a fellow human being.

'By the exhibition of the spirit of philanthropy, some flowers which might have blushed unseen are enabled to develop into full blossom.'

The Phelps-Stokes Fund also enabled me to realise a pet ambition, which was to know Hampton Institute in Virginia, the school where Booker T. Washington was educated and where he obtained his inspiration to found Tuskegee Institute. A Teacher Travelling Scholarship worth 100 dollars enabled me, in the summer of 1933, to attend the Hampton Institute summer session for two weeks as an observer, as the guest of the Hampton authorities. There I met Professor Ross F. Lohr, Assistant Professor of Education, who hailed from Freetown,

Sierra Leone, residing comfortably at Hampton, and Professor Taylor, later Principal of Mabang Agricultural Academy, Sierra Leone, then a third-year B SC student.

Meanwhile, I had been elected a member of many learned societies: the Royal Anthropological Institute, the Royal Economic Society, the American Society of International Law, the American Anthropological Association, the American Ethnological Society, the American Political Science Association and the Institute of Journalists. The circumstances under which I was elected to the fellowship of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain are worthy of note. During one of the seminars in anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, I read a paper on 'The Origins of the State'. Such a seminar was generally open only to holders of the MA degree and students of the PH D. One distinguished guest at this seminar was Dr Bronislaw Malinowski, Professor of Anthropology at London University, then on a lecture tour of the United States. After my seminar he spoke to me about his interest in the subject-matter of my report and suggested my associating with the British fraternity of anthropologists, which I accepted with pleasure. After his return to London I received a letter from the Secretary of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain saying that, after satisfying the formal requirements of that body, I had been unanimously elected a Fellow.

It was with a heart full of sorrow that I attended the last farewell function on my behalf at Lincoln, given by the Mu chapter of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity. My fraternity brothers wished me the best of luck in the world and reminded me of the slogan of all Sigma men in the world: 'Bigger and Better Negro Business'.

Then came the commencement exercises, early in June. After bidding farewell to my students and colleagues, I called all the African students at Lincoln together: Dr E. A. Schandorf of Christiansborg, Accra, Dr Benjamin Kagwa of Uganda, and Dr David Boye-Johnson of Freetown, Sierra Leone. I begged them not to forget Africa. I warned that they had a rendezvous with Africa, and unless they returned so as to play an important part in the development of our continent, posterity would desecrate their memory. Since they were my frater-

nity brothers, they also pledged to crystallise economic determinism among Africans when they returned to their homes and to give up their lives as a sacrifice for the ransom of the many who were ensconced in intellectual darkness.

I went to see Dr Wright, later President of Lincoln University, and thanked him for his personal interest in me and in my future. He bade me farewell and told me to keep my chin up, no matter what gruesome experiences might be mine in my short life on earth. Dr and Mrs R. F. Labaree gave me words of comfort. The same was my experience when I went to Dean George Johnson, who had shown a keen interest in me during my stay in Lincoln.

When I returned to my African colleagues, I found them downcast. Their disappointment at my departure was plainly visible. With a voice that was hardly audible, I challenged them that the mantle was being left to their care and it was up to them to take it up. They stopped their work (they were cleaning and painting the university library building as part of their summer jobs). The four of us sat down under the trees which majestically faced Cresson Hall. There was a tense silence; and we wept.

By now, the Short Line bus, which was to carry me away, had sounded its siren from a mile away in the direction of Oxford, Pennsylvania. As this giant of the road wended its way through Lincoln Highway No. 1, I shook hands with my African and American friends. The bus was now at a dead stop. I boarded her with my luggage and, as she moved away from the Chester Hills I loved so well, I waved to my African heroes and their American hosts, all of whom seemed to have been petrified. As we passed through the rural towns of West Grove, Avondale and Kenneth Square towards Chester, Media and Philadelphia, I realised what parting meant not only to friends but also to intellectual brothers. Within ninety minutes we were in Philadelphia.

We made a stop of forty-five minutes. Then I went to a public telephone and called up Dr Speck, Head of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, and bade him farewell. He said something like this: 'Goodbye, Zik, and don't forget the University Museum when next you visit America,' reminding me of the necessity of sending African

arts and crafts to the Museum in order to illustrate African material culture.

I called up a few friends, but soon the conductor had begun his routine: 'All aboard for Camden, Trenton, New Brunswick, Newark, Jersey City, New York.' I boarded the bus and took my seat, and as we left 'Philly' I fell into a deep slumber, waking from time to time, with my mind weighed down with melancholy, until we had travelled the hundred miles to New York.

As the New York sky-line came in sight, while the Short Line bus manoeuvred its way through the dense motor traffic, I could only thank God for creating some human beings to be philanthropic. I wondered again what would have happened to me if benefactors had not crossed my path? Apart from my father's great sacrifice, I thought of the benefactions of Dr Durkee, Dr MacDonald, Rev. Morsell, Rev. Dr Lamb, Dr Locke, President Johnson of Lincoln University, the Phelps-Stokes Fund and others, who in smaller ways, had made life worth while for me in America.

Two benefactors in particular had saved me from possible destitution. If Professor Wright and Mr Ocansey had not fed me with the milk of human kindness I do not know what would have become of me. Suppose Dr Wright in his humanity had not offered me a job as part-time instructor in political science, it would have been extremely difficult for me to earn my graduate degrees.

And if Mr Ocansey had not, in his native goodness, offered me a job to go to when I returned to Africa, and been liberal-minded enough to permit me to negotiate the conditions of employment with him, although a missionary organisation had denied me the elementary right of bargaining with it for the terms of my employment, what would have been my fate?

I thanked God for creating benefactors in the world and implored Him, in all humility, that whatever I did from then on, my activities should be interspersed with benefactions so that, in the words of George C. Stebbing, I could 'be a star in someone's sky'. Such was the truth I imbibed at Lincoln and it made me free indeed.

To commemorate Mr Ocansey's benefaction to me I decided, on arrival in New York, to have his photograph transplanted

and mounted permanently side by side with mine, to remind me of my great benefactor and the generosity which, without realising what his noble gesture had meant to me and to my mission in life, he had extended to me. For many years this photomontage was in my bedroom.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PILGRIM RETURNS HOME

*The success story of a happy warrior who returned to the land
of his birth*

God be with you till we meet again!
Keep love's banner floating o'er you,
Smite death's threatening wave before you,
God be with you till we meet again.

W. G. TOMER

I. BYE, BYE, UNCLE SAM!

In New York I stayed at a small hotel near the 110th Street subway station between 7th Avenue and Lenox Avenue, and with the aid of money kindly provided by the Phelps-Stokes Fund, I booked my passage on the RMS *Aquitania*, then the third largest vessel afloat. I visited Dr Cyril Olliviere, who had established a flourishing medical practice in Harlem, to bid him farewell.

I decided to 'smoke New York over,' before leaving 'God's country'. So I visited Radio City Music Hall in the Rockefeller Center, which is one of the finest theatres in the world. I went to the Empire State Building, the tallest building in the world, and when I got beyond the 100th storey it took all my courage to look down and see human beings moving like ants below.

Then I attended a burlesque in Harlem. I saw white and black actresses as they paraded themselves semi-nude before their clientele. On the eve of my sailing I decided to play the role of 'Big Time Harry' to peep into some important night clubs of Harlem. I went to Small's Paradise, the Cotton Club, Royal Casino, and other 'joints' nearby, not so much because I was a patron of this kind of entertainment but because I wanted to be a many-sided man of the world.

Harlem cannot be adequately described to those who have not visited the United States and seen what the people of African descent are able to do for themselves in the new world. There one finds the Negro engaged in all the important professions and vocations of the world. At 'Sugar Hill' one will find some of the smartest set of Negroes who, by virtue of their being top-flight artists, have amassed wealth beyond comprehension; which most of them then proceed to squander in an atmosphere where passion reigns supreme. That is one view of Harlem, the fleshpot of Gotham!

Speaking of Harlem reminds me of Miss Nancy Cunard, the young and brilliant member of the millionaire family which controlled the Cunard Steamship Line before it merged with the White Star Line whose acquaintance I had made two years previously. Because of her interest in the black race, her annual allowance was reduced to the barest minimum.

Undaunted by her family's attitude, she made friends with Negroes the world over, finally visiting Harlem in 1932 with a view to collecting material for her book, *Negro: An Anthology*. Before I met her in person she had asked me to contribute an article on the Republic of Liberia for her anthology. I readily obliged and sent her 'Liberia: Slave or Free?' which ultimately appeared in the book.

Meanwhile, Dipeolu (alias Frank A. Brown) and I had to spend my last night in America together. I asked him to leave the PH D and to remember that he had a rendezvous with Africa. He assured me that he appreciated what I had advised him and that he would soon return home. I warned him to beware of the fate of Aggrey, Okokon and other nameless African argonauts, seekers after the 'golden fleece' of knowledge and skill. He in turn warned me to be careful of Africans because they always destroyed their benefactors.

The next day I went on board the *Aquitania*. Some of my friends, mostly American, West Indian and African students and colleagues, came on board to see me off. Then I met Mr and Mrs Frank Dube of Natal, who were on board bound for South Africa. Mr Dube held an MA (Hons. in education) degree from Columbia University. His wife was an American Negro and a musician. They were travelling to South Africa

to teach at the Ohlange Institute, which was founded by Dube's father, another product of American education,

Gradually, the *Aquitania* pulled away from the port of New York. I looked mournfully at 'the greatest city on earth' and said ruefully: 'Bye, bye, Uncle Sam. You have been so good to me. I shall never forget you.' Tears trickled down my cheek as I went to my cabin. After I had become composed I went up on deck; and as we entered the Ambrose Channel New York evanesced. Once more I saw the gargantuan Statue of Liberty.

The *Aquitania* had a fairly large swimming pool, a cinema theatre and tennis courts, and we took advantage of these amenities with delight. The crossing was pleasant, and Mr and Mrs Dube were very friendly companions. I had already arranged to stay with Louis Nwachukwu Mbanefo, my kinsman, in London, and I assured the Dubes that I would introduce them to the Warden of WASU for accommodation.

We reached Southampton five days later and boarded the boat train bound for London. During the train journey, I enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the countryside. Mbanefo was at Waterloo Station to receive me. He directed the Dubes to the WASU, where Mr Solanke became their host.

2. A BACKWARD LOOK AT AMERICA

On the eve of my sixtieth birthday in 1964, 'Peter Pan', the satirical columnist of the *Daily Times*, asked me whether there were any events which haunted me and which had registered unfavourable impressions on my memory during my nine years' sojourn in the United States. He also wanted to know which events pleased me, and he requested that I should explain how these unfavourable and favourable impressions combined to determine my attitude towards the United States, the citizens of that country, my student life, and the white race.

As far as the unfavourable impressions were concerned, I replied that four lynchings had shocked me. With the aid of the magazine *Fact*, I was able to recollect the details of these macabre holocausts. In December 1925, two months after my arrival in the United States, Lindsay Coleman, a Negro, was

tried by a Circuit Court for alleged murder of a plantation manager. He was found not guilty by a jury in Clarksdale Mississippi; nevertheless he was lynched.

In June 1926, Albert Blades, a twenty-two-year-old Negro, was lynched, by hanging and burning, because he was suspected of having criminally assaulted a small white girl. The official physicians who examined the girl exonerated the Negro and declared that the girl was never attacked but was merely startled by the presence of a black man. This happened in Osceola, Arkansas.

In November 1927, at Columbia, Tennessee, a Negro named Henry Choate was accused of attacking a white girl. It was Armistice Day and the court-house where he was to be tried was festooned with flags and bunting. A mob of white men transformed the balcony of the court into a gallows, wrested him from the police and lynched him without a fair trial.

In October 1933 a crowd of 3,000 white men, women and children in Princess Anne, Maryland, overpowered fifty policemen, smashed the doors of a prison cell, dragged out and lynched George Armwood, aged twenty-four, in one of the wildest lynching orgies ever staged in America. He was accused of attacking an aged white woman; and without giving him a fair chance to defend himself or to be tried by a lawfully constituted court, the mob took the law into their hands. The lynching was especially ghastly because one white boy, aged eighteen years, was reported by the *New York Times* of October 19, 1933, to have slashed off Armwood's ear with a knife.

On the favourable impressions, the victory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the presidential elections of 1932, and the introduction of the 'New Deal' reinforced my faith in the ultimate emergence of the United States as a moral force in the twentieth-century world. Roosevelt's policy was radical, because with imagination and confidence he courageously departed from the beaten path of the traditional capitalist practice of leaving private entrepreneurs to determine the factors for employing labour on an inequitable basis of the 'law' of supply and demand. The 'New Deal' was designed to deploy public funds to create employment opportunities in public works and other units of the public sector, so that the

unemployed would be kept employed. This philosophy laid a solid foundation for the elaborate machinery of social security introduced later to guarantee the welfare of what Roosevelt and his 'brains trust' characterised as 'the Forgotten Man'.

These unfavourable and favourable impressions combined to mould my ideas and construct in my mind the image of America which has lingered. On the one side of the balance sheet, we have an America saturated with racial intolerance, bigotry and lawlessness. This was a passing phase in the saga of American history, in spite of the colourful roles of certain American politicians. The fact that successive administrations tightened the screw on the law enforcement agencies, compelling them to perform their sworn duties and protect the lives and properties of American citizens, was a clear indication that the era of unbridled fanaticism and anarchy was in process of becoming an unlamented closed chapter in American history.

On the other side of the balance sheet, we have a great and sprawling country, peopled by self-reliant, hard-working, and philanthropic go-getters, descendants of hardy pioneers who defied the elements in order to crystallise democracy as a way of life. If we examine more closely the adjectives I have employed to describe this species of humanity, we should be able to appreciate the soul of the real American.

Self-reliance has enabled Americans to build the mightiest nation on the face of the earth. Hard work has enabled them to establish the highest standard of living and remuneration for work in the whole world. Philanthropy demonstrates the humanistic philosophy of these pioneers and the spiritual nature of their make-up as fellow human beings, thus justifying the exodus of the 'Pilgrim Fathers' in the seventeenth century, who defied the dangers of the Atlantic, fervently believing that, although their ancestors were 'chained in prisons dark', yet they did not mortgage their conscience to the forces of oppression, intolerance and inhumanity.

Go-getting is an American trait. It implies the exercise of initiative and enterprising ability. Hardy pioneering means an adventurous spirit that ignores all hazards. It is an exemplification of willpower that is resolute, undaunted and irresistible. Democracy is the legacy bequeathed to those who are now privileged to live as full-fledged citizens of the fifty states

comprising the United States of America. It means living in an atmosphere in which the state concedes to the citizen certain fundamental freedoms and basic rights: the freedom to life, the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, the freedom to acquire and possess property, the freedom of movement, the freedom of peaceful assembly and the freedom of association. Protection of these basic freedoms is guaranteed under the provisions of a written constitution, which can not be abridged, denied or violated excepting under due process of law.

If such a country is described as 'God's country', the exaggeration can be excused. But deep in my heart I can honestly confess that the United States of America impressed me as a haven of refuge for the oppressed sections of humanity in Europe, Africa, Asia and the rest of the world. It is only in the United States that any human being can live in a free environment which will give that individual full scope to develop his personality to the full, in spite of the vagaries of human life, some of which I have spotlighted above.

Therefore, if one should ask me why tears trickled down my cheek as the *Aquitania* sailed away from the shores of the United States of America, my simple reply would be that, despite the fact that some people who looked like me were fed 'with bread of bitterness' by a microscopic section of the backward elements of this progressive and philanthropically-minded segment of human society, this great country is still the bulwark of liberty and the haven of the children of God. Don't blame me for calling it 'God's country'. In the words of Louis F. Benson:

'Who shares his life's pure pleasures
And walks the honest road,
Who trades with heaping measures
And lifts his brother's load,
Who turns the wrong down bluntly
And lends the right a hand,
He dwells in God's own country,
And tills the holy land.'

I lived in the United States for close on nine years. My life is a testimonial that Americans shared life's pleasures and walked the honest road with me. They traded with heaping measures and lifted the heavy load off my shoulders. They

turned the wrong of inhumanity down bluntly and lent a helping hand to the forces of righteousness. Surely, people of this nature dwell in God's country and till the holy land. I am a living witness.

3. IMPRESSIONS OF LONDON

My stay in London was profitable. Meeting with my old friends was a tonic in itself, and seeing Ernest N. Egbuna, Ekundayo Ajayi, E. S. Ajayi, H. O. Davies, Akinola Adeshigbin, Louis N. Mbanefo, O. Taiwo Jibowu, Fela Sowande, and many others, reawakened my love for the homeland.

The WASU Hostel at 62 Camden Road, NW 1, was the headquarters of most West African students in London, where we congregated and devoured West African newspapers. I also had the pleasure of giving a series of talks to the students there.

Life in London was most intriguing. Having spent nine years in America in quest of knowledge, it was only in the twilight of my stay there that I dared to pry into the social life of the western peoples. I enjoyed myself sufficiently well to realise the vanity of human wishes.

I visited some of the night clubs of the West End, particularly 'The Nest', a favourite of the West African students. 'Ike' Hatch, an American Negro, was the rage of the place. His singing and dancing, coupled with the bevy of female beauties who flocked there, transformed this spot into a second Harlem.

One of the first letters I received in London came from Miss Nancy Cunard, then living in France. Her letter was illuminating. It reads in part:

'Welcome to England! I wonder how you are finding it and if you loathe or like the British panorama; no one could like all of it but any way climatically you have not hit a bad moment.

'So you are at the West African Students' place; please remember me kindly to Cobina Kessie (nephew of Nana Sir Agyeman Prempeh II, the Ashantehene).

'Hope you will meet Chris. Jones by now; make him take you to the docks where he works. A remarkable place. And he will show you also Walker's Café . . . unique of its kind; I always think of it as typical of the wretched kind of "centre" the spades have in the whole huge city of London—so utterly different from

the American places, and even more so to the non-colour concept universal, in a social sense, in France (save for the Algerians, if you please . . . can you imagine a Paris café with a notice outside, "Les Algériens ne sont pas admis" (i.e. Algerians are not admitted)? Such, however, is the case.

'Our mutual friend, Padmore, is here now and we have spoken much of you. I am enjoying the typing out of his new book on British colonies in Africa. It is fine. What an indictment!

'Do not miss the African things in the British Museum; they are lovely, though crowded together in a shocking way. Also the Wellcome Museum in Wigmore Street is good.

'Let me know if you are planning to come through France before going on to Nigeria. I shall come up to Paris to meet you, if so, and I do hope this will be the case.

'I feel somewhat lost without the long steady work that was involved in the making of the book [*Negro: an Anthology*]. To what shall I turn myself?

'I want so very much to make a big film on Negro history (revolutionary too, of course); but think of starting with the burden of the knowledge of its cost . . . of lack of interest in producers, etc. What is to be done?

'By the way, I fear you cannot have got your copy of my book even now. I was in London for a day on July 1st, and I looked up what address it had been sent to; could find none, so had to conclude the publishers did not have it either.

'We, therefore, sent you a copy at once then. But you may have left before it got to Lincoln.

'We will look forward to hearing how you find the English scene, when you have the time. . . .'

Coming into contact with so many West African students almost upset my plans. The Nigerian students, especially, urged me to return to Nigeria, for I was needed there more than in the Gold Coast. I maintained that having promised Mr Ocansey, I could not, in fairness to him, renege on the bargain. One of them contacted those who controlled *The Nigerian Daily Telegraph*, requesting that I should be given a chance in Nigerian journalism; but no encouraging reply was forthcoming. Then I was persuaded to write *The Nigerian Daily Times*, offering my services in any journalistic capacity. Although I had never met Mr C. A. A. Titcombe, its editor, yet I was prepared to work with or under him, irrespective of academic qualifications which, to me, were not the final criterion to determine a first-rate journalist.

I forwarded a letter to Sir Adeyemo Alakija, chairman of the

board of directors of the Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company Limited. My letter speaks for itself:

'Dear Sir:

Patriotism motivates my writing this letter to you. I am a Nigerian (Onitsha) and I studied in the United States for nine years. . . .

'In the last four years I was Instructor in Political Science at Lincoln University. I hold the MA and M SC degrees in addition to being a fellow of eight learned societies in England and America.

'I am now on vacation pending the publication of my book on Liberia at the end of September.

'During the interval I was away from Nigeria, I have studied the theory and practice of journalism from every conceivable angle.

'On many occasions I was editor or reporter of important American newspapers. I am proficient on the editorial, reportorial, and business sides of the profession. I am an active member of the Institute of Journalists, London.

'An important Gold Coast newspaper company has made to me an offer that is favourable. It is planned to transform a weekly into a daily and I was invited to fill the editorial chair. The remuneration, though modest, is consistent with sound business principles.

'In addition, I am given an option on a commission of the net profit and certain percentage of shares in the company, which is backed by two of the leading financiers of Accra. In other words, every inducement has been made to secure my services.

'An agreement is in the offing because there are minor details to be discussed when I arrive on the Gold Coast. Frankly speaking, I would prefer to settle in Nigeria.

'I am not parochially patriotic, but it is my belief that our talents should be conserved and used for the development of the country which is so much in need of talents.

'My education at Onitsha, Calabar, and Lagos has made life-long contacts for me. I speak Yoruba and Ibo fluently. I am familiar with Nigerian tribal idiosyncracies.

'On the other hand, I like the Gold Coast as well, first for its general development, and secondly, for the dynamic expression of its peoples in general. I have travelled over to Accra, Koforidua, Kumasi, and Sekondi, and made a few friends, but I do not have a working knowledge of the languages there.

'I do not know whether the offer made to me by the businessmen of the Gold Coast is an inevitable challenge flung at Nigeria. If it be one, then it should be accepted.

'In all modesty, I submit that an experience of nine years in

modern journalism is too much of an investment for Nigeria to transfer to the Gold Coast; although West Africa will benefit no matter where I may go.

'I am thirty years of age and unmarried. I am a Christian and a man of temperate habits. Could you afford a berth on your staff for a trained and experienced newspaper executive, be he an editor-in-chief or associate editor and an African at that?

'Could you grant remuneration, no matter how little, but sufficient to give him food, clothing, and shelter together with a little luxury, and to offset the flattering offer of the Gold Coast, and at the same time compatible with one's training, cultural background, and the resources of your company?

'If so, I am available to consider your terms and will gladly give preference to a Nigerian offer in comparison with others. I will be in London until September 30.

'Please cable your pleasure to me before that date in care of the above London address. This will obviate inconveniences, and will facilitate my final decision.

'Believe me to be, honourable sir, very sincerely yours,

'NNAMDI AZIKIWE.'

Before posting this letter, I was obliged to read it to the hearing of five students who had prevailed upon me to write *The Nigerian Daily Times*. When I finished reading it there was resounding applause.

After waiting for some time, I realised that my efforts to associate myself with *The Nigerian Daily Times*, in any editorial position, were destined to fail. My letter was not even replied to, either in the affirmative or negatively. Meanwhile, Mr Ocansey seemed to have sensed that my services might be in demand, so he sent three cablegrams for me to return as soon as possible, for he had bought and assembled the plant and machinery with which to start *The African Morning Post*, the name I christened the proposed daily.

In England, I spent most of my time in the British Museum checking up some of my citations from British authorities in respect of Liberia. I also took copious notes on Egyptology, in the preparation of my typescript, 'The African in History'. It was at this stage that I began to contrast life in England and America. My impressions of England must necessarily be superficial in some respects, because I stayed there for only three months. Yet I feel qualified to express my views; after all, I know a few 'authorities' and 'experts' who spent a month or

two in some parts of Africa and wrote books or articles on their 'observations'.

During my stay in England I observed the cultural effect of American institutions on the lives of the British people. In the realm of amusements and entertainments there was a tendency to Americanise their programmes, especially in jazz music, stage dancing, popular songs and cinema films. Lew Leslie's 'Blackbirds of 1934' broke all records for attendance at variety shows during its run in a London theatre. This was an ensemble of Aframerican actors and actresses in which sparkled Nina Mae McKinney, 'Peg Leg' Bates, 'Fats' Waller and other lesser lights.

In the London night clubs American songs were sung. Certain types of American choreography were practised and danced, particularly the 'Blackbottom', the 'Swing' and the other rages of 'jitterbugs'. I noticed also that in some parts of England 'Americanism' was very much in evidence; such as 'Okay Chief', 'Okay baby', 'Scram', 'Vamoose', 'You're on the spot', 'Shake dem legs, baby', 'Give him the works', 'It's jake old pal', 'Oh boy, oh boy', 'You're forty with me, baby', 'Don't cramp my style, poker face', 'Strut that stuff, jigs', 'Lay 'em thick on him', 'Listen, you mug', 'Shoot to kill', etc.

So that in London, whether in the streets, theatres, pubs, clubs, or in homes, I found American institutions influencing certain aspects of British culture. Most of the cinema films were imported from New York and Hollywood; and one could always tell which cinema houses were popular in London, according to whether the films shown were American or not.

In the night clubs I discovered that there was a great demand for tap dancers; the tap dance had been so popularised in America that even schoolboys and girls did it on street pavements. I was surprised to see some mediocre Aframerican and West Indian tap dancers becoming the rage of London night clubs. Of course, in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

By now I began to contrast the behaviour and manners of the American and British people. I found the latter subtle in their approach to human problems and tactful in their solutions. The Americans, on the other hand, were boisterous, and inclined to be impolitic and impulsive. On the race issue

the attitude was identical, but the approach was fundamentally different.

In America (I refer to the Atlantic seaboard which was my domicile during my stay there) it was plain that a coloured person was not regarded as the social equal of a white person. This social custom was so rigidly enforced that, unless one wished to be blind to the truth, there was no necessity to beg the issue. True, there were exceptions to the rule, but I have in mind the inexorable unwritten law. Knowing this to be what the white American thought of the coloured folks, it would be capital folly to expect him to play the role of a hypocrite. It was in his blood, and this complex of Nordic superiority was difficult to eradicate from his mental outlook.

Admittedly, there were in America organisations devoted to inter-racial co-operation. I had the honour to associate with some of them. Certainly, some of the white folks I worked with were sincere, yet no one member of any race by his own individual efforts could solve this social problem. Even the feeble attempts of Abraham Lincoln and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi resulted in assassination.

Harlem in the island of Manhattan is a ghetto reserved for Negroes, into which are concentrated about one million people, making it one of the largest single units of settlement of Negroes on earth. Of course, Negroes live in other parts of the city of New York, but in Harlem the black man and woman develop their talents. Here is really an important cultural centre of the Negroes of America. Here you find black folk from all over the USA, from Canada, Latin America, the West Indies, Africa, Oceania, Madagascar, Melanesia, and other places. Here they fraternise, the bad with the good, the virtuous and the vicious.

Paradoxically, some white folks live in Harlem and intermarry with the blacks. Some rich white women have black husbands or paramours living in Harlem and there are wealthy black women also who have white husbands or lovers who live in Harlem or outside. It is not uncommon to see white women or black women shunting high-powered open-air limousines from downtown Manhattan to the Bronx and back with their companions of the opposite colour ensconced beside them, chatting, singing, laughing—sons and daughters of Aphrodite!

Black people work in white settlements. White people work in black settlements. Both races realise the irony and the folly of race prejudice. That's New York, the laboratory of inter-racial relations.

What of the Britons? I found during my stay in London that while they professed that there was no colour bar in England, yet in that stronghold of aristocracy it did exist. Unlike the southern and part of the northern regions of the United States, black folk rode in buses and trains, and attended theatres without discrimination, yet one was naturally the cynosure of all eyes on account of one's colour.

However, in the lower strata of English society the colour bar was not so pronounced, especially where the black person was economically self-sufficient. This explained why confraternity among white and black was encouraged, especially in the night clubs of the West End of London. There were other factors, psychological, physical or intellectual, which made black persons desirable as companions among the white folk in England. Nevertheless, the colour bar, as it existed in England, was mortal to the solidarity of the Commonwealth.

During the centenary celebration of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Society in 1938, the *Manchester Guardian* published the attitude of the society towards the colour bar. 'Sir John Harris [Secretary of the Society] declared that the colour-bar policy pursued in South Africa and applying to Africans, half-castes, and Indians, all of whom were technically "coloured", was a menace to the British Empire. In that area a coloured man, whatever his character or attainments, was disfranchised, and trade unions refused to allow coloured men to become skilled workers.

'General Smuts had warned the Union of South Africa when it proposed to embark on that policy that the bill would be regarded as an outrage not only by black Africa but by yellow Asia. Once that policy spreads to the great protectorates of Bechuanaland and Swaziland and reaches the Zambesi [said Sir John], nothing will prevent its spreading its virus over the whole of Africa. We must find some way of ameliorating the conditions growing up in South Africa and preventing the spread of the legislative colour bar. It is the only govern-

ment in the world that practises it. In the United States there is no legislative discrimination like this.'

I have dwelt on the colour bar issue in Britain because there is no more disintegrating factor permeating the fabric of human relations than the arrogation of a status of superiority by any particular section of the human race. The classification of races into superiors and inferiors has created and nurtured a spirit of animosity on the part of those who might have become allies instead of enemies, in the struggle of human existence.

Man is not innately wicked, but when an attempt is made to consign him to the scrap-heap he shows resentment in no uncertain terms. True, the affirmation of equal status among the races of mankind may be a defence mechanism or a sort of consolation to those races who might have traces of apparent backwardness in their general make-up, yet the fact remains that it is one potent way that man has of avenging injury of this type. Scientifically, there are no superior and inferior races, physically or mentally. Achievement or success is a universal human trait which favours no particular race.

There are stupid black Africans as there are stupid white Europeans. Professor Boas said that no scientist can, with exactitude, distinguish the brains of a black man from that of a white man. The fact that a person has black skin, a platyrrhine nose (nasal width), dolichocephalic index (long-headedness), woolly hair, and pronounced prognathism (low facial angle) does not necessarily make him belong to an inferior race. The evidence unravelled by modern anthropology indicates that certain races which were regarded as 'inferior' due to certain physical characteristics have become 'superior' overnight.

For example, the thick lips and kinky hair of the black peoples were formerly thought to show their affinity with the apes; but today these are regarded as more human traits in the ladder of evolution, and the races with thin lips, straight hair, and abundant bodily hair distribution are classified as nearest the apes. In other words, the science of anthropology has reached a stage where no anthropologist of repute would stake his reputation in making wild assertions regarding Nordic or 'Aryan' superiority.

Thus it is clear that race prejudice is purely sociological: an outcome of man's inter-social relations. It is not inborn, because children of white and black and yellow races mingle freely, being conscious of no basic difference in their make-up as members of the human race, but only of superficial differences. But as they grow up, they begin to learn and inherit the prejudices of their parents and elders, and this gradually influences their attitudes.

I remember meeting a young white American friend at an inter-racial conference. After the plenary sessions, we were divided into groups for general discussion, to enable us to 'get acquainted' with each other. The two of us discussed several issues and discovered that we both had socialist leanings and were interested in social justice and spiritual regeneration.

I asked him why he had not previously associated with black folk. He replied that he could not explain and that it 'just came about' that way. When I pressed him further he confessed that, in his youth, he had black boys and girls as his playmates but afterwards his parents warned him about black people, alleging that some Negroes had tails, some emitted effluvium which was allegedly due to their kinship with the apes, some had horns, some were sadistic and some were over-sexed. I asked him whether he had studied biology, anthropology and sociology at his university. He admitted that he had a bachelor's degree in the social sciences. I inquired whether the allegations of his parents or elders could stand the test of scientific criticism; his answer was that it never occurred to him to analyse the race problem scientifically.

Then I suggested to him that his prejudice was so strong that he did not have room in his mind even to classify the Negro as a human being who was subject to the laws of biology. We laughed mutually and agreed on the oneness of humanity. We both realised the futility of race prejudice, even though we appreciated the impossible task, in dealing with this phenomenon, of immediately reforming man's social attitudes and mental outlook.

The practice of the colour bar is not healthy anywhere on earth, because of its disintegrating effect on the morale of humanity. True, certain situations warrant the enactment of legislation to protect the public welfare; but in a democratic

society this cannot be protected effectively by discriminatory legislation. Personally, I would not like to go where my racial affinity would make my presence repulsive to the members of other races; and I would not care to associate myself with people who are of opinion that I am an extraneous element in their society. But I will not tolerate any practice from anybody, however high or low his position, which would tend to relegate me to the background, simply because of my race.

People who practice race prejudice are mentally subnormal because their faculties are not fully developed to appreciate the nature of such an irrationality in the social fabric of humanity. It is, therefore, tragic when such a social aberration is given legal sanction by any political entity which pretends to be democratic.

My stay in London was, however, productive sociologically. I mingled freely with those white people who liked to mingle with other races, and I was able to appreciate the philosophy of life of the ordinary human being. I joined some night clubs not necessarily because of my fondness for such kind of entertainments, but to enable me to observe, at first hand, the natural yearnings of human beings. My observations were highly successful and I was satisfied that, left to themselves, average English men and women do not care a hoot whether a person is black or white.

When I watched the dancers as they glided on the night club floors, I questioned the aesthetic of the popular modern style of European dancing. I am neither a prude nor a killjoy. But I wondered whether the European form of dancing was not a definite proof that the sex urge dominated the emotions of that segment of humanity.

Dancing in Africa is purely aesthetic and recreational, but I am not saying that Africans are frigid when it comes to the role of sex in their social institutions. The European form of dancing appealed to me as nothing short of artistic caressing which provoked the libido, yet it was sanctioned by the conventions of that society.

I also met a fellow observer of human problems, a white South African student barely in her twenties. She came from one of the ruling families of her country, and was studying at

London University. I asked her what she was doing in a night club, and she confessed that she yearned for an atmosphere where she could be free to give an outlet to her emotions, unrestrained by the chains of a blindly prejudiced society.

These experiences convince me that man is, at heart, innately sociable and ardently desires the fellowship of humanity, irrespective of race; yet social forces hasten the disintegration of the social structure by irrational codes of behaviour and conventions.

As a result of our common interest in the study of British colonial administration, it was my good fortune to meet Miss Margery Perham, Research Fellow of St Hugh's College, Oxford, and Research Lecturer in Colonial Administration in the University of Oxford. She was interested in African affairs and was familiar with many West African students whom she met occasionally at the WASU hostel for critical discussions on British colonial policy.

I had the honour to spend a week-end at her country home in Abingdon, Berkshire, with Charles Adeniyi Williams, a civil engineer who had been my schoolmate in Lagos. We found she was fond of animal husbandry, and she showed us how her favourite cows were milked and where they pastured. In her library she had one of the finest collections of books and documents on British colonial administration. I was impressed by her academic ability, although I accused her of being a rabid protagonist of Lord Lugard and his satellites—which she admitted.

When she asked me about my future plans, I informed her that I was going to assume the editorship of a daily newspaper in the Gold Coast. I told her point blank that her countrymen and women were out to exploit the colonies; as an African, I was an extraneous element in the British colonies, and on my return there I would be regarded with suspicion, my only crime being that I had been educated abroad.

She tried to convince me that efforts were being made to absorb trained Africans into the civil services of British West Africa; but after hearing of my experiences with the Sierra Leone, Gold Coast and Nigeria Governments, she could appreciate the predicament of the educated African. We agreed that Africans should be more self-reliant instead of

relying upon the colonial government to provide them with employment.

Because I was independent in my way of thinking, and insisted that I would rather earn a pittance as a newspaper editor than have my thinking regimented in the Government service, she was visibly moved. When one reads through her illuminating *Native Administration in Nigeria* (Oxford University Press, 1937), one appreciates the gentle rebukes, which dot the pages of this book, that she directed against the colonial governments in British West Africa, for their short-sighted policy in alienating the genuine affections and loyalties of educated Africans.

On page 361 of her book, cited above, I detected a direct reference to me. She said:

'In the services performed by the central government we should press forward the policy of employing more Africans in positions of trust which was boldly proclaimed by Sir Donald Cameron in the speech in which he opened the Yaba Higher College, an institution founded largely with this object.

'There is, however, one branch in which, I believe, Africans should not enter, and that is, the Administrative Service. This should aim at being increasingly advisory in its functions.

'It should be regarded as the temporary scaffolding round the growing structure of native self-government. African energies should be incorporated into the structure: to build them into the scaffolding would be to create a vested interest which would make its demolition at the appropriate time very difficult.

'The ambitions of the educated should also be met by doing everything possible to find or create opportunities for them within the native administrations. This is not always easy. It is fortunate that the majority of the educated have hitherto been from the Yoruba country, where the local governments are large enough to employ some, at least, of their more civilised members.

'But what scope, to quote a recent example, can the rudimentary Ibo groups offer to one of the tribe who has spent ten years at American universities accumulating academic qualifications?

'The government does not, of course, want to encourage the hope that all those educated overseas have a prescriptive right to government employment, yet the assistance of government is necessary, if highly educated men are to find openings in the Protectorate.

'When they fail to obtain encouragement in this direction, they settle in the towns in a mood of embitterment which finds its main object in the government's native policy.

'This loss or perversion of talent is so unfortunate that the British authorities would be wise to make considerable efforts to create openings for such men. . . .

'These suggestions are not offered in an overconfident spirit. We must be prepared for unexpected developments, and perhaps for an unexpected rate of development. . . .

'For success in the difficult task of assisting the people of Nigeria to build up a successful polity, our reward will be to have introduced a stable member to the society of nations.

'We shall also have offered to the rest of the Negro peoples not so much a model as an abiding encouragement. Of this, more than any other race, they stand in need.'

Meanwhile, I had discussed Miss Perham with other students. Some of them were sceptical about her sincerity of purpose, due to her firm belief in Lord Lugard's stepchild, indirect rule; whilst others thought that she was a remarkable woman. Personally, I admired her for her depth of thought in appreciating the fact that Nigeria, as a part of British Africa, could not make progress without the parallel development of the illiterate African masses and the educated African.

Unlike Dr Raymond Leslie Buell, whose monumental book *The Native African Problem* (Macmillan 1928, 2 vols.) is still a classic on the study of African affairs, Miss Perham was not only academic. Her ideas were full of sound practical suggestions backed by common sense. She advocated self-determination and self-government for Africans, presumably within the framework of the Commonwealth of Nations, if and when the Africans themselves had proved their political capacity.

Through this contact with Miss Perham I was able to meet other friends. In a letter dated October 5, 1934, Miss M. M. Green, writing from the University Women's Club, 2 Audley Square, London W1, indicated:

'I hear from Miss Perham that you are returning to Onitsha this month and I am wondering if there is any chance of our meeting before you go.

'I, too, am going to the Ibo country this month—sailing on October 17—and would be very glad of a talk with you if we can manage it.

'I am sure you could give me useful advice on many points. But I expect that you—like myself—are pretty full up these last days before going.

'Are you by any chance free in the evening either next Tuesday

or Wednesday, and if so could you come and drink coffee with me at my club address as above, at 8.30 p.m.?

'Unless by good luck we are sailing in the same boat—*Apapa*, October 17, in which case we could talk more.'

Incidentally, it happened that I had booked my passage on the *Apapa*, so I replied and informed Miss Green that we should have more time to discuss Ibo affairs during our voyage to Africa. Two days later I received the following letter from Sir William Edgar Hunt, Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Provinces:

'I have heard a good deal about you recently from my friend, Miss Perham, and should be glad to have the opportunity of meeting you before you return to Nigeria, if that is possible.

'I am coming up to London tomorrow and expect to be there for a fortnight. Perhaps you could have lunch or tea with me.

'I should explain that I return to Nigeria myself on 14th November and shall probably be posted to Enugu.'

I replied to Sir William and accepted his invitation to lunch or tea; and I looked forward to meeting him because his letter, and that of Miss Green, and the contact with Miss Perham, had made me look at the brighter side of the problem of race relations in England. After receiving the letter from Sir William, I was asked to call at the Colonial Office. There I met Major Hanns Vischer, formerly Director of Education, Northern Provinces of Nigeria. We discussed many issues. When we touched on higher appointments for Africans in the Civil Service, I made it plain to Major Vischer that I was fed up with the whole business; if I were offered the post of Chief Secretary to the Government of Nigeria, I would decline it.

He asked my reason for such a pessimistic view of the future of Africans in the higher posts of the colonial service, and I replied that I would rather face overwhelming odds to provide for the future economic security of my children than depend upon official largesse usually doled out on humiliating conditions. He thought that I had misunderstood British colonial policy. Then I mentioned the case of E. S. Ajayi, an agriculturist. I also referred to the offer of £200 per annum to African lawyers and physicians, while their European counterparts were offered £450. I inquired whether that was not adding insult to injury.

He admitted that the salaries might be parsimonious and that the classification of higher posts held by Africans with the adjective 'Assistant' or 'African' was challenging because it was based on an assumption of racial inferiority. Then he patted me on the back and said that he was glad to have met me. He confessed that I was not the type of fellow he had expected to meet; he did not appreciate that I was loyal to the British Empire. I humorously remarked: 'You must have thought that I was a "Bolshie!"' 'Of course not,' he said, tactfully evading the issue, as I left his office in Downing Street.

The next day I received the following letter from him, which bore the heading of the Royal Societies Club, St James's Street, London SW1:

'Dear Mr Azikiwe:

'I hear that you are shortly leaving for West Africa and would very much like to see you before you go.

'Would you give me the pleasure of lunching with me here on Monday next, 1.15, or Tuesday the same hour?

'Perhaps you will drop me a line here to say what would suit you best.'

After having assured Sir William that I would lunch with him, when he called me up on the telephone, I was very embarrassed when I realised that it was also the date I had previously assured Major Vischer for lunch as well. The confusion came about because I had only two days before sailing and I was involved in a hectic rush. When I discovered my mistake I called up Major Vischer asking if it would be possible to cancel the engagement.

He replied that, since both of us were fellows of one or other of the Royal Societies, he had told some of his friends about me and they wanted to meet me. Considering that I would soon return to Africa, where Sir William and I would be able to see each other more often, I asked if he would kindly release me from our engagement. This he graciously did, but from the tone of his voice over the telephone I could discern his disappointment.

When I met Major Vischer at the Royal Societies Club, it was my good fortune to come in contact with some British savants. After lunch, the discussion which followed was very enlightening and challenging. To some African students the

role of Major Vischer was one that should be carefully scrutinised. To others he was a friend, whose acquaintance should be cultivated. Personally, he impressed me as a conscientious official whose job was that of liaising between the Colonial Office and the budding leaders of the colonial territories. I did not regret having come into contact with him because it enabled me to know the Colonial Office and to spend an hour or two with those who were responsible for formulating the hide-bound policy of that citadel of British colonialism.

4. THE VOYAGE TO ACCRA

Meanwhile, my eyes were turned homewards to Africa. After I had attended a round of social activities and bidden farewell to my friends, October 17 rolled round and the hour of departure dawned. At Euston Station some of my colleagues and friends, including Major Vischer, braved the bracy autumn morning to see me off.

Then Robert Broadhurst came into my compartment; he blessed me, wished me godspeed and prayed that God might guide me in my humble efforts to serve Africa. He was an elderly gentleman of African descent, light in complexion, probably sixty-five years of age at the time, but mentally virile and very progressive in his ideas. He was one of my admirers during my stay in London and rarely missed any of my weekly lectures at the WASU.

As the train pulled away, Liverpool bound, one could appreciate the looks on the faces of Ladipo Solanke, Ernest Egbuna, Broadhurst, H. O. Davies, Laminah Sankoh, Louis Mbanefo, and many others who waved as the iron horse grumbled and pulled away from this smoky London railway station. When we reached Liverpool I was ushered into my cabin on board. There I met Emmett Harmon, a Liberian student who was returning to Monrovia, after studying at Howard University.

Because I had with me the final proofs of my book on Liberia, and because he was the only African on board, I felt naturally that he would help to make my voyage pleasant. After having steamed out to sea, the time for dinner came and Harmon and I went to the second class dining saloon. We

discovered that seats originally assigned to us had been transferred to other white passengers, and two seats were reserved for us in a corner far removed from the rest of the diners. I was peeved because here was the ogre of the colour bar rearing its horrid head to mar my homeward voyage.

Emmett, the son of Senator Harmon of Monrovia, was a young buck. From his demeanour one could appreciate that he was a flaming youth. Outright, he blamed the chief steward and told him that in his country, 'the independent state and the free Republic of Liberia', no white man would dare treat the black man as an inferior person. He asserted our right to sit anywhere, and if efforts were made to prevent us we would resist force with force. The chief steward was cool and he explained to us that he was only trying to make the trip as comfortable as possible for all the passengers.

I asked him whether he realised that he was insulting his passengers by deciding who among them was superior and who was inferior. He disclaimed any liability by saying that some passengers disliked having black diners sitting with them on the same table. I requested that he should point out to us the white passenger or passengers who had complained to him about us. He evaded the issue by saying that they would complain. Then I added that, left to humanity at large, there would be no colour bar, but that certain institutions, of which he was a pawn, injected the virus of misunderstanding among mankind due to their ignorance, hence the existence of race prejudice.

I maintained that no white passengers would dare to raise objections to Africans dining with them, because they were travelling to Africa and nobody had forced them to proceed to the black man's country to earn a livelihood. Realising that the man would not listen to reason, but preferred to be guided by an apparently hide-bound policy of Jim Crowism against African passengers, I warned him that he was not engaged to insult his customers and that if he dared to segregate us we would make trouble on board, since the other passengers did not pay a higher fare than either of us.

We went and sat among the other passengers. Some of them were embarrassed, some were sympathetic, while others lacked the moral courage to call a spade a spade in the realm of racial

relations. However, some of them, among whom was a reverend mother, conversed with us, which was proof that not all the European passengers on board were racially prejudiced.

The next morning, before the breakfast bell, the purser entered our cabin rather unceremoniously and warned us that he heard we were trying to make trouble on board. 'If I hear further complaints about you both, you will be dealt with severely. You savvy, darkies?' were his very stupid remarks. As a tried and tested boxer, I never allow myself to lose my head; but on this occasion I could not contain myself with such impudence. I told this uncouth official that he was a disgrace to his job and warned him that if he entered our cabin again without knocking, as he did that morning, I would shellack him with my fists.

Then Emmett and I asserted that we had paid our passage and that there was no provision in the tickets to the effect that passengers would be segregated for purposes of racial discrimination, and that, if he insisted on treating us as inferiors, then we would have to defend our racial integrity and face the consequences. He left our cabin as meekly as a lamb; and when we entered the dining hall we were seated with the other white folk, who were as friendly as they could possibly be.

Having successfully defended our rights, we became the best of pals with the chief steward, and having torn the veil of misunderstanding which had hitherto kept us apart, we found this white employee of Elders to be a gentleman and a Christian too! He would come into our cabin and offer us some fruits; he told us interesting stories of his experiences on the coast and asked for forgiveness because he was only doing his duty—a pawn in the whole game. Because I had with me a Columbia portable gramophone and a very fine collection of records of classical music, including the compositions of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Mascagni, Chopin, Beethoven, Rachmaninoff, etc., some of the 'highbrow' passengers often spent some time in our cabin discussing music with us and some current problems.

In connection with Beethoven, not only did we discuss the incredibility of a deaf man producing such masterpieces, but I had to tell one of our friends that one of Beethoven's compositions was written in honour of Bridgewater (a Pole of African

descent) and that this was altered later, due to a temperamental clash between the two musical geniuses.

At times the reverend mother would send for me and we would chat about missionary endeavours in Africa. I maintained that, while we appreciated missionaries in Africa, yet some of them needed spiritual rearmament to give them the courage to preach to their own people the essential unity of the human race. Otherwise missionary endeavours would fail, especially among the younger generation of Africans who had travelled and stayed in the white man's country.

After leaving Las Palmas I was happy to welcome the Rev. Dr G. T. Basden into my cabin. We had a long conversation and he told me that he had been sea-sick. I reminded him that as a very young boy I had taught in the CMS Mission, of which he was Secretary. We exchanged views on Ibo ethnography, of which he was an authority.

On arriving at Bathurst, Gambia, I went ashore and visited the offices of the *Gambia Outlook and Senegambian Reporter*, which was under the editorship of the well-known journalist E. F. Small. He was very friendly and, in the light of his experience, he advised me on the pitfalls of West African journalism. From the general trend of public opinion there, his newspaper was popular.

When we reached Freetown, Emmett disembarked and joined the *Deido*, bound for Monrovia. My stay with him had been very instructive. His intelligence impressed me, and we talked politics most of the time. He is now one of the leading lights of his country.

At Freetown I went ashore to see my boyhood playmate, Leslie Hall Modupe Gage of the Customs. Leslie was a student at the Wesleyan Boys' High School between 1915 and 1918, when his father was employed in the HM Customs at Lagos. His mother died when he was young, and up to the time we last saw each other, Leslie and I used to visit the Ikoyi cemetery to plant flowers on his mother's grave.

The reunion at Freetown reminded us of the good old days, when he was one of the very few African boys to own and ride a bicycle in the streets of Lagos. His father made this possible to make the lad forget the tragedy of his dear mother's untimely demise. He took me to the Government Printing Press and I

met an African superintendent there who was educated at Hampton Institute.

Then I visited the offices and works of *The Sierra Leone Daily Guardian*, where for the first time I met Ewart C. Thompson. He was then a member of the editorial staff of that newspaper. Leslie then took me to *The Sierra Leone Daily Mail* and there I met J. V. Clinton, former editor of the *Nigerian Eastern Mail*, Calabar. Clinton and I discussed the future of journalism in West Africa, particularly the problem of circulation and distribution of newspapers in the hinterland, which we realised was a hard nut to crack.

After calling on a few friends, I returned on board and we sailed for Takoradi. On arrival there, I saw that the place was completely changed. It had become one of the finest ports in this part of the world. I went ashore and motored to Sekondi, where I visited the old friends who took care of me when, with two other adventurers, we made our first daring attempt to proceed to America. I renewed acquaintance with Mrs Ruth Blankson and assured her that, when the time came, I would repay her generosity to me in 1924.

On October 31, 1934, the *MV Apapa* anchored off Accra. Since that port had no landing facilities like Takoradi or Lagos, we had to proceed ashore in surf-boats. These boats were manned by powerful-looking Ga boatmen of marvellous physique. They would row the distance from the vessel to the Accra Customs Wharf, probably two knots or more, depending upon the tides, singing their native songs, and biting a chunk of kenkey (their staple food) off and on.

Even though I was trying to forget the colour bar, I must confess that as soon as we reached tropical Africa I experienced it at its worst. Before I disembarked from the vessel, I had the mortification of having the purser call upon me to interview the immigration officer. Had he been polite it would not have mattered. Instead, he yelled out: 'Hey, black face, don't leave the boat until you have shown the police your passport.' And I retorted: 'Say, pale face, did I tell you that I am an alien? Don't you know that a British-protected person of West African descent enjoys certain privileges of British nationality in British West Africa?' 'Sorry, mister,' he replied, 'I thought you were a Liberian.' I reciprocated: 'Okay, chief!' as I entered the

'mammy chair' and descended into the surface-boat which was waiting for cabin passengers along the steamer. Then we rowed towards Accra, whose landscape was a thing of beauty.

As we glided over the briny deep, I surveyed Accra from Achimota direction right through to Christiansborg; and I whispered to myself that, one day, I would be in position to guide the public opinion of the country whose capital was then before me. As we moved nearer and nearer to the Accra beach, a thousand and one thoughts filled my mind. Then, suddenly, the boat boys stopped rowing.

We were now mid-way from the steamer to the port and, because of the boisterousness of the waves, some of the passengers were sea-sick. The chief boat boy demanded 'dash'. Those of us who were not actually sea-sick but were on the verge of being so, hurriedly passed the hat round. We subscribed the sum of five shillings and passed same to the argonauts who thanked us and proceeded once again to do their job.

When we reached Accra the boat boys began to lift the passengers shoulder high and to land them ashore. Since I was the only African in the surf-boat, it appeared as if the boat boys concentrated their attention on the white passengers, leaving me, a black man, their kith and kin, to wait, as the last man. When now I realised that six out of the ten passengers had been carried away, I forced myself on the boat boys and told them to carry me ashore. One of them told me that until they had carried away all the 'masters' they would not entertain my request.

I refused to budge and stuck to my guns. I told them that, having allowed ladies and other Europeans to be carried ashore, and having given them a 'dash', I would not tolerate any prejudice against me, on the part of my own people, simply because of my skin colour. Then I dared them to drop me in the water (since, by now, I was seated on the chair which they used in carrying passengers above their shoulders ashore). Then one of the European passengers in the boat, Dr F. R. Irvine, science master at Achimota College, whom I had met on board and talked with on a number of issues, told the boat boys to do their duty and forget whether one was black or white.

The boat boys looked at me with amazement; and it seemed

as if the scales had fallen from their eyes. In humiliation, they performed their duty. When I reached the shore many Africans flocked round to welcome me. The chief boat boy came and apologised. He confessed that he had not known who I was, and confided that they had many grievances against the Elder Dempster Lines. As soon as I started my newspaper they would send a delegation to brief me to fight their cause!

4. CONTACT WITH MY BENEFACTOR

Meanwhile, Mr A. J. Ocansey had been kind enough to arrange for a car to pick me up and a lorry to carry my loads to my hotel. With one of his sons as my escort, we drove away to Pagan Road, where this business magnate lived unostentatiously. 'Welcome, Professor Azikiwe, I am glad to meet you. Come in here and sit down.' That was the shrill voice of Mr Ocansey, who was in his sitting room chatting with his son-in-law, Mr A. M. Akiwumi. He turned towards me to give me a hearty handshake. I sat down after the usual courtesies had been exchanged between the three of us.

Mr Akiwumi and I motored to the Trocadero Hotel at Crewe Avenue, where I was quartered in the hotel annex with two rooms, one serving as bedroom and the other as a parlour. At first I suffered from the intense heat, but gradually began to acclimatise. I had my meals at the hotel's dining enclosure.

As soon as I settled down, friends began to visit me at the hotel. When Mr Bankole Awoonor Renner came, we talked about the good old days in America. Although we had never before met, yet I knew that in 1926 or so he was a student at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh. I reminded him of some of his poems published in the *Crisis* and *Opportunity* magazines in New York.

Another visitor who came to my hotel that day and who impressed me was Isaac Theophilus Akunna Wallace-Johnson. I had read and heard a lot about him but not met him. We exchanged views and I said that while I thought that it would be practicable for Africans at this stage of their development to experience an intellectual revolution, yet an extremist or leftist point of view would be dangerous, in view of the unpre-

paredness of the masses. He countered by pointing out the fate of Soviet Russia, where the masses were illiterate and impoverished, and yet when Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky sounded the clarion, they rallied round them and a new order emerged.

I warned him that his analogy was false, because Russia was unlike West Africa; the political, social and economic situations were different. He told me point blank that if Africans depended upon intellectuals or leaders of thought they would not get beyond the stage of producing orators and resolution-passers. It was necessary for doers or leaders of action to step on the scene and prove that the African has a revolutionary spirit in him.

Then I referred him to the history of modern Italy: how it took a Mazzini to revolutionise the thinking of the Italians, and a Cavour to plan the future of Italian nationalism, before a Garibaldi came on to the scene as a man of action. I posited that the thinking processes of Africans should be revolutionised in the sense that a national rebirth should be engendered; the ideas and ideals of Africans should be directed towards nationhood, so as to crystallise a sense of oneness.

While we found ourselves agreed on the need for an African rebirth, we disagreed on the method by which it could be achieved. Wallace-Johnson thought that my method would take centuries, and his would only take decades. I thought that his methods were suicidal because it would ruin many innocent Africans who might jump blindly into the fray without appreciating the significance of the cause they were sacrificing their lives for. I contended that my method would take decades, not centuries. But I appreciated Wallace-Johnson as a patriot and reformer who believed that the soil of Africa was now fertile for the struggle to redeem it from European imperialism.

I visited Mr Ocansey to discuss business. He handed to me the draft of the contract of employment. Like contracts of its type, it was unilateral and all I had to do was to sign on the dotted line. I submitted that the provision regarding restraint of trade was oppressive. His solicitor agreed but submitted that it was necessary in order to protect the interests of the City Press Limited. I requested time to study the agreement more carefully.

Meanwhile, I had returned to the Trocadero, and there my good friend, B. E. Ene, told me that the Nigerian colony at

Accra wanted to give a small dinner in my honour that evening. I was agreeably surprised. It was the first reception given to me since my return to Africa; and it was the only reception given to me in the Gold Coast to welcome me into that country.

That evening, November 5, 1934, I was the guest of five gentlemen of Efik descent who were domiciled at Accra. They were E. Antigha Simon, B. E. Ene, H. B. Olali, Moses Ochukpa and James E. Bassey. Mr Simon was then proprietor of the Efik Press at Horse Road, Accra. Mr Ene was book-keeper of Messrs G. B. Ollivant & Company Limited, awaiting transfer to Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo. Moses Ochukpa, was my former school-mate at the Hope Waddell Institute, Calabar. Messrs Olali and Bassey were independent, although Mr Bassey later joined the staff of the Efik Press, after having been head printer for the Fanzaar Press at Koforidua.

After dinner, these gentlemen presented to me the following address of welcome:

'Fellow Countryman:

'We have great pleasure to welcome you among us. It is a complete satisfaction to us to see that after you have been away from your country for a considerable number of years in pursuit of education, you have come back to us here in Africa with sound health, genuine patriotic ambition and educational distinctions with a view to employ these acquirements for the amelioration of conditions obtaining in the land of your fathers.

'We know with certainty that while for several years you were in the United States of America both during your university and tutorial careers, your principal aim was to do everything which lies within human possibilities to promote advancement of your race.

'We congratulate you upon your success for having written a book containing startling facts about the peoples of Africa; a book which has won the approbation of the most fastidious critics of the British political circles.

'The part we understand you played in bringing about better understanding and peaceful atmosphere among the West African Students Union in London shows that you will discharge to your country's satisfaction the sacred obligation you have taken upon yourself.

'Your return to Africa, after so many years of indefatigable studies and remunerative appointment in a country far ahead of ours in education and civilisation, speaks of your great devotion and love to your country.

'What increases our happiness more is your early attachment to journalistic occupation, because we believe that it is the best field for the exposition of your knowledge and promulgation of your patriotic feelings for the sufferings of the Africans in general.

'We doubt not that your activities will open a new page in West African journalism.

'May the Almighty God impress upon those concerned the advisability and the necessity of accepting you in the spirit you have come, which is, as an African to Africa.

'We remain, yours fraternally . . .'

In view of the fact that I had been away from my homeland for many years, I asked Mr Ocansey to allow me to return to Nigeria to renew old acquaintances and make new ones. Then I informed him that the salary of £120 per annum was parsimonious and that very few Africans with university education, who were trained abroad, would accept an editorial appointment with such a minimum salary. He asked what would be my minimum? I told him that I would not mind working for salary and commission, calculated on the basis of a net profit for the year, plus a commission based on circulation increases from time to time. He advised me that the market for newspaper sales in West Africa was very poor; he was afraid I might be making a mistake in thinking that commission would augment my salary appreciably.

In his opinion, the maximum circulation which was possible in the Gold Coast for a daily paper might be 3,000. He did not think that it would be possible to exceed that in the next decade, in view of the country's preponderating illiteracy. I thanked him for his fatherly advice, but assured him that I was prepared to take my chance in the attempt to prove that high circulation was possible in British West Africa.

When I returned the next day, Mr Ocansey agreed with my proposals: a salary of £180 per annum; plus a commission of 10 per cent on the net profit for the year; plus a commission of £3 per 1,000 increase in circulation, over and above the first 1,000, payable *pro rata*. I assured Mr Ocansey that I would sign the contract if the modifications suggested would be embodied in its original draft. He promised to incorporate them on my return to the Gold Coast from Nigeria. I emphasised that if he wanted my services, then the contract should be drawn

up and signed immediately. He pleaded that I should trust him and that he would not fail me.

Considering his reputation and his benefactions to me since my arrival in Accra, I made up my mind to have confidence in this friendly business magnate. He had already trusted me by giving me a loan of £16 for my travelling expenses. Then I booked my passage in the German steamer *Wadai*, bound for Lagos.

6. HOME AFTER NINE YEARS

Travelling homewards in a German steamer enabled me to contrast my experiences with those aboard a British-owned vessel. Without being parochial I must admit that I was treated with courtesy, and comforts were made available to me without fuss, as was my experience in the *Apapa*. Of course, I was travelling first-class in the *Wadai*, and I had travelled second-class in the *Apapa*. Yet I have no doubt that I was more happy and cheerful on board the German boat.

As an African passenger, my twenty-four-hour trip from Accra to Lagos was more pleasant to me than my fourteen days' trip from Liverpool to Accra in a British vessel. I pondered why those who professed to protect and rule me politically would want to impose a strain on my loyalty.

These thoughts caused me to soliloquise on the elements of strength and weakness in the methods of colonial administration of the continental European states towards the black races. The fact that the French Government, with all its faults, would not hesitate to appoint an African as General in the French Army, either in France or in their overseas territories, proved to me that skin colour was no barrier to achievement in the French community. The opposite was the case in the British Commonwealth. I knew that Africans were Governors of French colonies both in Africa and elsewhere including the French West Indies. I knew that colonial peoples had representation in the French Chamber of Deputies in Paris, and that some black persons had had the distinction of becoming members of the French Cabinet.

By now we had reached the Lagos lighthouse, and as we steamed into the lagoon the sun shone brilliantly and Lagos

emerged in its splendour. The *Wadai* anchored at the Customs Wharf. A sea of heads was there to welcome the passengers. Some of them were Africans, some were Europeans, and some were Syrians and Lebanese. Then my friends came on board and greeted me. I was thrilled as I set my feet, once more, on the soil of my country.

As I left the Customs to enter a waiting car which was to take me to the familiar haunts of my boyhood days, I shed tears of joy. I was happy that, at last, I had not failed in my attempt to improve myself, on which I had set out nine years previously. I was proud that whatever achievements had come my way had been realised through the sweat of my brow and that my success was genuine and had no taint of shadiness. Moreover, I was proud that I would have the opportunity to show that not all Africans who were educated in America were academic impostors, and that the prejudice against American education would now be exposed.

Patrick O. Emodi and I. Nne'ka Ikwuazom were among my friends who not only met me on board but also made arrangements for my accommodation in Lagos. They assured me that the Ibo community was proud of the honour I had done them by emerging as the first indigenous Ibo university graduate. We remembered the good old days at Onitsha.

I must confess to an occasional delinquency in writing to my friends and relatives, but there is one trait in me for which I am ever grateful to God, and that is the cultivation of a sense of appreciation and gratitude to my benefactors. Indeed, I shall be ever grateful to Emodi, who was then an Inspector of Police, and Ikwuazom, who was then a civil servant in the Medical Department, for their hospitality to me. Symbolically, milk and honey were the order of the day; sheep and goats were slaughtered; tymbals sounded, and there was dancing because the lost one had returned home.

This is metaphoric language, but it is how I can best describe the way my people received me, after a sojourn of nine years in the new world. According to arrangements made by a Committee of Ibo Gentlemen, Mr Ikwuazom was to be host for my lodging, and Mr Emodi undertook the responsibility for my board. Any person with common sense would appreciate the difficulty encountered by these two men; I was not oblivious

of the economic hardship in Lagos, and even though I rejoiced with them, yet I was determined not to cause them unnecessary out-of-pocket expenses.

When Mr Emodi asked me about the nature of the food I wanted, apparently making arrangement with a hired cook to prepare European diets for me, I calmly told him that my secret yearning, all these years, was to enjoy *dombai*, our staple diet in that part of Africa. He pleaded that I should not eat native food as it might upset my stomach and be deleterious to my health. I submitted that European or African diet could be deleterious to health, depending upon nutritional factors. So far as I knew, I thought that *dombai* and good old African vegetable or pepper soup contained sufficient carbohydrates, fats, minerals and protein to give me the necessary nutrition I needed, although I realised that excess of carbohydrates might intensify my body temperature. I knew that the leaves used in preparing the soup must have some vitamins which should make me healthy, provided pepper was not used excessively. Both Emodi and Ikwuazom laughed in amazement that the native had returned and 'gone native' overnight!

Meanwhile, visitors literally streamed in at Ikwuazom's and at Emodi's. Among them were former playmates, schoolmates, classmates and friends—J. C. Zizer, E. Alaba Akerele, Dr Kwao Sagoe, Ithiel O. Phillips, A. K. Disu, Max Iyalla, and several others. I often did not go to bed before 12 or 1 a.m., entertaining and deliberating with visitors.

Then Kodit Onwuli, my brother of the pen (we were among the foundation members of the Onitsha Literary Club and dabbled in writing poetry under the aegis of Stuart-Young), informed me that a Committee of Ibo Gentlemen had arranged a public reception in my honour to be held at the Glover Memorial Hall, on November 10, 1934.

Before my arrival in Lagos there had been dissension in the rank of the Ibo-speaking peoples as to what organisation should have the honour of according me what was, in their opinion, a fitting welcome. One group, composed mostly of elderly people, and who were Onitsha born, maintained that, since I was a son of Onitsha Ado N'Idu, it was proper for them to undertake the whole responsibility, before other peoples participated.

The other group, composed mostly of younger men whose

education and training and contact with the outside world had widened their horizon, preferred to cast away parochialism with all its concomitants. True, the members of the two groups were of mixed ages; there were young and old among the first, conservative group, and also among the second, radical group. The two delegations informed me that there was an impasse in their plans regarding my reception and sought for my opinion.

I welcomed the two delegations and informed them that, first and foremost, I was a son of humanity and a citizen of the world. I submitted that my place of birth was an accident: neither Onitsha nor Nigeria nor even Africa could correctly claim me, because I was of the earth, and I belonged to the earth, irrespective of geographical and other man-made boundaries. But I did not want to be too idealistic in my view of the mission of man in the world. So I asked them what were the tribal affinities of their constituencies. They replied that they were all Ibo-speaking people. Then I questioned why a house should be divided against itself.

I counselled them that the idea of aristocracy of birth was becoming obsolete, antique, antediluvian, and unworthy of practice by rational humanity. I added that I was sorry that tribalism still existed in West Africa, and that it was a pity that only the Ibo-speaking peoples saw fit to welcome me publicly, although I must admit that I was welcomed privately by different sections of the Lagos community. Then, as a human being who was faced with the practical realities of life, I asserted that I was opposed to all forms of social prejudice.

'The Ibo-speaking peoples are one,' I submitted. 'Our common creator gave us a common language and a common culture. The Ibo man and woman from Okigwi are not essentially different, in their race, language and culture, from the Ibo man and woman from Ibuzo, Aboh, Onitsha, Oguta, Owerri, Aro Chuku, Nsukka, Bende, and Udi. The Ibo people who speak the eastern dialect are understood by the Ibo people who speak the western dialect. The difference between the two main groups is only artificial and colloquial.

'Why all these artificial divisions among the Ibo-speaking peoples, who are a factor to be reckoned with in the future history of Nigeria, and who have a destiny in conjunction with

the Hausa, Yoruba, Ibibio, Efik, Itsekiri, Urhobo, Edo, Ishan, Nupe, Ijaw, Kalabari, Tiv, Kanuri and other tribes, towards the crystallisation of a new Nigeria? Come now, my brothers, do not cut your nose to spite your face. We are all Africans, sons and daughters of the great creator, brothers and sisters of the great human race. As for me, I would rather be welcomed by the Ibo-speaking peoples, because I am an Ibo man; I speak Ibo; my culture is Ibo-orientated, and when it comes to tribal classification, naturally I am Ibo.'

My interviewers were stunned to silence and shame; and the interview ended. I understood that both groups subsequently agreed that a reception should be given to me by a Committee of Ibo Gentlemen, and that, on my return from Onitsha, preparatory to my proceeding to Accra, a send-off should be given in my honour by the Onitsha people. Admittedly, this was a tactful way out of an embarrassing situation created by the barrier of inter-tribal and intra-tribal prejudice. I did not force the issue then, because I had sense enough to appreciate the conservative nature of man as a social animal, more particularly my kinsmen, bearing in mind the implication of the term 'Onitsha'.

At 5 p.m., on November 10, 1934, the Glover Memorial Hall was crowded by a big audience. The chairman of the occasion was O. Jibowu, supported by Honourable T. A. Doherty, Adedapo Kayode, J. C. Zizer and Dr Kwao Sagoe. Mr Emodi, Chairman of the Committee of Ibo Gentlemen, introduced Mr Jibowu in fitting terms, pointing to him with pride as one who had demonstrated the capacity of Africans to hold high positions of trust in the civil service. Mr Jibowu was then the only African magistrate in the civil service of Nigeria.

He rose and was generous in the complimentary adjectives he used in welcoming me to the homeland. His opening address was couched in terms of good humour. Then D. C. Orakwue, first class clerk in the Posts and Telegraphs, read and presented to me an address of welcome whose signatories were: P. O. Emodi, J. O. Ugboma, F. G. Onyiuke, B. E. Obianwu, J. O. Onyeachom, R. N. Onyejekwe, R. D. Odogwu, J. U. Uzzorh, P. U. Onyejekwe, M. O. Ajegbo, B. C. Asiodu, D. C. Orakwue, J. N. Ikemefuna, E. K. Keazor, J. A. Otigbah, Michael Brown, C. H. Olisa, J. C. Anyogu, S. A. Okonkwo, B. T. Okwusogu,

C. Idigo and F. S. Ijeh. The following is the text of the address:

'Dear Brother:

'It affords us the greatest pleasure to welcome you back home after a sojourn of nine years, and also to congratulate you on your many successes and achievements in the United States of America, in your quest for education that will lead to the uplift of your country and the glory of her name.

'When we look in retrospect upon the early days long past, when the desire started to burn within you like a living coal, and then recall also in this our hour of gratification what might have been termed one of the childish foibles of the rampant age, when you abandoned an appointment with a hopeful and lucrative future, for a goal, the attainment of which presented a hope much like a spider's web, our hearts are filled with joy that, in the end, the goal was reached, and now you have come back to us crowned with laurels and in the immortal words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

"Learned in all the love of old men,
In all youthful sports and pastime,
In all manly arts and labours."

'We have followed your academic career with unabated interest from your undergraduate days at Storer College, right up to your winning a fellowship at Howard University with a reasonable stipend in 1929; then up to the time you obtained, at a comparatively young age, your two Master's degrees in arts and science, and as a fitting climax to a highly academic achievement, your appointment to the high and responsible post of Instructor in Political Science . . . at Lincoln.

'All these are by no means idle accomplishments but speak audibly of the assiduity with which you applied yourself to your studies, and the realisation of your aim. In the social life of America you figured with no less distinction than in the academic life, for it is on record, and we are proud of it, that you were always an elected member of so many learned societies.

'America knew your worth and Great Britain also recognised it; for the bestowal on you of the Fellowship of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, and later the Fellowship of the Royal Economic Society, bear incontrovertible evidence of your keen efforts in these varied fields.

'In sports and other pastimes too, you hold a record worthy of pride and emulation. It is on record that you have won consistently distinction as a star "letter-man" in track and field athletics, swimming, football, tennis, boxing, field hockey and basket ball, and your recent aspiration to represent British West Africa,

for the first time in her history, in the great Empire Games though unaccomplished through lack of official support, is a great credit to your valour.

'In extra-curricular activities too, you maintained a record as class representative in inter-collegiate debates, as winner of golden keys in literary activities, and you won also five major scholarships at Storer College, and the Annual Conforth Oratorical Contest and the American Literature Prize.

'Journalism too held an honoured place for you and your joint editing of the *Summer Session Times* of Columbia University (1930), your contributions to many learned journals, among which we may only mention the *Journal of Negro History*, and also your election to the membership of the Institute of Journalists, of London, are by no means the idle achievements of a deck-chair lounge.

'Your recent publication, *Liberia in World Politics*, will long live to dispel the long-cherished opinion that the African lacks initiative and creative ability. We have not the slightest doubt that your detailed studies in psychology, sociology, political science, economics, education, philosophy, rural sociology and the principles and history of law will aid you in the task your country demands of you.

'Education is the sore need of your country and the education that she needs is in your own words, "not Europeanising, but rather Euro-Africanising the Africans". Let this then be your aim in whatever field of activity you engage yourself.

'Once more, we welcome you back to the motherland and wish you many happy days and greater achievements in the service of your country.

'We are, fraternally yours . . .'

As I rose to respond there was a tremendous applause and I was overcome with emotion. I thanked the chairman for his kind remarks and expressed my appreciation of the contents of the address of welcome. Then I appealed to the audience to look round the world and observe the widespread revolt of the youth-in-mind against the cant and hypocrisy of the day. There was need for a new approach to the problems of Africa, I urged, as I proceeded to demonstrate how a new Africa could emerge from the debris of the old.

The realisation of a new Africa was possible, according to my thesis, by the Africans cultivating spiritual balance, practising social regeneration, realising economic determinism, becoming mentally emancipated, and ushering in a political resurgence. By spiritual balance, I meant freedom of expression

and respect for the opinion of others. Social regeneration implied the treatment of all Africans as brothers and sisters, irrespective of tribe, so as to crystallise a sense of oneness and identity of community interest. No longer should Africans draw a line of distinction, based on tribal or linguistic factors, but they should appreciate the universal affinity of all African peoples.

By mental emancipation, I meant the eradication of fear in the mental make-up of the African. I urged my audience to emancipate themselves from the servitude of an inferiority complex, and substitute therefore a sort of psychological aggression. I adduced evidence to prove the mental and physical equality of Africans with the other races of mankind. I referred to the role played by Africans in ancient history: how the Greek *literati* portrayed the progenitors of Africans as gods and objects of beauty, and how they connected the black race with all that was noble, godly, and virtuous.

I mentioned the role of the black Ethiopians of the xxvth dynasty in Egyptian history in 663 bc. I narrated how the blacks from the Sudan, Napata and Meroe domiciled in Egypt, miscegenated with Egyptians and influenced the various dynasties of Egypt.

Then I wended my way through the corridors of time and told the story of the African in world history, spotlighting the immortal exploits of the black Duke of Florence, St Benedict the Black, Hannivalov of Russia, Amo, Alexandre Dumas, Chevalier de St George, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Dessalines, Phyllis Wheatley, Benjamin Russwurm, Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, and other great men and women who, in various field of human endeavour, physical and mental, had demonstrated the capacity of the black peoples.

I suggested that, if Africans could leave their native haunts and proceed to Europe or America to rub shoulders with the best intellectuals produced by these countries and even at times, surpass them, this proved conclusively that not only was the African the equal of any race on earth, but he was also superior to some of the representatives of the various races of mankind. Therefore, I urged my hearers to be up and doing, because the realisation of an independent political existence (which, in my speech, I identified as political resurgence),

presumed the four steps outlined by me, so as to concretise a trained mind, a sense of oneness, economic security, and an aristocracy of intelligence.

I concluded as follows: 'Where you have people whose thinking has evolved beyond the primal stage and who allow reason to control their thoughts; where you have people who appreciate their common affinity and live in a co-operative spirit; where you have people who are economically secure, individually and collectively; where you have people, who are creative factors in the social and material cultures of mankind, you cannot keep them politically subservient indefinitely. That is the substance of our revolt against the *status quo*. It shall be the basis of my mission and become a crusade for national freedom and the liberation of Africa from the manacles of European imperialism. God helping me, Nigeria shall be free and out of the struggle shall emerge a new Africa.'

I was loudly cheered as I resumed my seat, and *The Nigerian Daily Times* described my speech as having an 'electrifying' effect. In glowing language, it wished me success in my endeavours to serve my country and my continent. Then came invitations for lectures from various organisations, some of whom admittedly wanted an opportunity to put me through the acid test, so well known in Lagos! I did not waver because I had confidence in my ability to deliver the goods, since I had not abused the opportunities which were mine during my temporary exile in the new world.

I was aware of the unnecessary suspicion which security officials entertained about me and my mission; but I was honest in my convictions, sincere in my philosophy and reasonable in my argumentation. Thus armed with these spiritual weapons, I banished all fears from my mental make-up. When warned of the danger of incurring the displeasure of officialdom, I assured my friends that I had not returned home with a view to inciting my people to lawlessness. Instead, I was determined to excite them from within, by carefully studied and well-directed self-criticism, towards a renascent community, which should be the immediate stage before the crystallisation of a new Africa.

On one occasion I spoke at the CMS Faji School in Broad Street, Lagos, on 'African Contributions to Western Civilisa-

tion'. At this lecture I had the pleasure of meeting Thomas Horatio Jackson, a well-known journalist who had been my boyhood hero. His remarks after my lecture did me a world of good. In all modesty, I was shocked at the crowd which surged and milled inside and around the Faji School Hall, the yard, and even Broad Street; I was informed later that people crowded as far as Odunlami and Ajele Streets. This gave me satisfaction because I have always believed that no social reform is possible without taking the masses into consideration. That is why I have often maintained that, in becoming a journalist, I was travelling along the right track.

The verdict of history supports the thesis that no revolution, be it social, economic, religious or political, could crystallise without the support of the masses. The people hold the mandate of man's existence as a social animal, and no person can successfully claim to be a patriot who overlooks this important factor. Those intellectuals who think that they, alone, are gifted to change the destinies of their fellow men and women, are living in a fool's paradise, like Louis XIV and others who thought of the people as tools of the élite. History shows that they lived to sign their own death warrants.

I also had the distinction to speak, under the auspices of the Ansar-U-deen Society, on the subject of 'Mohamedan Contributions to Western Civilisation'. The crowd was so vast that the lecture was held out of doors. As I spoke I discovered the yearnings of my Muslim brothers and sisters for a spokesman to espouse their cause and interpret their philosophy to a community which had been antagonised against them through the forces of ignorance, prejudice, mis-education, and mis-leadership.

Then I pulled a boner! In my fervour, reviewing the biography of Mohamed, I referred to him as a camel driver who became one of the world's greatest religious philosophers. Although the great majority of the crowd did not appreciate this slip, yet it became the subject of a press controversy, when one of the Muslim leaders, a non-African, objected to Mohamed being identified as a camel driver. Of course, he was historically wrong, but I was able to appreciate how such a reference might be considered as derogatory. My friend forgot that Joshua, whom the Greeks called Jesus, was a carpenter by

trade, and explicit reference to this does not derogate from his greatness in history.

7. REUNION WITH MY KINSFOLK

Meanwhile, I prepared to return to Onitsha for a reunion with my father and my mother. I joined a lorry and proceeded homewards by way of Ibadan, Benin and Asaba. As we passed through the countryside, I was impressed by the progress made in road transportation. We made two important stops on the road from Lagos to Asaba. The first was at Ibadan, where the Onitsha colony there had mustered in strength. They stopped the lorry and entertained me for about half an hour, and were kind enough to present me with one guinea towards my travelling expenses.

At Benin, early in the morning about 6 a.m., the driver of our lorry was startled when a police constable, on patrol duty, stopped him and placed him under technical arrest. When we reached the police station I was more than happy to discover that the Inspector of Police in charge of Benin City was my namesake and class mate, George Benjamin C. Anyaegbunam, son of the first Ibo clergyman. The inspector laughed when he realised what had happened. He had instructed the police constable to be on the look-out for this particular lorry from Lagos, and to investigate if I was inside the lorry, and if so to ask me kindly to detour to the police station. I think this police constable did not quite understand his instructions and, apparently thinking that the lorry carried a fugitive criminal, or that its driver had committed an offence on the road, he placed the lorry, the driver and the passengers under arrest. When he discovered his folly, all of us—the inspector, the constable, the lorry driver, the passengers, and my humble self—had a big laugh at the embarrassing situation.

Then Anyaegbunam and I recalled our bygone days, especially 1912-15. We remembered when Miss Sarah Nsenu, Miss Priscilla (Anyaegbunam) Maduegbuna, Rev. V. N. Umunna, Mr Maduegbuna ('Omenike') and others taught us at the CMS Christ Church School, Onitsha. We recollected our escapades as schoolboys, exemplified in the immortal Christopher 'Nwitom' Akalam, Solomon Orakwue and other rascals.

And we reminisced on the pranks played by our girl classmates Eleanor (Ogwu) Mends, Jemima (Okobi) Anazonwu, Janet Brown, Eunice Udemba, and Eunice Abiana (Osadebe) Nnoruka and many others. Then I took leave of my pal and proceeded on my journey.

After eighteen hours of driving on the road we reached Asaba and beheld the lordly Niger! Asaba is an historic town, formerly a government headquarters. Although it is sited on the western side of the river, facing Onitsha, and I had passed through this town to and from Lokoja and Baro on many occasions, yet I had never set foot on its hallowed soil.

Asaba is significant for me for another reason. My father was educated at the CMS teachers' college there in the latter part of the 'ninties, before he joined the civil service. According to my mother, Okwudili, the boy who was born after me, died at Asaba in 1906 at a very early age, and his tiny body was buried in the sod of that town. Again, Asaba had claims on one of my aunts, Nwabiankie, eldest daughter of my maternal grandfather, who was married to Chief Obi Okoye of that town.

As soon as our lorry stopped, Chief Simon Egbunike, a member of one of the most famous families in Onitsha, greeted me and suggested that we delay our crossing the Niger because a deputation of leading members of the Onitsha community were on their way across to meet me at Asaba. I had not anticipated such a break in my journey; but it was welcome. When now the delegation arrived, they told me of intensive preparations to give me a rousing welcome, that the town of Onitsha was tense with hilarity and the people were in the mood for a Roman holiday.

At 4 p.m. we sailed on the marine ferry, the *Shanahan*. As we neared the eastern bank I beheld a sea of heads reminiscent of my stay in the United States whenever there was a big football match. The deputation said that the gargantuan crowd was evidence of the affection of my people for me. It was a vindication that they appreciated my intellectual achievements, they assured me. When we reached the marine wharf, I stepped ashore on the soil of my fatherland. It was a most thrilling experience, which probably comes once in a lifetime.

Then came the reunion between father and son, and between

mother and son. As they embraced me, tears of joy trickled from my eyes as I was transported into the realms of unbelievable ecstasy. That particular occasion can be better imagined than described. After greeting my parents, I was welcomed by the Chairman of the Onitsha Improvement Union, on behalf of the Onitsha community. Then I met members of the union and other leading citizens of the town who had congregated at the wharf. My parents and I were ushered into a waiting car, as the officials of the union and other prominent members of the Onitsha community followed in their cars.

The motorcade then headed for my father's house in Old Market Road, followed by a huge crowd estimated by the *Nigerian Daily Times* to be about 10,000, which was so thick that we had to move at a speed of less than five miles an hour. The heat was intense not to speak of the dust raised by the feet of this amazing crowd of admirers and curiosity seekers, who pushed our car and intermittently roared 'Welcome' as they sang, danced and sweltered.

When we reached my father's house, our yard was literally crowded to the brim, so that it was extremely difficult to break through the solid mass of humanity. After an exchange of greetings with officials of the Onitsha Improvement Union, I was formally handed over to my parents, as these officials who had so kindly organised this memorable reception took leave of me, and left me at the mercy of the crowd of visitors, who now surged at every available space in our compound and kept vigil with us until midnight. The next morning I received over fifty telegrams from different parts of Nigeria, some of which read as follows:

Jos. Welcome home and accept personal congratulations your brilliant educational achievements contribution to Nigeria's elevation to position of honour in world's history. Michael Odiari.

Jos. O thou glorious specimen of mother Africa I welcome you back to our troubled homeland with ecstatic feelings. Osmond Osadebe.

Ringim. Obed Azikiwe Onitsha. Accept our hearty congratulations for the arrival of our venerable son Professor Nnamdi Azikiwe. May God's Holy Spirit be his guide. Agusiobo for Onitsha Residents.

Calabar. Welcome and congratulations. Visit Calabar. Nyong Essien.

Owerri. Accept my unbounded congratulations. Welcome home. Welcome. Nnua. Chukwura.

Aba. Ibo community desire accord you reception Tuesday evening. Reply. Welcome home. Sidney Onyeabo.

Calabar. Ibo Tribe Union extend heartiest congratulations your attainments in America and safe return homeland and respectfully invite you to Calabar on visit. Telegraph date. Agusiobo for Union.

Benin City. Request one night when passing. Compliments. Ezecholui. Anyaegbunam.

Enugu. Onitsha Union wish you hearty welcome. Desire you visit Enugu. Advise whether possible giving date. Ikeme Secretary.

The above should suffice to give an indication of the tone and trend of these telegrams, not to speak of several letters which streamed into our home, welcoming me home and inviting me to come on a visit to their various communities. Then I was invited to a reception at the Native Court Hall, Onitsha, under the auspices of 'the Community of Ibo-speaking Young Men' on the evening of November 17, 1934. November 16 was my thirtieth birthday, and it was probably the best birthday I ever enjoyed, because it was the occasion of my return to the homeland, and the period of my life when my homefolk honoured my insignificant self as their worthy brother in the common cause.

On that night the Native Court Hall was crowded to overflowing. Among those who were programmed to speak that night was my friend, counsellor and guide, John Murray Stuart-Young, author, poet, philosopher, virtually ignored by his own people.

After the chairman of the occasion had been introduced, an address of welcome was read and presented to me, together with a substantial purse. The address was signed by the following: Simon Egbunike, I. A. Mbanefo, P. H. Okolo, F. M. Abuah, Thomas Mbanugo, T. O. Chukura, C. N. Egbuniwe. W. N. Onuchukwu, H. U. Kaine, J. Mba, J. N. Odogwu, M. N. Mora, P. N. Anyaorah, Denis A. Olimma, J. C. Onwualu, R. N. Ibeziako, P. A. Nnoka, James Ifeajuna, J. C. Nwanolue, P. O. Onwualu, R. D. Agbakoba, N. O. Ibuzoh, P. O. Ezeani, P. C. Emelu, J. B. Arinze, and others. The following is the text of the 'Address of Welcome presented to Professor

Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe, of Onitsha, by the community of Ibo-speaking young men, on the occasion of his return from the United States of America, after nine years of serious labour for his country':

'Our worthy son of Ibo-land—Africa:

'On behalf of ourselves, the signatories, in the name of all Ibo-speaking people, and in short, of all true sons of Africa, we welcome you back to the land of your birth. We welcome you to our midst, after nine long years of absence, not in quest for money, but for that treasure which really edifies.

'For nine long years have we waited in common, brooding over this thought—that America, that great Continent, shall one day be called to account. This day, with the rise of the sun, your *alma mater*, with all here present as witnesses, has assured us, your own kith and kin, of her magical method of transformation. America has another hold on Africa, her little brick of nine years ago is now a marble.

'We are grateful to God for His care and preservation of you during this period. We congratulate you on your splendid achievements. Our foregone conclusions after your matriculation at Howard University are true to the very letter today. We foresaw what was to come, when in 1927 you won six major scholarships at Storer College, and obtained a certificate in law from La Salle Extension University, of Chicago; we saw that the present honours must fall thick and fast. . . .

'We congratulate you as holder of nine athletic championships. Your splendid physique speaks of many years of great attention to the body also. Of your literary activities, modesty forbids our blowing our own trumpet. However, we congratulate you as the author of *Liberia in World Politics*, and also the author of six monographs on scientific and literary subjects. . . .

'How can we thank you for this world honour, this salvation? "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" This question has no more room in Ibo-land. Where there is nothing but there is the *will*—there is much—the will is the deed.

DALU OLU, NNAMDI. ONITSHA SI NA IFE EMEMEI.

'We have heard that the City Press Limited, of Accra, Gold Coast, offered the editorship of *The African Morning Post* to you, and that you have accepted same. We cannot put obstacles in your way. What is your reason for your choice is still an open question. To the men of your type, speculation is a hobby. But at the same time we feel that we have to sound our note in time.

'We know that as that great philosopher, Socrates, you are a citizen of the world and, therefore, even in the Gold Coast you are at home. You are at home, indeed, but you will feel more

at home with your own—your blood. Come back as soon as you can. Come back to us as a leader, a teacher.

We are, dear Professor, your own relatives, well-wishers and friends. . . .

In my reply I deplored the attitude of selfish parochialism which marred the social life of our people, and I warned that unless there was a reorientation of values the result would be a disintegration of our social structure with its attendant repercussions. Then I proceeded to outline my philosophy of a new Africa, appealing to all Africans to look forward towards a new day of freedom. This could not be realised without a change of attitude. This implied love for our kith and kin, and respect for our fellow man, irrespective of his tribe or clan, and a realisation of our oneness with humanity at large.

After my speech, Dr Stuart-Young said he was happy of the opportunity to join in welcoming me back to my native land and his adopted native land. He remembered when I was young and asked him for advice regarding the pursuit of a literary career, and how he advised me to leave it alone, unless I was genuinely inspired. He was proud that I was able to make the grade with distinction. He commended me to my people, telling them that he agreed *in toto* with my plea for unity, and that my philosophy of life was identical with his own in many respects.

Earlier that day a tennis tournament was staged in my honour at the Oguta Road tennis courts. I participated with my friends. Meanwhile, my cousin, the Owele of Onitsha (Chief Samuel Chukwuemeka Obianwu), had invited me to a family reunion dinner. The Owele spared no efforts to entertain me as befitted his high rank in the hierarchy of Onitsha chiefs.

By now a very close friend of mine, Arthur Rudolph Agusiobo, wrote a letter to me from Enugu, as follows:

'Dianyi,

'News of your arrival in Nigeria only reached us on Monday the 12th instant through the *Nigerian Daily Times*. I telegraphed at about 10 a.m. but could find from later reports that it may not have been delivered to you before you left.

'*Nnua Nnua!* A very hearty welcome I express to you! Record of your reception at Lagos wasn't a surprise to us, but that accorded to you at Onitsha itself as a whole.

'Due to divers factions and petty dissensions about the town, we who are out here feared that there would be nothing of the kind. You deserve it and I congratulate you.

'All I can remember now is about your preparation in 1923, at 3 Brown Street, Lagos, and see what position this has gained you today!

'Everybody regrets that we cannot ourselves find suitable employment at home in order to retain you for real loyal services to your motherland.

'It is the wish of everybody here to see you.'

My classmate, Samuel Obiora Achebe, also wrote to welcome me. He was then a tutor at St Paul's College, Awka, and as I read his letter my memory veered to my first romance which was doomed by destiny, because of the warmth of my ambition which forced me temporarily to relegate romance to the background. Such is life: a rendezvous of shattered dreams and broken hearts!

After spending two weeks at home I decided to visit friends and relatives who lived in nearby towns and were desirous of seeing me. My first place of call was Port Harcourt. I joined a lorry to make the 128-miles journey. On arrival at this important town I was given a princely welcome. A local brass band met me at the lorry park, where a big procession was formed to the premises of my host and cousin, S. N. Obi, then assistant chief clerk in the Treasury Department.

My arrival at Port Harcourt was also of historical significance to me. Although I had read of the first qualified physician produced by the Ibo nation, Dr Simon E. Onwu, yet I had not met him in the flesh until my visit to Port Harcourt. This history-making personality was so modest and self-effacing. I doffed my hat to him.

On the evening of November 22, 1934, I was the guest of the Ibo Union at a reception held in my honour in the Palladium, under the chairmanship of the Rev. L. R. Potts-Johnson, proprietor of *The Nigerian Observer*, a weekly periodical. Dr Onwu introduced the chairman in choice words, and the latter's opening remarks were featured by sarcasm and good humour which were appreciated by the audience.

The following were the signatories of the address of welcome: S. N. Obi, Charles A. Nweje, L. N. Mbakor, W. H. Davies, D. Okwosah, N. O. Alozie, Rev. S. N. Okagbue, Dr S. E. Onwu,

F. A. Utchay, Z. C. Obi, J. T. Ogbolu, F. W. Emuchay, and R. U. Ezeogu. The text reads as follows:

'We have very great pleasure to present you with address of welcome. A gifted son of Iboland, how proud and delighted we feel, as members of the Ibo Union, to have the honour to welcoming you to Port Harcourt this day.

'It was nine years ago that you left these shores to the United States of America in pursuit of higher branch of studies. During those years we watched with keen interest through the newspapers of America and Europe and the local press, your progress and brilliant achievements in the universities of Lincoln and Pennsylvania.

'It is worthy of note that through the different stages of your university and post-graduate studies in the United States of America you won laurels by display of those rare gifts and abilities for erudition and elocution of a great Aggrey.

'As an author and publicist of international repute, your book on Liberia—that much maligned Republic—and other well-known contributions to literature and art will remain a lasting monument of scholastic genius and achievement.

'We praise God for His mercies in guiding you through the vicissitudes of your sojourn in America and Europe and for bringing you safely home to Nigeria for happy reunion with friends and countrymen who have the satisfaction of seeing in you the dawn of a new era in educational and cultural aspirations of the rising generation of the Ibo country and Nigeria.

'Finally we pray that whatever walk of life it will please God to call you may be the means of diffusing light and knowledge to the people of this land and the honour and glory of God.

'Once more we bid you welcome.'

From Port Harcourt I entrained for Enugu together with my companion, Mrs Janet C. Obodochina, sister of Mr Obi, who had accompanied me in all my perambulations from Lagos to the provincial towns and back. Enugu was an enigma to me. I recalled events of exactly a decade before which became vivid once more in my memory. How my heart cracked in agony at a short-lived romance! Who should have been mine had become another's, and who should have been her brother's had become mine. Such is life's irony.

At 5.15 p.m., on November 23, at the African Club House, Enugu, the Onitsha Improvement Union staged a grand reception in my honour, under the chairmanship of Rev. A. W. Howells. Fifteen minutes later a group photograph was

taken, as at Port Harcourt. Onuora Ikeme, Secretary of the OIU, introduced the chairman and his supporters. After Rev. Howells had made his preliminary remarks, Mr Agusiobo read the address of welcome to me.

This address is not being reproduced because it is substantially the same as the other addresses already published. Then I spoke on 'The New Africa' and urged the audience to revolt against the *status quo* and act as a leavening process so as to become forces for social progress. After I had spoken, a rather heavy purse was donated to me by the union. Mrs Sophia (Ogo) Egwuatu was the charming lady who presented the purse to me, amidst cheers.

J. M. Osindero then proposed a toast to 'the Future of African Youths', which was suitably replied to by C. T. Holmes. The chairman then wound up the meeting and also gave his impressions of the guests, after which J. M. Onyechi moved a vote of thanks to the chairman and his supporters. Later, dancing was the order of the day, with C. H. Anyogu as Master of Ceremonies.

The next day I left Enugu and returned to Onitsha, where I found a letter from one of my former teachers, a very brilliant son of Ibo-land, whose identity I will not disclose as it is irrelevant, but I will reproduce a portion of his letter. From it I gathered that he had been present at Port Harcourt when I was received by that community. He assured me that my ideas of a 'New Africa' were consonant with his and he urged me to visit some of the secondary schools of Ibo-land, particularly the CMS Training College, at Awka, so as to preach this gospel to the future leaders of Nigeria. His letter, which is self-explanatory, reads as follows:

'I hope you had a nice time at Enugu as it was at Port Harcourt. I came back yesterday from the Port. I don't know what your programme is at present, but I am making this important request of you.

'Your lecture at Port Harcourt on the "New Africa" greatly agreed with my humble views about this great continent that I would like you if possible to give the same lecture at Awka. Why I make this request is this: here we have the training college of the Mission that at present has in their grip as far as education is concerned the destiny of the country.

'Over a hundred students are in residence as well as others—

teachers in the Government employ. I hope that those of these who have ears to hear and eyes to see, after hearing the lecture as I was privileged to hear at Port Harcourt, will be lifted to a higher platform in their ideas; for I am afraid that some of our young boys have become stale and sterile in their minds about the future of Africa, and if that idea is carried away to the schools outside, the dawn of a better day will be put off longer than is necessary.'

Meanwhile, I had received an invitation from the African Club, Onitsha, signed by its Secretary, S. B. Adeoye, to another reception in my honour. This was partly recreational and partly intellectual. The first part of the reception, according to the programme, consisted of a tennis tournament, and the second part consisted of a garden party during which there was to be an exchange of views between the members of the club and their guests.

When the function opened, Grayson Awani, Chief Inspector of Police, delivered the introductory speech, and Mr Adeoye read the address of welcome. Other speakers on the programme were A. E. Prest (Inspector of Police), C. B. Janney (local Treasury assistant), and C. N. Chukurah (Assistant chief clerk, Police Department). The address reads as follows:

'On behalf of the members of the African Club, Onitsha, and in the name of all true sons of Africa, we welcome you back to your native land. We are happy indeed to have you back in our midst, after nine long years of absence, in quest for that which is more precious than rubies.

'Whether you did or did not sacrifice yourself for the benefit of Africa, is of interest only, as every enquiry is, which concerns the personal existence of a poet who has fully revealed man, and entirely concealed himself. For in such a limited period of nine years, and in the face of considerable odds, you have succeeded in winning for your country and race the great honours of the civilised world.

'Your academic qualifications speak for themselves; and as a holder of many championships, your splendid physique speaks of many years of great attention to the body also. Professor Azikiwe, we congratulate you. It is not drawing a long bow when we say you are, indeed as to your individuality, the "Great Unknown". What an amount of interest there is in that short letter of Cicero's in which he describes how Caesar dined with him.

'We find that "the man who kept the world in awe" ate, and drank, and talked as any other cultivated gentleman would,

and the community of nature between him and them, which the majesty of his genius seemed to destroy, the dining table thoroughly restores. In the same way, we long for the particulars which would put aside the majesty of your genius, and open an entrance for us to your individual humanity.

'We would like even to learn surely that your self-sacrifice is for the dawn of the new Africa. We are called upon, as it were by a superior warning voice, again to attend to Africa; to attend to the whole of it together; and to review the situation with a usual degree of care and calmness.

'To preach co-operation to an empire so great and so distracted as ours is, in the attempt, and undertaking that would ennoble the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest undertaking. Struggling a good while with these thoughts, however, by degrees we feel ourselves more firm. We derive, at length, some confidence from what in other circumstances usually produces timidity. We grow less anxious, even from the idea of our own insignificance.

'For, judging of what you are, by what you ought to be, we persuade ourselves that you would not regret a reasonable proposition, because it has nothing but its reason to recommend. The proposition is co-operation. Not co-operation through the medium of war; not co-operation through the labyrinth of endless negotiations; not co-operation to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing question. It is simple co-operation sought in this spirit of co-operation; and laid in principles purely pacific—"the pen is mightier than the sword". And for this co-operation, we now appeal to the enlightened, high-minded, right-feeling, conscientious and contemplative genius of our civilised countrymen.

'Professor Azikiwe, our idea is nothing more. The future of Africa lies in the hands of men like you. We cannot go beyond our powers. Country lands reach forth milk, cream, fruits, or what they have, and many nations (we have heard) that had not gums and incense, obtain their requests with a leavened cake. In that name, therefore, we most humbly present you with this address, that what delight is in it, may be ever yours, the reputation Africa's, and the fault ours. Professor Azikiwe, may God bless you.

'We are, your dear countrymen . . .'

Meanwhile, on November 26, 1934, the non-native African residents at Onitsha invited me specially to a *tête-à-tête* held in the Masonic Hall, where they welcomed me to Africa fittingly. They delivered a message to me, which I am reproducing below, and also presented me with a beautifully bound Holy Bible. The signatories of this message are as follows: E. E.

Williams (for Sierra Leone), N. A. Sannicz (for Gold Coast), J. T. Sharpe (for Yoruba), S. M. Uddosu (for Benin), Grayson Awani (for Itsekiri), J. B. Finecountry (for Niger Delta), and Aqua Okon (for Efik). The message read thus:

'On your return home from America laden with the high academic laurels of which any race in the civilised world will justly be proud, having brilliantly, creditably and most successfully pursued and completed your course of studies we, the undersigned on behalf of ourselves and the entire community of non-native African residents in Onitsha, cordially and sincerely welcome you home, and beg leave to express to you our heartiest congratulations.

'Although you had the chance and privileges of electing and selecting a line of study which would have brought to you greater benefit with immediate financial results and high placed position in life, yet we observe that you have adopted a vocation, an educational vocation—the press—more in duty to your race and country.

'We, therefore, wish you all Godspeed in your new sphere of life. And when, as leaders in all ages have experienced, your mettle is severely put to the test, you will always bear in mind the words of Ovid: "In difficult circumstances remember to keep an even mind".

'Sir, will you please accept from us this souvenir, the highest and the best which we could now offer you. May success crown all your efforts in this your exemplary unselfishness and labour of love for a united Africa, greater and higher still for the accomplishment of the prayer of the Christ: "That all may be one."

'We beg to remain, dear sir, your friends and countrymen.'

Meanwhile, I had left Onitsha bound for Aba, in order to accept the invitation of that community and also to renew acquaintance with Sidney, one of the children of Bishop Onyeabo. On arrival I was his guest. On the evening of November 27 a reception was held in my honour in the Native Court Hall, under the chairmanship of Sigismund Macaulay, barrister-at-law. Among those who attended it, as one of the supporters of the chairman, was Montacute Thompson, whose ability as a lawyer and an advocate was renowned in this part of the world. 'Monty' and I knew each other before I sailed away, and before the reception that evening he had kindly entertained me in his home; but I did not appreciate that, after the reception of that night, I would lose him for ever, for he died two years later.

The Aba reception opened with the introduction of the venerable chairman by Mr S. I. Simon. After the chairman's preliminary remarks, I was introduced to the audience by G. A. Abuwa. Then M. C. Samuel-Egonu read the address of welcome. After my reply a purse was presented to me and dancing continued until the early hours of the morning. The signatories of the address were: S. C. Madezia, G. A. Abuwa, J. C. Areh, Dixon O. Ewo, S. I. Simon, Sidney C. O. Onyeabo, M. C. E. Egonu, F. Wambu Wadibia, M. Monago Ufondu, and others. Here is the text of the address:

"We, the undersigned, as representing the Ibo community of Aba township, on behalf of ourselves and the people we represent, do hereby present this short address to you, in token of our good feelings towards you on your return from the United States, and also to express our appreciation of your brilliant and distinguished career while there.

"We congratulate you; we welcome you; we admire your spirit of enterprise, and of endeavour. You have shed lustre on our country and our race. You have proved by your example that tenacity of purpose is the key to unlock the barred gates of mystery and of fate. Difficulties which at first threatened your course have at last yielded to the dictates of your ambition and determination.

"We are proud of you; for through you, the Ibo land has gained an enviable position in contributing to world scholars. You have laid bare the futility of some unfounded aspersions often, but cursorily cast at us by the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the uncharitable, as to the mentality of the Ibo youth. By your achievements, the Ibo tribe has been reassured that given equal opportunities with her sister tribes she can cut her niche in the African temple.

"You have taught by your efforts that the word "impossibility" must be erased from our minds; and that with requisite determination, assiduity, self-confidence and industry, the dizzy heights of academic fame can no longer be reserved for the select few. We have watched with keen interest your career both at home and in the United States; and while you were prosecuting your courses of study there, and pulling off one degree after another, we here were offering prayers and praises unto Him who endowed you with the ability and stamina to achieve these successes.

"Indeed, well might we reaffirm that your tribesmen, your countrymen, your Africa, share with you all the joy and the felicity of the proud distinction of an "Instructor in Political Science". We hardly need to remind you that our country has changed but little in the things that matter since you left her

shores, presumably impelled to search for a balm to heal her woes which you know only too well.

'You have been forged at the American anvil and we look to you to contribute your quota to Nigeria's progress and more particularly to Ibo progress. To take a concrete example, your literary gifts might be placed for all it is worth at the altar of service. If it is true that the pen is mightier than the sword, well might Nigeria hope for the awakening of her latent racial consciousness from your inspiration; and we can only promise you that men are not lacking who will give you the backing that a Native Press in Eastern Nigeria all too well deserves.

'Finally, we commend you to the keeping of God, the almighty; we commend you to all true sons of Africa; we commend you to all well-wishers of our race. We wish you unqualified success in your indisputable field of Journalism. We join with other communities of our race to bid you welcome. Welcome once more to your motherland, thou distinguished son of Africa.

'We are, our dear brother and Professor, yours very sincerely, for and on behalf of the Ibo community of Aba township.'

From Aba I decided to proceed to Calabar, via Oron. On my arrival at this strategic centre, I was informed that the grave of my fellow 'merchant of light', the late Ered Ebito, barrister-at-law, was situated there. I lost no time in visiting his parents to console them. When they showed me his last resting place, I was downcast because, during his student days at Howard University (1924-27), very high hopes were held for Ebito.

At the Oron beach I was accosted by two gentlemen, P. O. Iboko and S. K. Jideonwu, who introduced themselves as delegates of the Ibo Tribe Union, Calabar. They had been deputed by the union to meet me and escort me to Calabar. They handed to me a first-class ticket for my passage, even though they did not mind sacrificing to travel third-class. I mention this point because it is a remarkable trait of the African—to suffer privation in order to guarantee comfort for his guest.

Two hours later we steamed into Calabar, my old hunting ground. Then my two escorts showed me a sea of heads which had clustered around Matilda beach. I was informed that the Ibo-speaking peoples at Calabar had decided to accord me a befitting welcome and that over 20,000 Ibo folk, one-half the population of that town, had thus decided to stage a demonstra-

tion on my behalf. When I landed on the historic shores of Calabar, my hosts lifted me into a waiting car and drove me round this ancient town. Indeed, it was a thrilling moment, as I had received part of my education at the Hope Waddell Institute and worked in the town as a solicitor's clerk before sailing away in 1925.

On the evening of November 28, 1934, a reception was given in my honour at the Duke Town School, under the chairmanship of the Honourable C. W. Clinton, barrister-at-law and proprietor of *The Nigerian Eastern Mail*. J. H. Agusiobo introduced the chairman, who was heartily cheered as he mounted the rostrum to commandeer the deliberations of the evening. I. R. Iwoka then read the address of welcome, after which I replied. Then J. Manderson Jones (a West Indian tutor), L. T. Chubb (district officer) and Asuquo Nyon spoke in turn. L. V. C. Anyogu moved a vote of thanks to the chairman and the guest-of-honour and the meeting was closed. M. D. W. Jeffreys, PH D (district officer) was also present.

I am not reproducing the address presented to me, but will remark that my trip to Calabar was also memorable because I was able to effect a reunion with one of my old school-mates, Olarenwaju Staveley, a civil engineer. Neither of us knew that we were destined to see each other then for the last time on earth for, like 'Monty', he succumbed two years later in Kabba Province.

The following evening, November 29, the Ibo Tribe Union had arranged a purely Ibo reception for me at the Holy Trinity School, where every one of us went native: the guest and the hosts. The congregation was about one thousand. Palm wine and kola nuts were the order of the day, and speeches were made in the Ibo language.

When one remembers that this group of Ibo peoples is a conglomerate of different Ibo-speaking clans from the eastern and western banks of the River Niger and from divergent cultural areas, then one would appreciate the spirit of conviviality and fraternity that was generated that day. The chairman of the occasion was Mr Kalu Irolo, and the following were the signatories to an address of welcome which was written in Ibo and read in Ibo on this auspicious occasion: J. A. Akaya, J. H. Agusiobo, P. O. Iboko, N. C. Okam, T. E. Awabiham S. T.

West, M. N. Nwachuku, Johnson Okelugo, S. Amaugbo, Paul Item, M. W. Onwumere, E. Okoro, G. I. Inji, K. Isiakpuna, Anya Oku and others. The text of the address, reproduced in its original Ibo. reads as follows:

'Onye Ayi Furu Nanya:

'Obu ayi nile nnuku ife obi uto uto ayi, ndi aha ayi di nime akwukwo a, si we zuko nebe a na aha Ibo nile di na Calabar, ka ayi we kele gi ekele nihi nleta ibiara ileta ayi, we gosikwa gi na ayi enwegh kwa okwu zuru ayi maka ikowara gi otu obi ayi nawuli kwa elu nonu, nihi obi ike i-nwere we ga Obodo America, no otutu aho, nanagh nti ahuhu nile di ya, we wetara Ibo nile okpu eze, wetakwara Nigeria, E, wetakwara Ndi Oji nile.

'Odi mgbe ayi nuru na inalata, ayi neche gi, akpiri ihu gi nakpokwa ayi nku, ma emesia, nihi ma madu neche ihe ogerme ma Chineke neme ozo, ayi ahugh kwa gi. Ma ugbuga, obibia i biara nihi ndi Ibo, na ndi eyi gi di na Calabar, nejigh nleda anya, mere ka onu ayi di uku kari. Ola edo bu ihe di oke onu ahia burukwa ine anachosi ike nuwa.

'Odigh aku aka nonu uzo onye ume ngwu; odigh kwa eso onye nejikoba aka ya arigo nihi ndina ya. Mgbe ndi ufodu dikwa nura, ndi ozo nadogbu onwe ha noru ehihe na abali. Anya nile imuru na ahuhu nile ihuru na Obodo America we nwe nmuta nke mere na inwere aha otutu di iche iche, dikwa uku, nke odigh mgbe anya ayi huru nmuta di otua nala Ibo, huru ayi ihe oke onu ahia karia ola ocha na ola edo.

'Oburu na ayi ewere pen ayi debe notu notu ihe bayere nmuta gi site na mgbe ayi na gi no rue mgbe ihapuru, site kwa na mgbe irutu Obodo America rue mgbe imusiri ihe ichoro we lataba, ayi chere na otutu madu ndi namagh gi geche na ayi nenyere gi otutu efu. Ayi guba kwa ya nogugu i geche na ayi akwadebegh ihapu gi ka izue ike niye gi nile. Otu odi, mgbe dum, nti ayi gheoghe, akwukwo, newspaper nagbara ayi ama mgbe nile na odigh ihe eji isi amu m'obu ihe eji aka eme odi mgbe ilara zu nime ya.

'Ma nke kasinu bu no kwa di elu nke nmuta gi nyere gi, na otu di elu di iche iche nke omera ka idi nime ha, na ugbuga na ijuru ha dum, we si na igeji ya bu nmuta we fe ala ndi Oji ofufe; ijikwa aho iteghete itara ahuhu nobodo inamagh we churu ndi oji aja. Nsi ngwusi okwu ayi, ayi nekegi ume na igbopuru gi ajo ihe nile nobodo America, obodo nuku ikpoasi di netiti ndi ocha no oji, ebe ndi'oji nwere otutu ihe nmekpa aru.

'Ayi nayokwa Ya ka O'duru gi we je ebe obula inaga yere ayi aka ka uzo O'meghere site na gi gharakwa imechi ozo. Ayi nayo gi ka inara nwantinti afere nka mpe opere kama ka ine anya obi juputara nonu nke anyi ji we nye ngi.

'Obu ayi, umu nne gi.'

I replied to this splendid message of goodwill by an appeal to the Ibo-speaking peoples: to forget their personal differences, to compose the same and to proceed forward on a mission of peace and goodwill wherever they lived. I pointed out to them the fact that, despite geographical differences, the Ibo people from Abiriba, Arochukwu, Okigwi, Owerri, Obosi, Onitsha, Awka, Udi, Abakaliki, Afikpo, Nsukka, Nkwerre, Aboh, Asaba, Ogwashi Uku, Ibuzo, etc., were able to congregate that evening under the auspices of the Ibo Tribe Union. This was a portent of a greater tomorrow for the forces of national unity.

In my humble opinion there was no material difference between all Ibo-speaking peoples and it was time the follies of yesterday were cast aside for the cultivation of a better relationship among them as part of the greater whole known as Nigeria. I asked the whole congregation whether they understood what I had said, in my own Ibo dialect? In unison, they replied in the affirmative. Then I said:

'Ndewo ndewo nuo: dalu nuo dalu nuo; onye na nkie onye na nkie; mbana nuo mbana nuo; ka a ka a; anyi anwula anyi anwula; ekwusie kwalam ihe nwere igwa una ta, ka Chineke nonyere anyi nile. Biko, gbahalu kwanum ma oburu na asusu Ibo nke mna su tata ewo siro madu nile anya, nihi na otego aka mgbe mu suru ya. Unu amago na aro iteghite dio nmu ji we nodu na obodo Bekei. Gri, ya! Gri ya!! Gri, ya!!!'

Then they laughed and rollicked because I was mutilating the Ibo grammar in the attempt to deliver my address in the 'Union' version which was immortalised by the late Archdeacon Dennis. After the speeches and the eatables and the drinkables, I was presented with a beautifully designed brass pan, typical of the arts and crafts of that part of Nigeria, and a fat purse. I thanked my benefactors and we disbanded, each person feeling a sense of oneness towards the crystallisation of Ibo nationalism as a foundation towards our social regeneration, as parts of a greater Nigeria.

The next day, November 30, 1934, I embarked at Elder's Wharf bound for Oron where, on arrival, I received a cablegram from Mr Ocansey urging me to return because all arrangements for the operations of *The African Morning Post* had been completed. On my arrival at Onitsha that evening, another

cablegram from Mr Ocansey stated that he was awaiting my return. He was worried and it was necessary for me to arrange to return to Accra.

Meanwhile, my father was persuaded by some friends not to allow me to leave Nigeria, but that I should settle down and start a newspaper at Onitsha. He went so far as to have entered into preliminary arrangements for the purchase of a small printing machine which was available. I promised my father that I would return if there was no meeting of minds between me and Mr Ocansey. He was obliged to release me.

I joined a motor lorry at Asaba, after crossing the Marine ferry. The next day we reached Lagos, where I became the guest of M. O. Ezeudu, a relative and a chief warder of His Majesty's Prison. On December 6, 1934, a send-off party was given for me in the Glover Memorial Hall, under the auspices of the Onitsha Improvement Union, with the Honourable Dr C. C. Adeniyi-Jones in the chair. A beautifully illuminated address of welcome was presented, after which a heavy purse was donated to me. The signatories of the illuminated address were M. O. Ezeudu, J. A. Egbuna, J. A. Obodochina, J. A. Ejoh, F. Ogugua-Arah, G. Egbuniwe, J. N. Obinwa, G. Anyaegbunam, and B. C. Obi.

CHAPTER IX
IN THE LAND OF
KWEGYIR AGGREY

*My baptism in the furnace of imperialism by aescendants of
Boadicea in the land of yellow metal*

'I do not know what I shall find on
out beyond the final fight;
I do not know what I shall meet beyond
the last barrage of night;
Nor do I care—but this I know—if
I but serve within the fold
And play the game—I'll be prepared
for all the endless years may hold.'

GRANTLAND RICE

I. 'MY WORD IS MY BOND'

After a month's stay in Nigeria I had to plan to return to the Gold Coast. As I have shown, pressure was brought to bear on me to abandon my plans to settle in Accra. In spite of temptations to remain at Onitsha and start publishing a periodical in a small way, I was determined to demonstrate not only my gratitude to Mr Ocansey but also to vindicate that I had not erred in accepting an appointment in a country which might not appreciate my conviction that an African should not be branded a stranger anywhere in Africa.

I knew that in the history of the world many countries had benefited from the contributions made by strangers to particular communities. Therefore I felt that I could not be an exception. But I realised that a time would come when the battle line would be drawn, as far as principles and values were concerned; in which case, one could not avoid daring to be a Daniel. This generally leads on to the raking up of prejudices by petty minds who, in their bigotry, do not care to what depth they descend to smear an opponent who

may happen to be a 'stranger'; however, I did not foresee that there would be those who would choose deliberately to misunderstand me and my mission.

What weighed heavily on my mind then was my father's idea that charity began at home. Father had insisted that it was silly of me to continue roaming from place to place, trying to better the conditions of life of other peoples, while my own peoples in Onitsha needed my services. I had agreed with him that Nigeria was as much in need of my services as any other part of Africa.

Nevertheless, I made up my mind not to disappoint Mr Ocansey who, in word and deed, had proved to be my benefactor. I ruminated that not one Nigerian business magnate was prepared to give me a job, although I was not a 'stranger' in Nigeria. Yet it took a man of Mr Ocansey's vision and stature to see possibilities in me, in spite of the fact that I was a 'stranger' in the Gold Coast. For me his trust was more than sufficient to offset any inconveniences I might suffer by being labelled a 'stranger'. I felt happy that I did not succumb to the temptation to disappoint him.

Meanwhile a passage had been booked for me to travel to Accra on board the Elder Dempster motor liner *Accra*. After a restful voyage I arrived at my destination. I resumed residence at the Trocadero Hotel, and then visited Mr Ocansey to report my return.

The next day I had a long business conference with Mr Ocansey, planning when to start the new daily newspaper and checking up on the plant and machinery, and other matters that would require our immediate attention before we launched it. It was not long before Mr Akiwumi delivered to me the original and counterpart copies of the contract of employment executed by me and the City Press Limited. True to Mr Ocansey's word, all the agreed terms in respect of salary, commission and percentage of net profit were embodied in the agreement.

2. FOUNDING OF 'THE AFRICAN MORNING POST'

Before I assumed the editorship of *The African Morning Post* I had certain objectives in view. I knew that if these aims could

be achieved, the newspaper would become a success, while the Gold Coast would speed on its way to political rebirth. Mr Ocansey had warned me that he was pessimistic about the financial outcome of the venture, but I had assured him that, other things being equal, we would be successful.

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 realisation of political freedom.

During my last year in the United States I took advantage of my postgraduate studies in political science, and contacts with historians like Carter G. Woodson, William Leo Hansberry, J. A. Rogers and Charles H. Wesley, to study and analyse the causes of the decline and fall of civilisations engendered by both the black and white races throughout history from ancient to contemporary times. I reached the conclusion that at the root of these was the denial of the basic rights of the citizen.

Ethiopia declined because its Emperor claimed to be, and acted as, god on earth. Ashanti evanesced because the Ashantehene proved to be a despot. The Benin empire vanished because its Oba was a tyrant. Ghana, Mali, Melle, Songhai, Zimbabwe, Monomotapa and the rest of the African civilisations became extinct because of the predilections of African rulers for vesting themselves with supreme powers of life and death over their citizens. I realised, of course, that these African rulers trod the same path of authoritarianism as their non-African contemporaries in other parts of the world.

Before leaving the United States, I decided to postulate certain theses to illustrate the steps required to arrive at a political resurrection of the splendour that had been Ethiopia in ancient times, and the magnificence that was Songhai and other indigenous African civilisations of the past. I thought that a recapitulation of basic human rights, in philosophical terms and in sociological sequence, might better prepare the minds of my audience in Africa.

I decided that, in view of the *status quo*, any change would be in the form of a sacrifice by the ruling élite, whether that élite were African or not. So I listed these 'sacrifices', beginning

with the individual, and from him to the primary group, and thence to African society at large.

First, I coined the expression *spiritual balance* to connote the fundamental freedom of conscience, thought and opinion. I explained that every person had an inalienable right to think, to know, and to believe; and that no person had a right to deprive any other person of the exercise of this basic right, or to deny him that right. If we must be free in Africa, then we must go back to essentials and cultivate a spiritual balance among ourselves.

Secondly, I construed *social regeneration* to imply freedom of association and freedom from discrimination on account of race, colour, tribe, creed or religion. I argued that every person has a right to exist, as a member of society, without having to apologise simply because he is black, white or yellow; or because he is animist or Christian or Muslim; or Ibo or Fanti or Mende or Arab. All Africans, I submitted, were equal not only before the law, but before God and man. Therefore, Africans should treat each other with respect as human beings and as equals.

Thirdly, I ventured into the realm of economics, which I believed was the taproot of human society. I thought that a society which was poor was bound to determine the thought-processes and social paraphernalia of its people. So, too, a society which was affluent. Therefore, I advocated the conquest of man over poverty and over his environment, to enable him to feed, clothe and shelter himself comfortably, in addition to enjoying the good things of life. I christened such a condition of life *economic determinism*, because I believed in Karl Marx's idea of the economic interpretation of history in the light of experience all over Africa.

Fourthly, I decided to make a voyage into the realms of the intellect. I saw history as a panorama of the enslavement of the ignorant by the intellectually developed. Throughout the course of man's sojourn on earth, the intellectually alert have always controlled the destinies of the mentally feeble and mentally retarded. I discovered that those human beings who *knew* their capabilities and understood their potentialities usually imposed their superior intelligence on the inferior ones. In the light of contemporary history, I thought that the

mind of the African was in a dormant state and needed re-awakening. Hence I postulated the thesis that *mental emancipation* was necessary for the mis-educated African to be re-educated and be politically renascent.

Fifthly, I ruminated that once the indigenous African enjoyed basic human rights, and was able to think and to hold opinions, without denying the right to others; once the indigenous African was sufficiently broad-minded to concede to human beings the right to live and to enjoy life, without apologies, on account of race, tribe or such similar extraneous elements; once the African was liberated from the social and economic factors of poverty, to enjoy life in an abundant society, where the cost of living would be reasonable and the standard of living above the minimum subsistence level; once the mind of the African was liberated from the shackles of ignorance and superstition, there could be no doubt about the inevitability of the *political risorgimento* of the African, since the satisfaction of these conditions implies freedom to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Armed with this 'philosophy' of the 'New Africa', I had supreme faith that my journalistic mission in the Gold Coast would be successful. Then I mapped out my plan of campaign to ensure the least dissipation of energy. First, I reasoned that only political freedom would enable the native of the Gold Coast to realise his destiny: so I made 'Dominion status for the Gold Coast' the political mission of *The African Morning Post*. Secondly, I thought that nothing short of the repeal of the Sedition Ordinance would facilitate the freedom of expression so necessary to embarrass a ruling clique into appreciating its own tyranny: so I decided to campaign for the repeal of a law which was passed in the teeth of opposition by the nominated unofficial members of the Gold Coast Legislative Council.

But there were certain imponderables on the way. The first was the British colonial regime, with its whole apparatus of political administration, economic domination, cultural influence and social control. Second were the allies of the British, in the form of collaborators—the hard core of the African élite, who benefited immensely from the colonial set-up. Third were certain African chauvinists, who disliked the idea of non-

natives dabbling in Gold Coast politics, and those who resented competition by strangers.

Having assessed the situation, my next move was to select the editorial staff that would assist me to produce the newspaper. Incidentally, I named *The African Morning Post* after a London morning paper which had just suspended publication, and I selected as its motto: 'Independent in all things and neutral in nothing affecting the destiny of Africa.'

The City Press Limited were its printers and publishers, and a skeleton staff had already been appointed by Mr Ocansey, as managing director, to handle its technical and business departments. The solicitors of the company were Messrs A. Molade Akiwumi and K. Adumuah Bosman. Mr Akiwumi was Mr Ocansey's son-in-law and Mr Bosman was Mr Akiwumi's brother-in-law.

My choice for the post of sub-editor fell on A. E. Desmond Mills, a native of James Town, Accra. He was my school-mate at the Methodist Boys' High School in Lagos and elder brother of my class-mate, Cecil H. Lantei Mills. Both were sons of my former boss at the Treasury Department in Lagos, Mr A. H. Mills. The choice for assistant editor fell on Moses Ochukpa, another school-mate of mine at the Hope Waddell Institute, Calabar. Moses was an excellent writer and made his way to the Gold Coast where his talent was not recognised. It was unfortunate that in less than a year Desmond Mills died, and Moses Ochukpa was admitted at an asylum, where he subsequently died.

I required a good assistant editor to handle sports, so I appointed K. A. B. Jones-Quartey, who had just returned to Accra after a successful career at the CMS Grammar School in Freetown. I had as proof readers my brother-in-law, Peter O. 'Rock' Arinze, who had left the Customs Department to join me in Accra; and Adolphus Kofi Blankson, who had just finished his schooling at Sekondi. With this small staff we started the paper, to be joined later by Adisa Williams, Charles E. Shyngle, George Hughes of Cape Coast and Abimbola Akiwumi of Accra.

I advised my team that whatever we wrote to appear in our editorial columns should be done in a straightforward manner without apologies. I instructed that they should select for

publication articles which did not create an impression that we were ashamed of our race or that we were apologetic for being black Africans. It was my view that our editorials should punch hard at all elements which sought to slow down the progress of the Gold Coast to freedom.

Africans were made to stand erect by the creator of the universe, I asserted; therefore, Africans must not crawl on their knees and bellies, like reptiles, in order to secure their inalienable rights and achieve their natural aspirations. I insisted that my editorial staff should familiarise themselves with the rudiments of libel law and I lectured them regularly on the job.

We did not forget female readers of newspapers either. I appointed Mrs Mabel Danquah as women's editor, on a part-time basis. She maintained a daily column which proved to be very popular. She was the first wife of Dr J. B. Danquah and was daughter of Frans Dove, a leading Accra lawyer. She was educated in the United Kingdom, and just before her appointment had published a book entitled *Us Women*.

We turned the heat on the colonial régime in our editorial columns and encouraged our readers to express their views without fear but with a sense of decency and responsibility. We criticised official policy where necessary, and made suggestions for ameliorating conditions. Colonial administrators, not used to democratic checks and control, became very sensitive and misunderstood our policy. They called us names and regarded us as 'Bolshies' and 'agitators'.

On the economy of the Gold Coast, we deplored the system which encouraged British and other foreign firms to fix prices for Gold Coast products, and then, after processing or manufacturing them, also to fix the prices to be paid for them locally. We labelled this system as economic exploitation and suggested the active participation of Africans in their economic development.

For the workers of the Gold Coast we demanded a living wage, better conditions of work, and the encouragement of trade unions to thrive. We urged the workers to improve their efficiency and at the same time to demand their right to exist as human beings and not to vegetate as lower animals of creation.

We condemned the servile imitation by the people of the

Gold Coast of foreign culture. We challenged Africans to appreciate their own culture and to emulate the best of European culture and adapt it to their African society. Blind worship of European institutions was regarded by us as social slavery. Consequently, we criticised the acceptance of British knighthoods and honours by African leaders.

Our policy created an outburst of resentment, especially on the part of social climbers, careerists and those professionals, traders and contractors who, hitherto, had depended upon the goodwill of British officials and business establishments. Even some paramount chiefs publicly denounced us as inciting the youth of the Gold Coast against their elders. Thus the battle line was drawn between the progressive elements and the conservatives.

My contract stipulated that the policy of *The African Morning Post* should be formulated by the board of directors from time to time. This meant that, politically, we had to toe the line of our board.

At the material time, there were two main political parties in Accra: the Ratepayers' Association and the Mambii Party. The Ratepayers controlled the Accra Town Council and monopolised membership in the Gold Coast Legislative Council. It was led by Dr F. V. Nanka-Bruce, OBE, and supported by C. Akilagpa Sawyerr and other prominent personalities. It was not well organised as a political party and was supported mainly by friends and relatives of this popular James Town physician and socialite, Dr Nanka-Bruce. Naturally, it attracted to its fold the growing professional class and a mixed grill of ambitious indigenous traders, contractors and their friends, relatives and supporters. In fact, the leaders of the Ratepayers formed the hard core of the social élite of Accra society. Like their kind elsewhere, they snubbed the *hoi polloi* as inferior beings.

The Mambii Party was a new political organisation. The word means 'the people', and it was led by Kojo Thompson and supported by J. H. Glover Willoughby and other influential personalities including Mr A. J. Ocansey. Whilst Messrs Thompson and Willoughby were Ga and native sons of Accra, Mr Ocansey hailed from Adda in the eastern sector of the colony and protectorate. Thus this new party attracted

some of the indigenous Ga of Accra and most of the non-indigenous elements who resided in Accra, irrespective of their station in life.

Before *The African Morning Post* jumped into the 'affray', I conferred with Mr Ocansey for directives. In his view we should give full support to the Mambii against its political opponents. I asked him to allow me to study the tactics of the Ratepayers and to plan our editorial strategy accordingly. He agreed. Later, I explained that in view of the snobbish attitude of the Ratepayers and their supporters, our strategy should take into consideration the need to organise all segments of Accra society ostensibly for an all-out assault on the colonial régime, but specifically against the Ratepayers, as 'collaborators' of the British colonial administration.

Having received the blessing of my employers, I proceeded to orientate my staff on the editorial policy to be adopted. I suggested that we should enlist the support of professionals, traders, contractors, market women, workers, youths, etc., in a sort of crusade against the continued political domination and economic exploitation of the Gold Coast by Britain. I urged that we should manoeuvre the Ratepayers to continue to snub non-natives, whom they branded *koyo*, i.e. strangers; and we should use their snobbery as an argument indicating their incompetence to guide and control the political destiny of Accra.

It was not long before the *Gold Coast Independent* opened fire not only on Kojo Thompson and his supporters, but also on me personally as a 'bird of passage', who had nothing at stake in the Gold Coast but to pit brother against brother. In hostile polemics, I was caricatured as an irresponsible stranger who did not appreciate the hospitality of the people of the Gold Coast. I was advised to go back to Nigeria where I belonged and cease from fishing out of troubled waters in the Gold Coast.

Among my most trenchant critics then was D. G. Tackie, who edited that paper and also wrote a weekly column in *The Independent* under the pen-name of 'Digit' (pronounced 'dee-gee-tee'). He was supported by his sub-editor, Kobina Peters, one of the few university graduates then living in Accra. Kenneth McNeil Stewart, a West Indian who had become naturalised in the Gold Coast, was then editing *The Times of West Africa*

for Dr Danquah, joined my critics. He was an experienced poet; but he donned the garb of a political critic and did not spare me. Dr Danquah himself was not as involved as these three writers; but when he had occasion to disagree with my views, he did not hesitate to fire his broadsides—with decorum.

I decided to join the Mambii Party to enable me to feel the pulse of its leadership and followership. I did not offer myself for any office, preferring to be an ordinary member with no ambition for political office. Then I made propaganda, by means of frequent lectures at the Palladium, on the basis of my five postulates for a new Africa.

I challenged the Ratepayers to concede to their opponents the right to hold opinions and to express them fearlessly. I exhorted them to regard all taxpayers who lived in Accra as citizens and not as strangers when it came to the exercise of political rights. I advocated better pay for workers and suggested that the right to collective bargaining was basic. I insisted that the political leadership of Accra by the Ratepayers was aristocratic and should be changed by a democratic one: I invited my critics to a public debate to give them an opportunity to controvert any of my arguments, instead of piling abuse on me in the columns of their newspapers.

The tactics worked and the Mambii Party became a mass movement. In no time, Kojo Thompson inflicted a surprising but crushing defeat on Dr Nanka-Bruce at the Legislative Council elections of 1935. Dr Bruce filed a petition, alleging certain irregularities during the election, and won. The results of the first election were annulled by the Supreme Court. At the re-election, Mr Thompson won a landslide victory and that put paid to the political monopoly of the Ratepayers. At subsequent municipal council elections, the Mambii Party routed them; and so a new order was established in Accra under the militant leadership of Kojo Thompson.

Accra was now more politically awake. *The African Morning Post* did roaring business. From a circulation of 2,000 in 1934 it had rocketed to 10,000 daily in 1936. This was a record for West Africa then. Readers enrolled from far-away places like Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Cameroons. Such political and business successes brought in their train some difficulties. Threats of victimisation filled the air. Jealous and envious

politicians plotted to involve us in the toils of the law. Traps were laid not only for the party leadership but for me as well. It was not long before I found myself in the dock arraigned with a three count charge of publishing seditious libel. Each count carried with it a penalty of imprisonment for two years or a fine of £100.

3. MY TRIAL FOR SEDITION

Prior to my leaving Onitsha for a flying visit to Calabar, I had hinted to my father of my desire to marry a wife. I confessed that I should have married an American wife of my choice, but bearing in mind the fact that I might be the first indigenous Ibo university graduate, I thought that I should set a standard for other Ibo-speaking intellectuals. I believed then, as I still do, in inter-tribal and inter-clan marriage; but at the material time it was very necessary that our customs and conventions should be appreciated and better assessed.

My father promised to assist in finding a suitable partner. On my return from the provinces, preparatory to my departure for Accra, he apprised me that he had found someone who might meet with my requirements. He then asked my cousin, Mrs Janet Chinwe Obodoechina, who was brought up with me by our paternal grandmother and her mother (Madam Azumdiolo Obi), to arrange for a meeting with this bride-to-be.

After the meeting I told my father that she was acceptable to me. Then I suggested that arrangements should be made for her join me in Accra, after all the betrothal arrangements had been satisfied according to Onitsha custom. I did not realise that it would take a long time to fulfil the obligations required, until I received my father's letter early in January 1935. It took almost a year to enable me to provide the funds and wherewithal to satisfy the requirements of convention and custom.

Accompanied by her cousin Henry Orefo (now Chief Orefo, the Owelle of Onitsha), my fiancée, Flora Ogbenyeanu Ogoegbunam, arrived at Accra towards the end of March 1936. On April 4, 1936, we were married in the Wesley Church, James Town, Accra. In the photograph we took after the

marriage, the following persons flanked us: Chief Orefo, Mrs Sophia Freeman (my cousin), Mr and Mrs Peter O. Arinze, A. K. Blankson, Jacob Chukwude Anyanti, Miss Victoria Obodoechina (then nine years of age), and Mrs Agbon Quartey, wife of my landlord.

I was enjoying my honeymoon when one day I received a chit attached to a typescript in my office, which read as follows: 'Editor-in-Chief, this is a most interesting article, please publish as soon as possible. A.J.O.' It was a typescript of an article entitled, 'Has the African a God?' written by Isaac Theophilus Akunna Wallace Johnson, under the pen-name of 'Effective'. After reading the article, I telephoned Mr Ocansey and asked for an interview, which he granted, and then explained to him that the article was offensive and could be calculated to ridicule the government and bring it into hatred and contempt. It might cause a criminal libel action against us. So I vetoed it. He thought it was what the Gold Coast needed and should be published. After a little argument I obeyed.

When I returned to my office, I sent for my sub-editor, Mr Hughes, and asked him to comply with the instruction of the managing director. He edited the article and passed it down to the printers to set. Afterwards it was chased and the final proof was read and okayed by the assistant editor, Mr Akiwumi. On Friday, May 15, 1936, the article appeared in *The African Morning Post* and created a sensation in Accra. In the meantime I asked that the typescript, the galley and the chase-proofs should be sent to me. I kept possession of these for they were material evidence to prove who wrote, who edited, and who inserted this article in the newspaper of that date.

A few days later, the house of Mr Wallace Johnson was searched by the police, who recovered the signed duplicate of the typescript and were thus in position to prove he was author of the article. Then he was served with a criminal writ, arrested and arraigned before the Magistrate's Court, charged with violating section 330 (2) (b) and section 330 (2) (e) of the Criminal Code Ordinance, 1934. According to the Privy Council judgment, the following are the relevant issues of this *cause célèbre*:

'This is an appeal by special leave from a judgment of the West African Court of Appeal (Gold Coast Session) dismissing an

appeal by the appellant against his conviction on the 13th October, 1936, by the Supreme Court of the Gold Coast at the Assizes held at Victoriaborg, Accra.

The appellant was tried upon an information containing two counts charging him with offences against section 330 of the Criminal Code of the Gold Coast Colony (Chapter 29). The first count charged the appellant with unlawfully publishing a seditious writing of and concerning the Government of the Gold Coast contrary to section 330 (2) (b) of the Criminal Code. The second count charged him with unlawfully having in his possession documents containing seditious writing of and concerning the Government of the Gold Coast, contrary to section 330 (2) (e).

The trial took place before the Chief Justice of the Gold Coast Colony sitting with three assessors on the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th 12th and 13th October, 1936. The appellant was convicted by the Chief Justice on both counts, and was sentenced to pay a fine of £50 on the first count and, in default of payment within 14 days, to be imprisoned for three months. No punishment was inflicted on the second count.

The appellant appealed to the West African Court of Appeal against his conviction. The appeal was heard on the 17th and 18th November and the 1st December, 1936, and was then dismissed. The appellant petitioned His Majesty in Council for special leave to appeal, and this was granted on the 28th July, 1938.

The writing which was the subject matter of the charges was part of an article signed "Effective" and published in a newspaper circulating in the Gold Coast Colony. The material words as set out in the information, together with allegations as to the meaning attributable to certain words and phrases, were as follows:

'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).’

Section 330 of the Criminal Code (now section 326 of the Criminal Code 1936 Revision) is as follows:

Subsection (2):

‘Any person who—

‘(b) prints or publishes by any such act as is specified in Title 18 any seditious words or writing or . . .

‘(e) being found in possession of any newspaper, book or document or any part thereof or extract therefrom containing seditious words or writing does not prove to the satisfaction of the Court that at the time he was found in such possession he did not know the nature of its contents . . . shall be liable—

‘(i) for a first offence under paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) to imprisonment for two years or to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds . . .

‘(ii) for a first offence under paragraphs (e) and (f) to imprisonment for one year or to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds . . .’

Subsection (8):

‘“A seditious intention” is an intention—

(1) to bring into hatred or 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; or

‘(2) to bring about a change in the sovereignty of the Gold Coast; or

‘(3) to excite His Majesty’s subjects or inhabitants of the Gold Coast to attempt to procure the alteration, otherwise than by lawful means, of any other matter in the Gold Coast as by law established; or

‘(4) to bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against the administration of justice in the Gold Coast; or

‘(5) to raise discontent or disaffection among His Majesty’s subjects or inhabitants of the Gold Coast; or

'(6) to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different classes of the population of the Gold Coast':

It is not a seditious intention—

(a) to show that His Majesty has been misled or mistaken in any of his measures; or

'(b) to point out errors or defects in the government or constitution of the Gold Coast as by law established or in legislation or in the administration of justice with a view to the reformation of such errors or defects; or

'(c) to persuade His Majesty's subjects or inhabitants of the Gold Coast to attempt to procure by lawful means the alteration of any matter in the Gold Coast as by law established other than that referred to in paragraph (2) of this sub-section; or

'(d) to point out with a view to their removal, any matters, which are producing or have a tendency to produce feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes of the population of the Gold Coast.

Provided that none of the acts or things mentioned in provisos (a), (b), (c) and (d) shall be deemed to be lawful if they are done in such a manner as to effect or be likely to effect any of the purposes (1) to (6) which are declared in this section to be a seditious intention.

"Seditious words" are words expressive of a seditious intention.

"Seditious writing" includes anything intended to be read and any sign or visible representation which is expressive of a seditious intention.'

'At the trial a plea of not guilty was entered. The appellant admitted the writing and publication of the article. His defence was that the article was not seditious and that it was not calculated to bring the Government of the Gold Coast Colony into hatred and contempt.

'A great deal of evidence was called as to the application of the article to the affairs of the Colony. Notwithstanding the statements of witnesses for the defence that they did not read the article as having reference to the Gold Coast Colony, it was not really in dispute that the appellant had the Government of the Colony in view when he wrote the article and that it referred to legislation and events generally in the Colony.

'There was no evidence of any outbreak of violence or of any manifestation of hostility to the Government of the Colony as a result of the article.

'The case presented by Counsel for the appellant for their Lordships' consideration was that the prosecution could not succeed unless the words complained of were themselves of such a nature as to be likely to incite to violence, and unless there was positive extrinsic evidence of seditious intention. The

foundation for these submissions was sought in the summing up by Cave J. in *R. v. Burns* (16 Cox cc 355) quoted at length in Russell on Crime (9th edition) pp. 89-96.

Reference was also made to a number of cases on the law of sedition in English and Scottish Courts, which, it was said, supported the statement of the law by Cave J. Their Lordships throw no doubt upon the authority of these decisions, and if this was a case arising in this country, they would feel it their duty to examine the decisions in order to test the submissions on behalf of the appellant.

The present case, however, arose in the Gold Coast Colony and the law applicable is contained in the Criminal Code of the Colony. It was contended that the intention of the Code was to reproduce the law of sedition as expounded in the case to which their Lordships' attention was called. Undoubtedly, the language of the section, under which the appellant was charged, lends some colour to this suggestion. There is a close correspondence at some points between the terms of the section in the Code and the statement of the English law of sedition by Stephen J. in the *Digest of Criminal Law* (7th edition), articles 123-126, quoted with approval by Cave J. in his summing up in *R. v. Burns*.

The fact remains, however, that it is in the Criminal Code of the Gold Coast Colony and not in English or Scottish cases that the law of sedition for the Colony is to be found. The Code was no doubt designed to suit the circumstances of the people of the Colony.

The elaborate structure of section 330 suggests that it was intended to contain as far as possible a full and complete statement of the law of sedition in the Colony. It must therefore be construed in its application to the facts of this case free from any glosses or interpolations derived from any expositions however authoritative of the law of England or of Scotland.

In these circumstances, their Lordships turn to the Code, and they find nothing in the section under consideration to support the appellant's contentions. "Seditious words", in the terms of sub-section (8), "are words expressive of a seditious intention." By an earlier definition in the same sub-section, "A seditious intention' is an intention to bring into hatred or contempt . . . the Government of the Gold Coast as by law established".

Their Lordships find these words clear and unambiguous. Questions will necessarily arise in every case as in this case as to the facts to which it is sought to apply these definitions. Fine distinctions may have to be drawn between facts which justify the conclusion that the intention of the person charged was to "bring into hatred or contempt . . . the Government of the Gold Coast", and facts which are consistent only with the view that the

intention was no more than, in the words of a later part of subsection (8), "to point out errors or defects in the Government of the Gold Coast".

'It is quite another thing to add words which are not in the Code and are not necessary to give a plain meaning to the section. Nowhere in the section is there anything to support the view that incitement to violence is a necessary ingredient of the crime of sedition. Violence may well be, and no doubt often is, the result of wild and ill-considered words, but the Code does not require proof from the words themselves of any intention to produce such a result, and their Lordships are unable to import words into section 330 which would be necessary to support the appellant's argument.

'The submission that there must be some extrinsic evidence of intention, outside the words themselves, before seditious intention can exist must also fail and for the same reason. If the words are seditious by reason of their expression of a seditious intention as defined in the section, the seditious intention appears without any extrinsic evidence.

'The Legislature of the Colony might have defined "seditious words" by reference to an intention proved by evidence of other words or overt acts. It is sufficient to say they have not done so.

'For the reasons indicated this appeal should be dismissed and their Lordships will humbly advise His Majesty accordingly.'

Their Lordships found no justifiable ground to reverse the judgment of the West African Court of Appeal (5 WACA 56). The judgment was delivered on December 11, 1939.

To return to Saturday, May 23, 1936, the precincts of the Trocadero Hotel in Accra, where I resided, buzzed with excitement on that day, when D. G. Carruthers, Superintendent of Police, arrived with a complement of police constables and demanded to see me. He was directed to my suite on the top floor of the hotel and, on accosting me, he asked: 'Are you Mr Nnamdi Azikiwe?' I answered in the affirmative. Then, 'Are you the editor of *The African Morning Post*?' I said: 'Yes.' Then he replied: 'I have a criminal writ for you'. . . which he delivered to me for my perusal.

On reading the writ, I noticed that it contained four counts, of violating certain subsections of section 330 of the Criminal Code Ordinance. Each count carried a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment or £100 fine. 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 heaved a deep sigh as I noticed that cold sweat had overtaken me, and I shivered under an external appearance of a bravado.

Then Carruthers, a British Guianese of European descent, said to me: 'Zik, I hope you realise that I am doing my duty.' And I answered: 'Of course, D. G., I do.' He smiled and asked whether I would be coming to play tennis that evening at Adabraka, where we used to play a first-class game with the best in Accra. I replied that I would. Then he took leave of me.

My new bride asked what the noise was all about. I replied that one of our fellow tennis players, who happened to be a police officer, merely came to find out if I would be attending a practice session that evening at Adabraka. Then she asked what papers he handed to me. I replied that it was a circular for all members of the club who were interested in a tennis tournament that was being arranged. Then she left me to finish the preparation of my breakfast, since it was before 8 a.m.

I hurried to proceed to my office, which was unusual for Saturdays. My wife was worried and wondered what was wrong. I told her that I had no appetite for breakfast and that Mr Ocansey wanted to see me. She was puzzled because the telephone did not ring and, to her knowledge, nobody had come to our suite to deliver any message from Mr Ocansey. I asked her to trust me and not to worry. Then I entered my car and was driven to our Pagan Road office.

I had wanted to blame Mr Ocansey for not trusting my judgment in editorial matters, but in view of the delicate situation I decided to adopt a different attitude. He was also excited when I saw him and delivered the writ. As he read the indictments his hands quaked and I felt sure that a chill was passing down the old man's spine. I braced up and said to him: 'We don't have to worry, you know, Mr Ocansey. The burden of proof is on the prosecution.' He said that he realised it, but remarked that human beings could be wicked.

Then I struck a bargain with Mr Ocansey and told him that I had in my possession all the material documents that

could enable the Crown to secure prosecution. I submitted that the Crown could not, on presumptive evidence, prove me guilty of the offence complained of. They must prove that I wrote or authorised or edited or inserted or published the offending matter. Mr Wallace Johnson wrote the article; Mr Ocansey authorised the publication; Mr Hughes edited it; Mr Akiwumi inserted it; and the City Press Limited printed and published it. Therefore, the Crown could not fairly fasten on me the commission of a positive act on mere presumption, although, as editor, I realised that I was generally responsible for the publication of the newspaper.

When Messrs Akiwumi and Bosman, solicitors of the company, arrived, I repeated what I had previously told Mr Ocansey and told them that if Mr Ocansey would guarantee to pay the expenses for my defence, I would not disclose the person who authorised, edited and inserted the offending matter. I would take the rap and leave the prosecution to prove its case which, I was sure, it could not do. They asked me to surrender Mr Ocansey's original chit authorising the publication. I begged them to trust me, which they did. A few days later I appeared before Magistrate S. O. Quarshie-Idun, and the Crown Counsel was Algernon Brown (later Sir Algernon and Chief Justice of Northern Nigeria). I pleaded not guilty. He outlined the case for the Crown, whilst Messrs Akiwumi and Bosman represented me. Then the prosecution asked for adjournment to await the determination of the case against Wallace Johnson. My case was adjourned nineteen times at the request of the prosecution and, after the case against Wallace Johnson was determined by the assizes of the Supreme Court, I was arraigned at the November assizes before Mr Justice J. M. St John Yates.

At the material time Sir Leslie M'Carthy, KC, was Acting Attorney-General of the Gold Coast; he was said to be a distant relative of Dr Nanka-Bruce. But it was left to Gerard Howe, the Acting Solicitor-General (later Sir Gerard and Chief Justice of Hong Kong, and Attorney-General of Nigeria), to prosecute on behalf of the Crown. The prosecution submitted that the issue whether the article was a seditious libel or not was not in dispute. This had been determined in the *Rex versus Wallace Johnson* case by the Supreme Court. The issue

in my case was responsibility for the publication of the seditious libel.

The prosecutor then submitted that *The African Morning Post* was a newspaper published in the Gold Coast. He tendered a copy of the issue of the newspaper containing the offending article. He then led evidence to show that I was editor-in-chief of that newspaper. Mr Carruthers supplied the facts.

In the opinion of the Crown the article was calculated to bring into hatred and contempt or 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 different classes of the population of the Gold Coast. In view of the significance of the editor of a newspaper in a largely illiterate country, the prosecution held that a publication of this nature could result in disastrous consequences that might lead to an outbreak of violence.

My chief counsel, Frans Dove, who led Messrs Akiwumi and Bosman, decided not to put me in the witness box, but to make a technical submission of 'no case'. Mr Dove submitted that, for the prosecution to secure conviction, it must connect the accused with the crime. It must show that the accused either authorised or edited or inserted or published the seditious libel. Mere presumption that the accused was generally known to be editor of the offending newspaper was not enough. There must be positive evidence to show that the accused actually saw the typescript and then ordered publication. Vicarious responsibility could not be presumed, he argued, citing his authority from the latest edition of *Odgers on Libel*.

The judge requested him to give him the book for perusal, since the court library had only the old edition. Mr Dove then mentioned that it was my book. His Honour asked for my permission, which I did not hesitate to grant. After examining the authority cited, Mr Justice Yates overruled the submission and asked whether Mr Dove was prepared to continue his defence? He told the court that he had rested his case on his submission.

The trial judge then summed up the case and instructed

the three assessors, of whom one was a European employee of the UAC and the other two were African natives of the Gold Coast, resident in Accra. The two African assessors found me not guilty, whilst the European assessor found me guilty. Mr Justice Yates found me guilty. Then he spoke to me in this vein:

'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.'

I was marched to the cell, where I mixed with the other prisoners. My chief counsel came down to assure me that he was arranging for bail, while at the same time preparing grounds of appeal. Then I referred him to the Criminal Code Ordinance which stipulated a fine *or* imprisonment as penalty for the offence I was alleged to have committed. He advised me to pay the fine, which I did immediately. The Registrar (Mr Bannerman) handed me an official receipt; and Mr Dove advised me not to part with it.

After preparing grounds of appeal, my counsel submitted the same to the judge and asked for bail pending the determination of the appeal. Mr Justice Yates then detected the error in his sentence, as indicated in one of the grounds of appeal. He reconvened the court, which had been adjourned temporarily following the passing of sentence on me. I was again marched into the court and took my seat in the dock, when the judge asked me to rise and spoke in this vein:

'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 a fine.

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

Mr Dove pleaded with the judge that I had paid the fine; and since the law stipulated a penalty of imprisonment *or* fine,

and I had satisfied one alternative of that penalty, and moreover I was a first offender, His Honour should be mercifully disposed to have me discharged. Mr Justice Yates appeared surprised when he heard that I had already paid the fine. He demanded that I should produce the receipt, and I showed it to him. He then ordered me to return the receipt to the Registrar, who would refund my money to me. Mr Dove respectfully informed His Honour that he had advised me not to part with the receipt and submitted that it was for a higher court to decide whether the fine should be remitted or not. 'Very well, take the prisoner away,' ordered the judge.

After my bail papers had been prepared, I was granted bail on the suretyships of Mr E. C. Quarshie, proprietor of Jerrons Stores, Accra, and V. B. Annan, a pensioner lately returned from Nigeria. We prepared for the appeal, which took place in March 1937 before the West African Court of Appeal, constituted by Sir Donald Kingdon (Chief Justice of Nigeria), Sir Arthur Webber (Chief Justice of Sierra Leone), and Mr Justice Petrides (Chief Justice of the Gold Coast).

Again, Mr Dove led Messrs Akiwumi and Bosman in my defence; while H. W. Blackhall, Attorney-General of the Gold Coast (later Sir Henry, and President of the West African Court of Appeal) appeared for the Crown. My chief counsel informed the appeal court that, before tackling his main grounds of appeal, he wished to raise a preliminary objection. He submitted that the prosecution had failed to connect me with the crime in that it presumed that I was editor of *The African Morning Post*. Its duty in such a case, submitted Mr Dove, was to prove positively that I was editor who authorised or edited or inserted or published the seditious libel. This was not done.

In reply, Mr Blackhall admitted that what his learned friend submitted could be right; but, unfortunately for him, the record of the proceedings had made the task of the Crown easier, as he intended to prove to the court that the accused had already admitted being editor of *The African Morning Post*. Then he referred Their Honours to the evidence of Carruthers, who had deposed that when he went to serve me with the criminal writ, he had asked whether I was editor of that paper, and I admitted that I was. That evidence, submitted Mr Blackhall, disposed of Mr Dove's preliminary objection.

Mr Dove then averred that the submission of his learned friend was irrelevant, because the accused admitted on Saturday, May 23, 1936, that he was editor of the paper *on that date*. But the seditious libel appeared in the issue of that newspaper on May 15, 1936. Where was the evidence that the appellant was editor of that paper *on that date*? This, Mr Dove, submitted, was very material, and he challenged Mr Attorney to show in the record where evidence was adduced to this effect?

Since the Crown was unable to produce such evidence, Sir Donald Kingdon, President of the West African Court of Appeal, with the unanimous concurrence of his brother Chief Justices, proceeded to deliver judgment. He ruled that failure on the part of the Crown to connect the appellant with the crime, by proving that he was editor of the particular issue of *The African Morning Post* containing the seditious libel, was fatal to the prosecution. The court therefore allowed the appeal, quashed the conviction, remitted the fine, and acquitted and discharged the accused.

As soon as Sir Donald had finished reading his short judgment, a hilarious uproar broke out as hundreds in the court and its precincts began to rejoice in an unrestrained manner. The court was temporarily adjourned as 'Order in court!', shouted by the police, had no effect on the rapturous crowd.

I was carried shoulder high from the court, through the streets of Accra, to my office at Pagan Road. There Mr Ocansey congratulated me; and my staff joined with the mob as we milled through the streets of Accra, singing, dancing and merrymaking at my acquittal.

4. REMINISCENCES OF THE GOLD COAST

All told, I lived in the Gold Coast for thirty-two months—from November 1934 to July 1937. During that period I made friends and acquaintances in different walks of life, some of whom were destined to be lifelong. Apart from my professional calling and politics, I found time to participate in literary, sporting and wholesome social activities. My experiences were rewarding and, as long as I live, I can never forget that historic land.

Kwegyir Aggrey was responsible for my inspiration to rise

from the depths. Naturally, my first reaction after settling down in Accra was to visit Anamaboe, his birthplace, and to familiarise myself with the surroundings of his early development. I had the opportunity of seeing him when I was a lad of sixteen, and since then he had become my hero: faultless, sinless, and saintly. By the time I developed into manhood, I was still curious to know more about my boyhood hero.

Having been trained for holy orders, Aggrey's outlook on life was Christocentric. He was a truly great Christian and idealist. His sayings reflected his idealism; but there can be no doubt that he could not grasp the kernel of the social forces responsible for human relations, in spite of his exposure to, and familiarity with, the academic discipline of sociology, and his experiences as a black person in North Carolina. He continued to believe that harmony could be produced by playing the black and white keys of the piano.

This was a metaphor and it might be true of music; but certainly not of human beings. History has shown that, from time immemorial, black and white and brown races have failed to live in harmony, in spite of genuine efforts to cooperate by means of association or assimilation or amalgamation. The kind of harmony that can be optimistically expected is the tolerance of the racial minority elements by the fair-minded sector of the majority element. Without such tolerance, conflict or discord is bound to be the order of the day.

One of the great sayings of Aggrey on the African personality struck me: 'I believe that the Negro has a great gift for the world: the gift of meeting injustice and ostracism and oppression by sunny, light-hearted love and work. I believe he is going to teach that to Asia and the white folk.' If this saying were examined more analytically, it would be seen to be lacking in realism. Must injustice and ostracism and oppression be accepted light-heartedly and lovingly and as a matter of fact? Idealistically, perhaps; but pragmatically, not. History shows that injustice, ostracism and oppression can only be successfully met with moral or material force that is capable of replacing them with justice, kindness and fair play.

Another saying of Aggrey challenged my sense of justice. He said: '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.' I had studied Marcus Garvey's thoughts and opinions very carefully, and would not agree that he preached hostility; but this is a matter of opinion. Yet, assuming that he preached hostility, is it realistic to love those who try to exterminate one, and to continue working in spite of this threat to existence?

On Gandhi's teachings of *satyagraha*, history has proved Gandhi right. Those Indians who tried to love and co-operate with the alien *sahibs* who ruled them, and continued to do their work without seeking a practical means of effecting a radical change in their status, had learned from experience that they were living in the clouds. Who but a fool would co-operate with evil or with his oppressor?

That is not to say that Jesus of Nazareth lacked common sense when, in the beatitudes, he taught his listeners to love their enemies and do good to those who hate them. It simply means that a Christian must live on earth, not as part of the earth, but as part of elsewhere in the universe. Whether this is practicable or not remains to be seen. The division of Christianity into innumerable sects and the impracticability of some of its tenets might be responsible for the views of some cynics and sceptics. Well, Aggrey was a great Christian, and we need not criticise his Christian views.

What appealed to me more, was the applicability of these views on the Gold Coast, which was then under alien rule. Aggreyism confronted me as a way of life. Since I lived in an atmosphere of imperialism, or what we now describe as colonialism, I began to rationalise whether the Christian ethic was applicable in a society where social, political and economic control was concentrated in the hands of people who vested themselves with the power of life and death over their fellow men. As I surveyed the course of human history, I had my doubts. Hence, I decided to challenge injustice, ostracism and oppression, wherever they raised their heads, and to seek to replace them constitutionally with justice, kindness and fair play; leaving the Christian to continue in his belief, although he might find it difficult to translate idealism into practice.

One outstanding saying of Aggrey gave me hope and made me continue to respect him as my hero, in spite of the obvious

illogicalities in some of his outlook on the problems of life in twentieth-century Africa. It is this: 'I pray that God may continue to make me humble, meek and mild in my own interest; but bold as a lion, impregnable as adamant, and as determined as Fate, when it comes to working for Christian co-operation, for the elevation of my race, and for the protection of childhood and womanhood.'

To me, this was the epitome of a worthy life: humility, meekness and mildness, that are buttressed with a spirit that is resolute and determined to stand for what is right. Hence I was determined to join the struggle for the emancipation of Africans not only from foreign oppression but also from indigenous tyranny. This, I thought, was in accord with another Aggreyism: 'Let Africans remain good Africans, and not become a poor imitation of Europeans.' In other words, Africans must not substitute African imperialism for European imperialism.

Early in 1935, during the noise and din of Gold Coast politics, a young teacher who had been trained in Achimota College came to see me in my office. He had thought of becoming a Catholic priest, but changed his mind for personal reasons. He had ambition to study abroad, especially in the United States, but his funds were limited. He sought for my advice. I asked him whether he was able-bodied? He replied in the affirmative. I requested whether he would be willing to do any type of odd job and soil his hands so as to work his way through a university? He assured me that he would. Then I advised him to write to the authorities of Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

After he left me I sent a letter to Dr Walter Livingston Wright, Dean of the College, at Lincoln, and recommended this young man for his consideration as a prospective student. Dr Wright replied and confirmed having received his application for admission and informed me that the young man would be given an opportunity to discover himself. Later, this ambitious teacher visited me, full of joy, and showed me a letter admitting him at Lincoln that fall. He sailed for the United States and arrived in time to enter the university in September 1935. I refer to my friend, Dr Kwame Nkrumah who, after his education in America, returned to join other comrades in salvaging the Gold Coast from foreign rule.

During my stay in the Gold Coast I saw able to make contact with some men of the country who were graduates of American universities. Apart from the Reverend Dr Mark Hayford of Cape Coast, there was C. S. Acolatse, then a young lawyer. I understand that he later became a judge. J. Torto studied agriculture at the University of California. Rev. Dr I. D. Osabutey Aguedze and Rev. Dr F. K. Fiawoo were graduates of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlottesville, North Carolina. The former concentrated his activities in Adidome, while the latter confined his work at Anloga. Miss Charity Zormelo graduated from Hampton Institute, Virginia, specialising in Home Economics. She married Rev. Dr Fiawoo and died a few years later.

After Francis Kofie Kwia-Nkrumah had embarked for the United States, interest for further studies there was manifested by quite a number of young men. K. A. B. Jones-Quartey followed Nkrumah to Lincoln. He edited *The African Interpreter* in New York while doing his graduate work. Later he received his MA degree in English from Columbia University, and is now associate professor in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana; he is the author of one of my biographies.

Another contemporary of Nkrumah in the United States was Ako Adjei. I knew him when he was a last-year student at the Accra Academy. Then he went to study at Lincoln and moved on to Hampton Institute, and then to Columbia. After obtaining his MA, he proceeded to the United Kingdom, where he qualified as a lawyer in one of the inns of court. He became Foreign Minister of Ghana during the Nkrumah régime, but fell from grace and was detained without trial for many months, to be released after the army *coup* in February 1966.

I was impressed at the time by the liveliness of the Gold Coast press. On the death of J. E. Casely Hayford *The Gold Coast Leader*, published weekly in Sekondi, suspended publication; and it was left to *The Gold Coast Independent*, also a weekly, under the editorship of D. G. Tackie, to continue the struggle, aided by the *Vox Populi* at Accra.

The Gold Coast Spectator had brought virility to the weekly press, under the editorship of R. B. Wuta-Ofei; and it was my privilege to join *The African Morning Post* with the *Spectator* to reinforce the Ocansey group of newspapers in the Gold Coast,

for it was also owned by the City Press Limited. *The Times of West Africa* was owned by Dr Danquah, and edited by Kenneth M. Stewart. During the political squabbles of the early 'thirties, it faded out and suspended publication. *The Ashanti Pioneer* then came to the scene, published in Kumasi. It is still going strong, in spite of the vicissitudes of journalism in that part of West Africa. I understand that all the other newspapers mentioned above are now defunct.

Apart from Accra politics, the affairs of the Gold Coast in general loomed large and preoccupied my journalistic endeavours. The activities of the National Congress of British West Africa had inspired me during my school days, and fired my imagination to reinforce the ranks of the great men and women who sustained this organisation as soon as I could. Among these were J. E. Casely Hayford, H. Vanheim and T. Hutton-Mills of the Gold Coast; Herbert Macaulay, C. E. Shyngle and Chief Amodu Tijani Oluwa of Nigeria; Dr Bankole Bright of Sierra Leone; and E. F. Small of the Gambia.

These leaders were among those who comprised the delegation that visited the Colonial Office in London in 1920 demanding constitutional, political, social and economic reforms. They requested that the four English-speaking countries in West Africa should be granted representative government to expedite their progress to self-government, and they demanded the participation of West Africans in the formulation of executive policy in their countries. They pleaded for the creation of a common court of appeal for West Africa, and advocated the enfranchisement of its adult inhabitants. Then they suggested the establishment of a university for speeding up the training of personnel to operate the machinery of government in West Africa.

In spite of the moderate tone and reasonable requests of the petitioners, Lord Milner, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, turned down every one of their petitions. His lordship urged the delegation to return to their respective countries and co-operate with the *status quo*. This insult had great psychological effect on the countries concerned. It raised the issue: whether it was wise to continue adopting constitutional methods in trying to solve the problems created by European imperialism in Africa, especially in view of the fate of previous

delegations to the United Kingdom with petition-carrying delegates.

During my brief stay in London from July to October 1934, another delegation from the Gold Coast arrived in London to protest against the enactment of the amendment to the Criminal Code Ordinance, enlarging the scope of the crime of sedition in the Gold Coast. It will have been observed from the Privy Council decision in the *Wallace Johnson* versus *Rex* appeal, that the colonial authorities stretched the crime of sedition beyond the bounds of liberality. Their explanation for this assault on liberty was that the Gold coast was peopled mainly by illiterates and primitive people who could easily be misled or excited by agitators and mischief-makers. This, of course, is the usual argument of tyrants throughout history. This mode of reasoning was definitely responsible for the widespread agitation against colonialism and the incessant demands for independence in Africa and Asia.

The 1934 delegation was led by Nana Sir Ofori Atta, Omanhene of Akim Abuakwa, and its secretary was the celebrated Dr Danquah. The Gold Coast chieftain was a well-known Anglophile and was famous in his country as one in whom the colonial administration had implicit confidence. Yet when he arrived in London, he was shocked at the cavalier way Lord Swinton (then Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister), Secretary of State for the Colonies, received them and again advised them to return to their country and obey the newly enacted law. I took the opportunity to meet the delegation and to exchange views with Dr Danquah. It was ironical that both Wallace Johnson and myself had the distinction of being the guinea pigs used for a test case on this obnoxious law.

For political reasons, the leadership of Sir Ofori Atta and the composition of the delegation did not meet with the approval of a group of politicians in Cape Coast, who regarded themselves as more radical in temperament and outlook. I refer to the Gold Coast Aborigines Society, led by S. B. Wood and Kobina Seyki. This body sent its own delegation on the same mission. It also repeated some of the demands made by the National Congress of British West Africa fourteen years previously; and was similarly rebuffed by the ever-bungling wisecracks of the Colonial Office.

With such a background in Gold Coast politics, it was obvious that, as far as I was concerned, my path should be clear and my objective definite. If constitutional reforms must come in dribs and drabs at the pleasure of the colonial ruler, and not be regarded as a logical sequence in the historic evolution of any people towards statehood, then such people must agitate militantly within the law, to bring about a rapid change in their status, to enable them to formulate and implement policies that would reflect the reforms desired by them and their forefathers. Hence, my conviction that only 'Dominion status' would enable the Gold Coast to discover its national soul.

There were misgivings in those days about 'Dominion status'. Some of my friends were afraid that I would be prosecuted and goaled for advocating such a policy in 1935. This was due to the ambiguous wording of the sedition law, which made it an offence to advocate a change in the sovereignty of the Gold Coast. I maintained that the Statute of Westminster, 1931, clearly defined the implications of 'Dominion status' to mean self-government within the Commonwealth, of which the King was head. Thus, I argued that the colonial administration would not be legally justified in accusing me of trying to change the sovereignty of the Gold Coast. Such a law, I submitted, would be inconsistent with an act of the British Parliament, and so null and void.

Thus armed with the facts of history and feeling that the law was on my side, I waded into the controversy: whether or not the Gold Coast was ripe for self-government, and so, when such a historic change should take place. Many views were expressed *pro* and *contra* by politicians, intellectuals, writers and leaders in different walks of life. I still recollect the writings of many leaders of thought, irrespective of their political leanings, who expressed their views in the newspapers of the land, either in their own names or under pseudonyms. I remember particularly people like 'Lobster', Moses Danquah, Komli Gbedemah (senior), C. S. Adjei, Therson Cofie of the *Independent*, H. K. Mould of *The Spectator*, and others.

Then I turned my searchlight on the role of Achimota College in the social and intellectual revolution of the Gold Coast. I was quite familiar with the thoughts of Brigadier

Gordon Guggisberg and the Rev. A. G. Fraser on the education of the African, and how these two humanitarians pioneered Achimota as a bridge to connect the white and black races. But I was cynical about the sincerity of those who tried to put the ideals of Achimota into practice. The reasons for my cynicism were twofold: the role of Africans in Achimota, and the goals of Achimota.

I knew that the Achimota College authorities did not cherish the idea of giving African intellectuals a chance to teach at Achimota. At that time they made it a sort of exclusive preserve for white Britons. Otherwise, men like Dr Danquah, Kobina Peters and G. N. Alema should have been employed, if they had wanted to work there. Dr Danquah's reputation as a scholar surpassed a hundredfold those of the other white Britons and non-Africans engaged at Achimota. Kobina Peters got his degree at Durham and could easily have been absorbed to teach the classics, if nothing else. G. N. Alema qualified at Oxford in agriculture, and could have taught agriculture or any science subject with ease. To leave such talent and give preference to Europeans was to my mind an inconsistency which was not justifiable.

Even the role of Aggrey at Achimota left much to be desired. Contrary to popular notion, he was not the vice-principal of Achimota. He was not even the first vice-principal but *assistant* vice-principal. Why was he placed in a subordinate position, to make it possible for lilliputians to deride his academic qualifications, in spite of his valued experience in handling human situations? Besides, if he was not good enough academically for Achimota, why pull the wool over the eyes of Africans by appointing him on the staff as a figurehead to be admired by liberal-minded humanitarians and spurned by small-minded snobs?

Knowing how seriously I viewed the policy of recruitment and its effect on the objectives of Achimota College, its principal, the Rev. H. M. Grace, cultivated my acquaintance. He tried, in his winning Christian way, to persuade me that it was not due to race prejudice; but I found it difficult to agree with him. In his personal relationship with me I held him in high esteem; although I thought that the foundation of Achimota was tottering, because the colonial rulers felt that

only a British-orientated teaching staff could produce the right product that was expected of Achimota.

One facet of Gold Coast life into which I threw my lot was sports. I joined the Rodgers Club, and later identified myself with the Gold Coast Lawn Tennis Club at Adabraka, under the leadership of Richard Akwei, six times winner of the tennis singles championship of West Africa. Akwei was brought up in the Tilden tradition. He inspired and taught me to drive the tennis ball so hard that my opponent would find it difficult to return it. At the material time, I took interest in the techniques of Vines, the American Wimbledon champion, because he combined the power-drives of Tilden with the court tactics of Henri Cochet and René Lacoste of France.

I also joined the Tudu Lawn Tennis Club under the leadership of Frans Dove who, out of his generosity, maintained four tennis courts in his residence, supplied tennis balls, and encouraged leading tennis players in Accra to practise there daily. The two clubs indulged in a healthy rivalry, but I made friends with each of them and divided my playing time between them. My partners varied; but my last partner was Lovelace Buckle, who subsequently represented the Gold Coast in inter-colonial competition.

In boxing, I threw in my lot with the professional boxers who had made the Gold Coast prominent in this part of the world. I played the role of referee in some of the championship bouts and inter-colonial tournaments. That was the heyday of Seth Odamtey, then heavyweight champion of West Africa; Daniel Akwei, middleweight champion of West Africa; Chocolate Kid (alias J. E. S. Hayford, later Lieutenant-Colonel Hayford of the Ghana Air Force), welterweight champion of West Africa; and other stars like Nsawam Body, 'Vat 6g'. This was the time when Domingo Bailey, as flyweight champion of Nigeria, won the flyweight championship of West Africa in the midst of stiff competition.

One memorable occasion that I shall never forget was the staging of 'The Downfall of Zachariah Fee', a revue by the Governor, Sir Arnold Hodson. A most sociable person, Sir Arnold had earned the nickname of 'Sunshine Governor' when he lived in Freetown. In Accra, he threw open the gates and garden of Christiansborg Castle to the leading members of

the Accra community, and all delighted in strutting in the precincts of the Castle. When this revue was staged in the Palladium, Accra society turned out in full force, and we all particularly enjoyed the music, which featured 'The Teddy Bears Picnic'. I still admire the two books given to me as a wedding present by Sir Arnold, one of which was Stanley Baldwin's *Torch of Democracy*.

These multifarious activities necessitated my visiting different parts of the country, excepting the Northern Territories. Outside Accra, the other towns I frequented included Aburi, Achimota, Anamaboe, Cape Coast, Koforidua, Kumasi, Mankessim, Nsawam, Saltpond, Sekondi and Takoradi.

I visited Aburi during week-ends to admire the beautiful botanical and vegetable gardens maintained by the Department of Agriculture there. Achimota was then a cultural centre which attracted intellectuals, sports lovers and socialites. Anamaboe was a sort of national shrine. Cape Coast had been an intellectual centre of the Gold Coast until Achimota was founded. Even then Mfantshipim and Adisadel secondary schools still held their own. My friend Kobina Seyki lived there, and I did not hesitate to pay occasional visits, to exchange views with this savant of Gold Coast politics, whose radical ideas were after my own heart. Of course, the weather-beaten lawyer, Arku Korsah (later, Sir Arku and Chief Justice of Ghana) also resided there, and he was very friendly disposed towards me, not to mention the Hayfron-Benjamins and the de Graft Johnsons.

Once in a while I visited the Tortos at Koforidua, where young Torto was busily engaged in translating into practice the agricultural knowledge he had acquired as a student in the United States. He and his American wife made me feel at home whenever I visited this town. I travelled to Kumasi occasionally to renew acquaintance with W. J. Randolph, the draughtsman-contractor who had studied at Lincoln University a few years before. Mankessim was important in my itineraries as a road junction between Accra and the central and western provinces. I often stopped there to have a quick picnic lunch when travelling to Cape Coast or to Sekondi.

Nsawam was a sporting centre. Some of the toughest boxing

tournaments were staged there; and my Syrian and Lebanese friends did not hesitate to invite me to come and referee some of the main professional bouts staged there. Saltpond was important to me, for it was the place where I stored the printing plant and machinery that I purchased from the Railway Press at Sekondi, after I had relinquished the editorship of *The African Morning Post*. My first head printer, Smith Hammond, who purchased the press on my behalf and supervised its packing and shipment to Nigeria, hailed from here. He also accompanied me to Nigeria with a number of his countrymen, who stood by me most faithfully and loyally in those pioneering days.

As for Accra municipality, I made it my duty to familiarise myself with all its various wards: Adabraka, Christiansborg (Osu), James Town, Korle Bu, Korle Gono, Tema, Tudu, Usher Town and Victoriaborg, among others. The first eighteen months of my stay in the Gold Coast were spent in a suite at the Trocadero Hotel, in James Town; but during the latter part I stayed in Adabraka, on the Nsawam road. One particular acquaintance I made at Accra was with the family of Nii Kpakpa Oti.

Due to misunderstanding over the jurisdiction of the editor-in-chief and the managing director of *The African Morning Post*, and over certain financial matters, I was obliged to resign my appointment. Even then, I felt highly obliged to Mr Ocansey for his generosity in giving me the opportunity to earn a living and discover my true mission in Africa. True, he was not a highly educated man, but I found him to be extremely intelligent, resourceful, full of initiative and possessing the pioneering spirit of adventure which was lacking among contemporary Africans.

When the business history of this part of Africa is comprehensively written, due credit will be given to this African entrepreneur for his faith in the ability of the black man to hold his own in business competition. Not only was Mr Ocansey interested in newspaper printing and publishing, but he operated a chain of cinema theatres and also ran a string of 'Ocansey Stores', where the latest merchandise was always available at competitive prices. I admired his enterprising spirit and confess that this challenged me to take a risk and start a business

of my own. That I succeeded is due to the faith which contact with him inculcated in me.

Having relinquished my job, the issue confronting me was whether I should remain in the Gold Coast or return to Nigeria? I learned of the impending auction of certain condemned stores of the Railway Press at Sekondi, so I sent my friend Smith Hammond to represent my interest and make the highest bid for the purchase, which he did. Then he chartered a lorry for the printing plant and machinery, and stored it in the home of a friend in Saltpond. Hey presto, I had become the owner of a printing press and founded the Zik's Press as a business enterprise in Accra. So we arranged to remove the printing plants to Accra, where it was stored in the ground floor of my Adabraka residence.

A European friend became interested in my purchase of the Railway Press, and suggested that we should enter into a partnership and start a new daily newspaper. I agreed and assured V. G. Lainas that it would be necessary for us to sign a partnership agreement. Somehow the news leaked out; and the next thing I knew was that I had received a letter from Henley Coussey (later Sir Henley and President of the West African Court of Appeal), counsel for the City Press Limited, reminding me of a clause in my contract of employment, which precluded me from practising as a journalist in the Gold Coast for five years after the determination of my appointment with that company.

He was right; but I was advised at the same time that very few courts would enforce such a contract, since it would be tantamount to a restraint of trade. Attempts were made to persuade me to remain in the Gold Coast and challenge this attempt to browbeat me and prevent my giving *The African Morning Post* some much dreaded competition. But bearing in mind my respect for Mr Ocansey and my desire to leave the Gold Coast with a clean slate, I refused to be tempted to remain and engage in journalism against my previous employers, in spite of the supposedly alluring prospects.

Moreover, I was alerted that the Legal Department had counted their chickens before they were hatched, in that they assumed that the West African Court of Appeal would confirm my conviction; in which case, so the rumour went, an

official request would be made for me to be deported to Nigeria and to remain outside the Gold Coast after serving my sentence of six months. But the granting of my appeal frustrated this alleged stratagem. I had believed the rumour, whether it was true or not. So I made up my mind that, since my country had not initially offered me an opportunity to use my talent, and another country had done so, common sense and decency dictated that I should be grateful to the Gold Coast and not give cause for any unpleasantness which could easily be avoided. So I decided to return to Nigeria.

CHAPTER X

FOUNDING OF THE ZIK GROUP OF NEWSPAPERS

The story of my efforts to be economically secure and free from want

'If we work marble, it will perish;
If we work upon brass, time will efface it;
If we rear temples, they will crumble into dust;
But if we work upon immortal minds and instil
in them just principles,
We are then engraving that upon tablets which
no time can efface,
But will brighten to all eternity.'

DANIEL WEBSTER

1. THE MISSION OF SHOWING THE LIGHT

When I left Accra, bound for Lagos, I arranged for all the printing plant and machinery of the printing press to be shipped to my new sphere of operation. Because of the friendly attachment existing between me and some members of the staff of *The African Morning Post*, quite a number of these personally loyal workers pledged to serve me wherever I decided to print and publish newspapers. Because of this remarkable demonstration of loyalty and faithfulness, I can correctly claim that at least one-fifth of my original staff that started the *West African Pilot* had followed me from Accra, either as former employees or as admirers who were willing to join the crusade for the mental emancipation of Africa.

Among this band of crusaders were Adolphus Kofi Blankson, Collins Ulric Maximilian Gardner, Smith Hammond, N. A. B. Kotey, J. A. Mensah, E. L. Mensah, B. A. Tagoe, Paul Nutepe, Nii Abosey, E. P. Allotey, M. A. Cobblah and G. Ankrah. Blankson and Gardner were on the editorial staff. Smith Hammond was head printer. Nutepe was in charge of the book bindery. The two Mensahs and Cobblah were in charge

of the chases. Tagoe, Allotey and Abossey were compositors, while Ankrah was on the office staff. In spite of their paltry wages, they stuck with me.

My first task was to find accommodation, and No. 12 Market Street proved ideal for a start. Then I had to float a limited liability company which was christened Zik's Press Limited. It had an initial capital of £5,000, out of which £2,644 was paid-up. It was incorporated on August 5, 1937. Apart from myself, my father, my brother-in-law, and some Nigerians in the Gold Coast raised the initial capital which enabled me to buy the Railway Press plant at Sekondi and ship it to Lagos. My preoccupation was to raise the balance of £2,356 so that a working capital would be available.

I travelled to different parts of Nigeria while the plant and machinery were being installed. I succeeded in interesting many Nigerians and Gold Coasters in investing their money in this new venture. Within one month the needed capital was raised, and I planned to start publication of a daily newspaper on November 1, 1937. Unfortunately for me, I failed to take into consideration the cultural level of my people at that time. Moreover, certain business failures in the realms of banking and company management generally had made some investors to be overcautious, if not suspicious.

L. P. Ojukwu, who had invested £500 in my company and was elected a director, and through whose efforts eight investors bought shares worth in all £1,000, insisted that, although I was managing director of the company, yet he must appoint both the book-keeper and the cashier of the newspaper, who should be accountable to him while he, in turn, was accountable to me. I explained to him that it was an irregular procedure, but I offered to step down and become editor of the newspaper, provided he became managing director, when he would be in position to make such appointments in accordance with the terms of his agreement.

He declined to accept the offer to be appointed managing director on the ground that his grasp of the English language was rudimentary, but he insisted that I should allow him to make the two appointments or risk the chances of his claiming the refund of his investment and those of his relatives and friends. I was placed in a quandary because, as soon as he made

his investment, he had advised me to purchase further printing machinery since, in his opinion, the demand for our newspaper would be so great that the second-hand double royal wharfedale I had brought with me from Accra would not be able to satisfy popular demand.

Acting on his advice, I placed an order for a rebuilt double demy wharfedale for almost a thousand pounds c.i.f. excluding local charges. I husbanded the balance for recurrent expenditures and other contingencies. Thus it was not practicable for the company to refund the £500 without becoming financially embarrassed. If he carried out his threat to cause the withdrawal of the other thousand pounds, the company would be placed in serious financial difficulties. Prudence dictated that I should be tactful and conciliatory, which I was, but to no purpose.

Within a week of this impasse I received a letter from Mr Ojukwu's solicitor claiming the refund of his investment of £500 on the ground of misrepresentation. I was warned that failure to refund the money immediately would result in litigation. I consulted my solicitor, who advised me to comply with the request of my friend since his aim appeared to be to embarrass me and damage my credit before I even started business. I explained the precarious nature of the company's finances, but he advised that, of the two evils, the refund of this investment and the thousand pounds subscribed through his influence would be in the best interests of all concerned.

I was very shocked at the allegation that I had misrepresented matters relating to the company to him, because it was a complete fabrication; but in view of my solicitor's advice I invited Mr Ojukwu to confer with me in my office, which he did. I begged him to allow me to refund his investment in five equal instalments, since he knew that the money had been 'frozen', having been used to place an order for new printing machinery, which had been shipped from the United Kingdom. He refused to accept any instalmental repayment. He wanted refund of his investment in full or he would go to court, unless I allowed him to appoint the book-keeper and the cashier.

Thus, faced with Hobson's choice, I decided to refund his investment and avoid unnecessary embarrassment to a new business venture. I took out my cheque book to endorse it in

his favour, but he raised strenuous objection on the ground that it might turn out to be a 'rubber' cheque. I resented the insult and insisted that he should withdraw the imputation. He said he would do so if I gave him £500 in genuine currency notes. I reminded him that he had paid me by cheque and therefore I would repay him in like manner.

He agreed, provided I allowed him to use my telephone to obtain confirmation from the bank that the money was actually there. I raised no objection. So he telephoned K. M. Oliver, Manager of the Bank of British West Africa, to be assured that the cheque was good. Mr Oliver gave him the assurance. Before handing over the cheque to him, I requested him to pay me one shilling in cash, being the cost of the use of the telephone of the company. He refused to do so and I refused to hand the cheque to him. He offered to pay sixpence. I insisted on one shilling. Then he paid me one shilling and I handed him the cheque for £500.

Half an hour later I telephoned Mr Oliver to find out if the cheque had been encashed. He confirmed that it had and, of course, this made a deep inroad into our finances. Four days later I received letters from the relatives and friends of my would-be business associate, claiming the refund of their investments on ground of 'misrepresentation'. I calmly refunded the thousand pounds and decided to postpone the date of starting the newspaper. Then I decided to make another tour of the provinces and succeeded in selling shares for at least a thousand pounds. This, I thought, should be enough to augment what we had as reserves, and it enabled me to announce that the newspaper would start publication on November 22, 1937, instead of the date originally advertised.

After this initial setback, I regained my composure and proceeded to organise the business on a sound footing. In view of the defection of the director who had recovered his investment, I invited J. Green Mbadiwe, a mining prospector based at Minna, to join me and my father as directors of the new company. He accepted but reminded me that, like my father, he would be a 'sleeping' director, because he could not attend meetings regularly. Both of them trusted my judgment and had no reason to doubt my personal integrity. They, therefore, left me to use my discretion in the best interest of the business.

I had selected a competent editorial staff which included Fidelis Adophy, Olujide Somolu, John Agudosi Okwesa, F. O. Blaize, M. R. B. Ottun and Mobolaji Odunewu, in addition to Blankson and Gardner. In the business section, I invited Thomas Birch Freeman, a retired pensioner of the Marine Department, to assume office as business manager. G. D. Appah was appointed chief book-keeper. To see that the printing machinery functioned well, I appointed Samuel Ogunbamwo our press mechanic. He had been my team-mate in the Diamond Football Club which won the Lagos football championship fourteen years earlier.

In respect of the general technical staff, Smith Hammond assisted me in selecting the skilled craftsmen and women who were available in this specialised market. Some of them had gained experience in other printing and newspaper establishments and they did not find it difficult to adapt themselves to our newspaper organisation. Justina Dada Antonio, who was executive director of the *West African Pilot* during the civil war, was one of these experienced technicians.

I had christened the new daily paper *West African Pilot*, and chose Dante Alighieri's immortal lines as its motto: 'Show the light, and the people will find the way.' The duty of a pilot was to guide the ship entrusted to his care, and I thought that, at that stage in the development of my country, it was not the duty of any patriot to pontificate. It was incumbent on me to turn the searchlight of publicity, in the form of narration or exposition or description or argumentation, on the courses of action affecting my country directly or indirectly, leaving people to decide for themselves what attitude to adopt and what action to take, under such guidance. In this line of thought, we published the following as second editorial in our maiden issue:

"The motto of the *West African Pilot* is: "Show the light and the people will find the way." It reminds us of that portion of the scriptures which contain a beautiful analogy about man and light. Man, it says in effect, is a light, and no man lights his candle-light and conceals it under a bushel. He places it on the candle-stand so that its light might shine to all. This is the significance of light.

"The man who holds the light leads the way. As the pilot, he knows the way on land, at sea, and in the air. In the first, he

understands the rough places; in the second he is a master of the perils of the sea; and in the third, he commands a knowledge of the weather conditions. In all, he confidently moves ahead followed by others who entertain no doubts about his integrity. This is to say, one way of showing the light is to hold it up to those that are behind with the confident assurance that the way is a right one.

'Then the people will find the way, for the light is not concentrated at the feet of the holder. They are piloted aright and are able to guard against the dangers that may lie ahead. Africa needs a pilot with such a motto translated into practical life. And those who follow the true pilot, believing they are on the right track, will find their way to their destination with ease.'

On the day before publication of the maiden issue, I reminded my colleagues at our editorial conference that we were entering the field of competitive journalism to do two things: revolutionise journalism as it had been practised in Nigeria from 1859 to 1937, and demonstrate that journalism can be a successful business enterprise, just as any other field of human endeavour.

I was guided by the ideas of the great journalists who had preceded me, and particularly three of them, and I paraphrased their thoughts when I spoke to my editorial staff. I shall now reproduce these gems of thought which animated my drive to produce a newspaper, which did in the event set the stage for a new dimension in West African journalism. In their order of precedence, they are as follows:

J. Bright Davies, the doyen of West African journalism, in the maiden issue of *Nigerian Times*, a weekly newspaper, dated April 5, 1910, writing an editorial comment entitled 'A Reason for Our Faith', said:

'Public opinion in this country, taking expression in the widest acceptation or conceptions of the term, is just budding forth in its nascent growth, if even it can be regarded as having emerged at all out of an embryonic state. But, public opinion, as understood in the stricter sense and meaning of the term—there is no denying or blinking the fact—is entirely non-existent amongst us. The confused jumble of tongues, notions and ideas which passes current and is generally put forward as the opinion of the country, is not public opinion. And no wonder that, like the tower of Babel, the political, social and economic fabric of this nation's existence is threatened with decay and ruin under a ruthless policy of Government because of the prevailing confusion of tongues.'

'The creation, then, of a strong, healthy and vigorous public opinion in our country is one of the most important duties devolving on the intelligent and educated members of this community. But it is necessary to bear in mind that, although public opinion may possess strength, health and vigour—essential qualities undoubtedly—still it must be brought under proper training and educated under intelligent direction; otherwise, it is liable to sink down to the level of mere brute force. With such education and training, we shall be enabled to comprehend and appraise, at their true value, whether the measures of the Government under which we live appertain to our benefit or harm.

'We have no free institutions: we do not possess the franchise. Under the Crown Colony system by which we are governed, the public opinion of this country stands absolved from any political complexion whatever. The elections for the British Parliament, the rise and fall of governments, the successes or defeats at the polls of any of the two great parties in the state, these things interest us not. Whichever party is in power is no concern of ours.

'The government that seeks to protect the indigenous races of our country against harsh and oppressive measures by its consuls; that promotes the development of the social, industrial and economic resources of the country for the benefit of its inhabitants; that directs that the affairs of the country shall be conducted and governed by wise and humane laws; that native laws, customs and institutions, where they work no harm or injustice, shall be respected and maintained; that justice shall be administered impartially by the head of the local executive government to all the subjects of the King alike, irrespective of race, creed or colour; that will educate and train the native races under its rule and protection in the arts and forms of self-government on civilised lines; that cares for the moral and intellectual welfare and well-being of the native community; in short, that will instruct the representative of the Crown in this country, and keep him constantly reminded of the fact, that the great aim of his administration should be to do all that tends to make the people happy and contented, as it is their belief that they can be, under British rule;—the government that can accomplish these things for us, whether wholly or to the extent that it is permitted to do so, that Government is the party of our political opinion whilst it continues in power, and that is the party which the public opinion of this country ought most assuredly to acclaim.'

Dr Richard Akiwande Savage, in the maiden issue of the *Nigerian Spectator*, dated May 19, 1923, under his editorial notes, said:

'The safety of the people in modern society depends upon the

free and untrammelled expression of enlightened public opinion, and nowhere is this more imperative at present than in Nigeria. We have arrived at a stage in our political experience when, with a perfect understanding as to the goal before us, we can the more easily avoid those shoals which may endanger successively progressive advancement.

'Nigeria is a composite part of British West Africa, and, whether we will or no, our fortunes are irretrievably bound up with those of the latter. When we think of united Nigeria we must also think of united British West Africa. Indeed, there is hardly a responsible circle at present, whether Government, mercantile or economical, where British West Africa is not spoken of as a single entity, and all present-day ideas tend to such unification.

'It is in these circumstances that we start our career today as a public journal devoted to the expression of enlightened public opinion along the lines of that natural and normal advancement of the peoples of British West Africa, which we feel nothing can stop or prevent. But while thinking of West Africa in general, we shall of course think of Nigeria in particular, and neither in the one case nor the other do we think any apology is due from us to our readers.

'It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that the goal of British West Africa is to develop gradually her political system until she attains in due course full representative institutions, giving her the dominion status within the British Empire. It will not be tomorrow, or the next day. But that it is sure to come, no one can deny. Nor do we think there are any who will be found to dissent from the proposition.

'Now, in our progress toward this grand ideal there are bound to be differences of opinion. But there is every reason for us, as a people, to learn to differ, when and if necessary, without the personal rancour that tends to take us from our main quest and neutralise our efforts. We in Nigeria have wasted a good deal of valuable time in the past in useless personal encounters which have left us weak and impotent. Some of us vainly thought that we were doing a national service in such encounters. The truth is we gave our opponents and detractors the opportunity to come in and point to how little fit we were for responsibility.

'The result has been that proportionately to our political importance we are about to receive the smallest measure of representation in our local legislature; and we cannot complain because we were not united in pressing the claims of united Nigeria. We think it is about time we cried a truce to disruptive and disintegrating methods; and it will be our purpose to throw the oil of peace upon our troubled political waters and gradually heal the wounds that have been unfortunately inflicted in the past.

'If there are any to whom this work of healing differences is

unwelcome; if there are any who desire to perpetuate tribal, family, and individual warfare; to such we say we shall nevertheless not suffer ourselves to be deterred from the task we have set before us. Only we warn them that under certain circumstances one may be found not to be warring against man, but against ideals and movements which have their basis upon eternal principles, and can, therefore, claim sanctions that are more than human.

'In such circumstances, the metaphor of Mrs Nora Taylor, who is said to have addressed the second session of the Congress in Freetown, comes in aptly. Referring to the support of the Congress movement, she exclaimed, "If you cannot pull, push. But if you can neither pull nor push, then just get out of the way. For the locomotive is coming full speed ahead and it may crush you, if you get in its way."

'Really, it is important for men to remember that movements, like the National Congress of British West Africa, are not the work of any one man. Nor for that matter is any one indispensable to them. Indeed, no sane man can say that if tomorrow the leaders perished, the ideal would perish with them. That would be a writing of human history and evolution backwards. And it is for that reason that we call upon all patriotic sons of the soil to bury the hatchet and rally to the cause of liberty and national advancement.

'We claim for the people of British West Africa political freedom and equal opportunity, and when our sons in the public service plead for consideration, they plead in our name and shall not plead in vain. In our province, as *spectator* of British West African interest in general and of united Nigeria in particular, we shall reserve to ourselves the right of freely criticising and suggesting without malice, but with charity and persistence in the right.'

S. H. Braithwaite was the last of these three great journalists to influence the editorial policy of the *West African Pilot*. In the maiden issue of the *Nigerian Advocate*, dated August 1, 1923, the following thoughts appeared which had their influence on me:

'We shall do our best from time to time. . . .
We shall keep a straight bat and play the game.'

November 22, 1937, was momentous for me because it was the day a newspaper was published by a company of which I was a founder and in which I owned the controlling shares. Apart from the personal pride of partly owning a newspaper, it was a challenge to me to prove that my newspaper printing

and publishing could be made a profitable venture. Thus I put all my energy into the venture, dividing the work so that each section would operate smoothly and supervising the 'production' to ensure near perfection, if not perfection.

My editorial staff were loyal to the core. I made each one of them feel that his talent counted and his literary contribution was vital to the prestige of the newspaper. The division of labour took this shape:

All members of the editorial staff were assigned to day or night duties; among their individual responsibilities were to edit all manuscripts, according to our standard style sheet which I had prepared; they read galley proofs, and in addition corrected chase proofs; all members of the editorial staff should write one editorial on any current topic and submit it to me daily; I would maintain the 'Inside Stuff' column in addition to writing one or more editorials daily; Okwesa should maintain a column of 'Chit Chat' to reflect gossip in 'high' places; Ewart Thompson, a new acquisition, should write 'Here, There, and Yonder' by 'Tom Tinkle' daily; Ottun and Odunewu alternately should write daily commentaries on any aspect of sports; Odunewu should study the movement of prices in the shops and markets and write the column 'Business Notes' daily, in addition to maintaining the column on 'Movement of Steamers'.

In drafting our editorial comment for the maiden issue, we followed the pattern of *The African Morning Post* which started its journalistic life with a maiden editorial entitled 'We Make Our Bow'. In the case of the *West African Pilot*, we entitled it 'The Curtain Rises', and expounded that since we realised that newspapers are the dial of humanity's clock, we made our bow on the stage of West African journalism in a spirit which regarded co-operation as an essential element towards the fullest enjoyment of life among the inhabitants of this part of the world. We continued our maiden editorial in these words:

'The *West African Pilot* is a child of circumstance and we are cognisant of the fate of many a child of circumstance in the theatre of world's history. Nevertheless, this new organ of public opinion is destined to perform its task, in concert with its contemporaries, in a spirit of humility and candour and co-operation.

'As James Keeley enunciated: "Possession of a social conscience is necessary to the newspaper which would do its duty to readers and public alike." Consequently, the editorial policy of this newspaper will be independent in all things and neutral in nothing which affects the destiny of Africa.

'... Consistent with this policy, we shall not scruple to focus the spotlight of public opinion on any issue which affects the destiny of Africa, in the light of our sincere and honest convictions.

'We believe that genuine co-operation between the Government and the governed is and must be a *sine qua non* towards the successful realisation of the objectives of the state, as an instrument for the crystallisation of social and economic security to the nationals and residents under the aegis of that state's territorial sovereignty. Therefore, we shall not claim to be pro-this or anti-that.

'If Government, as an agent of the state, adopts certain measures which, in our opinion, would enhance the happiness of the community, we shall not scruple to say so and to laud the Government for its co-operative spirit. If, on the other hand, Government enunciates or applies certain measures which, in our opinion, would militate against the best interest of the community, it will be our supreme task, as a sentinel of popular liberty and guardian of civilization, to make our assertion in non-ambiguous terms.

'Our programme is based on the quest for social justice. Politically, we look forward to a better Nigeria and a more glorious future for West Africa. Socially, we hope that tribal prejudice and social stratifications are gone for ever and they must be swept away if they dare raise their horrid heads. Economically, we aim at the eradication of such forces of profit motive which overlook the African producer as a human being, and which lay unnecessary emphasis on material values.

'We anticipate no foes and we trust that it will not be necessary for us to be misunderstood. Howbeit, we offer to all our hand of fellowship and we trust that we shall be reciprocated, accordingly. To Government, we offer our humble allegiance, in return for protection and enjoyment, to the fullest, of the rights and privileges of the national or protégé. To the community, we assure our willingness to serve the cause that needs assistance against encroachment that deserves resistance.

"These things shall be! a loftier race
Than e'er the world hath known shall rise,
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes".'

2. A NEWSPAPER AS A BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

The literary content of a modern newspaper is one aspect of a complicated business structure with financial implications. Having assembled a large collection of plant and machinery in a factory and divided work among workers, to lubricate the wheels of this embryo industry to be productive meant an outlay of money for capital and recurrent expenditures. My next problem was to ensure a regular income which would provide sufficient revenue to offset the expenditure and to have sufficient profit for the shareholders and reserves for renewals, expansion and contingencies.

In the newspaper world there are many sources of revenue, to wit: advertisement, circulation, commercial printing, sale of printing paper, sale of accessories and printing supplies, royalties, etc. But in reality the main sources of revenue are the first three items named above.

As for advertising, it was obvious that practically all the mercantile, banking, insurance, shipping, mining and other vested interests in the country were expatriate. Thus their interest in local newspapers was secondary, their primary interest being confined either to periodicals published in Europe with West African bias, or newspapers published in Nigeria by expatriates or under the auspices of expatriates. After the cream of advertisement revenue had been skimmed off and presented to the favoured ones, the residue was usually rationed to the indigenous newspapers in the form of a dole or a crumb.

In 1937 the position of African entrepreneurs was precarious. Very few of them had the capital or managerial ability, expert knowledge or commercial experience to operate modern business competently. Thus advertising meant little to them since they had not the capital for such an 'expensive luxury'. Some of them advertised all right, but they could not afford to pay more than one shilling per single column inch, when the expatriate firms were willing to pay three or four shillings to their 'favourites'.

I decided to alter the order of precedence of revenue potential, as practised abroad, where advertisement was rated first. I decided that if I could increase my circulation and hold it to a figure that was constant, making allowance for fluctuations

beyond the control of all business enterprises, I would have a steady income to take care of my recurrent budget.

I reasoned that if I could hang on to a definite circulation, like 10,000 daily, and prepare my budget of expenditure on that basis, then any increase of circulation and any revenue earned from advertising, commercial printing, etc., would be an addition to gross profit which, with little prudence in financial administration, could give me not only a balanced budget but a reasonable net profit.

I was satisfied that my theory was practicable and, like a pragmatist that I have always thought myself to be, I proceeded to put my ideas to the test of reason and experience. The local publicity agency was then monopolised by expatriates who at first snubbed me. Then I contacted the Africa and Colonial Press Agency in London, which was under the management of my friend, J. Percy. He replied that he was willing to co-operate but I should prove my mettle in persuading prospective advertisers that my paper was not a nine days' wonder.

In the meantime, I made personal contacts with some of my school-mates and contemporaries and asked them why their businesses could not grow up like giants but remained like pygmies. They replied that their lack of capital was responsible. I bargained that if they would contract to advertise regularly in my newspaper for five years, then I would give them 'rock bottom' rates, in view of the inspired 'opposition' against African newspapers by the monopolies.

It was not long before many African enterprises had begun to advertise in our newspaper, led by Waterloo Medicine Stores, Bank Medicine Stores, and others. The former was owned by my class-mate, Babatande Scott, and the latter by my school-mate, Sir Mobolaji Bank-Anthony. These two gentlemen are still among my most cherished friends, in spite of the blizzards of Nigerian politics.

This was how I called the bluff of the expatriate advertisers, who not only monopolised the sale of capital and consumer goods to our people, but also monopolised the placing of advertisements in newspapers owned by the very people among whom these foreign enterprises thrived. I did not bother much with the moral issues involved. I only thought that all I could possibly do in the circumstances was to win over the confidence

of my people and make it impossible for others to starve my newspaper of advertisement revenue which was, in any case, very parsimonious.

After a year, the African and Colonial Press Agency began to send advertisement orders to us in trickles but at ridiculously low rates. We had to accept, but we proceeded to build up a big circulation by local standards, to enable us to keep in the race and also be in a position of strength when the time for bargaining with the monopolies came for increasing the advertisement rates.

Having studied the problem of newspaper distribution and observed its handicaps in a largely illiterate country like Nigeria, I decided to create a situation whereby the earning capacity of workers could be stable and also to employ artificial means to stimulate circulation, and thereby improve the quality of the newspaper, so that its reader circulation would be constant. I adopted three plans.

The first plan was to win the confidence of the newsvendors by encouraging them to organise themselves or strengthen their organisation in the form of a co-operative union. This required a lot of tact and patience because the local vendors appeared to be too independent. They lacked a spirit of cohesion for collective prosperity.

Because they were economically unstable I decided to allow them commissions on their sales, ranging from 25 per cent to 33½ per cent depending on their volume of business. I was prepared to make a bulk sale to the union, even with 33½ per cent commission, if they would take, say, 4,000 copies daily for Lagos alone. Otherwise, the registered individual vendors would be entitled to 25 per cent each.

This was good business opportunity for some of the unemployed. By selling 180 copies a day, a newsvendor could earn an income of 3s 9d. daily, or £1 2s 6d weekly, or £4 10s monthly, which was 10s higher than the prevailing salary of a third class clerk in the Nigerian Civil Service.

I conferred with the executives of the union and persuaded them to see the possibilities of earning an honest livelihood in this vocation. With 210 copies daily sales, each newsvendor could earn £5 monthly. With 240 he could make £5 10s. With 390 he could make £6. At the material time very few Nigerian

workers earned wages totalling £6 a month. As a matter of fact, most of the workers in the tin-mines of Northern Nigeria earned less than 1s a day: that is, £1 10s monthly.

The fact that the leading members of the vendors union developed to become leaders in their various communities, owning their own homes, getting married, rearing and educating their children, some of whom received secondary education, taking titles and fulfilling all their civic duties and responsibilities, is a vindication of our circulation policy.

The second plan was directed to vendors who lived outside Lagos. I invited applications from provincial agents on virtually identical terms. At first we were generous in not insisting that they should sign fidelity bonds or pay substantial security for their honest behaviour. The result was that most of them, though not all, were dishonest and grossly inefficient.

The third policy was to introduce gifts as an inducement to regular subscribers of our newspapers, so that in addition to stimulating local and provincial sales, I decided to distribute gifts to would-be subscribers. I collected together a series of my articles in *The African Morning Post* and elsewhere, which was issued in the form of a book entitled *Renascent Africa*. It was to be given to any prospective subscribers free of charge, provided the subscription was for one year.

I appointed S. W. Babs Taylor as a colporteur to register subscribers and distribute *Renascent Africa* to them. He was a Sierra Leonean, who had served as a clerk in various mercantile establishments in Northern Nigeria for many years. He was given sufficient funds for his transport and living expenses, in addition to a substantial salary. In three months he returned to Lagos having accomplished his mission. Then our circulation had soared to heights unprecedented in West African journalism.

Thus, from the circulation point of view, we demonstrated that the business of publishing a daily newspaper could become a going concern. At least we were able to contain our recurrent expenditure, particularly the purchase of newsprint and printing materials, repairs and renewals, salaries and wages, electricity, postage, freight, etc.

Our circulation policy amply rewarded us. From an initial daily printing of 6,000 copies we hit 9,000 in a year and by

1939 we had exceeded 10,000. The war then ensued and we had to experience shortages in the supply of newsprint, printing ink, spare parts of machinery and other accessories so important to the printing industry.

The popularity of the *West African Pilot* was patent. Throughout Nigeria and the English-speaking parts of West Africa this new daily was read avidly. Because of the emphasis I laid on circulation in the attempt to frustrate the monopolist contrivance of withholding advertisements from militant indigenous newspapers, and since this had stultified the growth of newspapers in this part of the world, I was determined to smash convention by proving that, other things being equal, an indigenously owned and well operated newspaper with spunk could pay its way and yield a reasonable profit.

After one year of existence, we declared a dividend of 15 per cent. For the years 1939-43 we declared 7½ per cent for each year. In 1944, it was 12 per cent. The year the war ended, it was 8 per cent; in 1946, it was 15 per cent; in 1947, it was nil; in 1948, it was 15 per cent; and in 1949 it was 20 per cent.

3. THE ZIK GROUP OF NEWSPAPERS

Flushed with success in printing and publishing the *West African Pilot*, we decided to introduce the 'group newspaper' idea in Nigeria. We had the machinery and plant. We had the expert knowledge of newspaper production. We had a skilled staff of workers in the editorial, business and technical aspects of the newspaper industry; and we had a small capital which enabled us to operate a profitable venture and to salt away small reserves for contingencies.

In view of the primitive system of transportation in the country, coupled with the unwillingness of the newspaper owners to co-operate in the manner of the Newspaper Press Association in Britain, it became necessary for me to find an answer, which I did by embarking on the 'group' idea. I thought that a Zik Group of newspapers published at strategic centres would minimise the problem of distribution.

On February 8, 1940, the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* was printed and published in Port Harcourt as the first daily

newspaper in Eastern Nigeria. Its motto was 'That universal brotherhood shall become a reality'. Its first editor was A. K. Blankson. The newspaper shook the eastern region like a hurricane. It was an instant success and it was good business, advertisements or no advertisements.

Three years later we moved to Onitsha, my home town, and started the *Nigerian Spokesman*. Its motto was 'That man shall not be a wolf to man', and its first editor was Olujide Somolu, who later became Chief Justice of Western Nigeria. Like the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, it was also a business success. Due to W. Coulson Labour's yeoman effort in publishing *Aurora* in the second decade of the twentieth century, Onitsha had once had a weekly paper, but this was the first daily newspaper to be published in that town.

A few months later I moved to Warri, and after negotiating accommodation with my good friend Chief Mukoro Mowoe, with the co-operation of another personal friend, Chief Asifo Egbe, I started the *Southern Nigeria Defender* there. Its motto was 'That man's inhumanity to man shall cease'. Its first editor was C. U. M. Gardner. At first it suffered losses, but it became a viable business proposition.

Early in 1944 I conferred with Duse Mohamed Ali, Effendi, for the purchase of *The Comet*; which was then a weekly news magazine. My intention was to transform it into a daily newspaper and transfer it later to Northern Nigeria. Negotiations being completed, we took control of this newspaper, christened it *Daily Comet* and appointed Anthony Enahoro, at the age of twenty-two, to assume its editorship. He was then the youngest newspaper editor in Nigeria, but it was a great opportunity for him to discover himself.

The original motto of *The Comet* was 'Truth, Liberty, Justice', but this was later changed by us to: 'That truth, liberty and justice shall flourish'. Due mainly to inexperience, Enahoro allowed himself to be decoyed into publishing what turned out to be criminal libel against a former Governor of Nigeria, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, whom I rate as a very considerate, humane and reasonable person and a friend of the African. Enahoro's informants deserted him at the hour of trial and he had to bear the full brunt of this ordeal. After the semblance of a defence, he was sentenced to a stretch of some months in

prison. His mother and I employed our resources to give him the best defence available locally. She appeared to understand that it was a case of the impetuosity of youth egged on by patriots, who were well-meaning but singularly ignorant of the fine points of the law of libel.

The outlay of capital for starting newspapers in Port Harcourt, Onitsha, Warri and Lagos had made an inroad into our finances. Various defensive actions against civil, criminal and seditious libel prosecutions made a deep bite into our budget and reserves. Apart from expensive solicitors' fees, we had to pay heavy costs, punitive damages, exemplary fines and awkward settlements out of court.

1947 was a bad business year for us. Not only was it the year I began to take an active interest in partisan politics by standing for election to the Legislative Council, but we had to spend money also for the expansion of our plant. I won the Lagos municipal election, but I could not concentrate on my business; so we had to sustain some losses that year. I also travelled to the United States and Europe from May to October 1947, after spending nine months in 1946 touring the whole of Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons on a political mission.

In 1948 business brightened a bit. The *Pilot's* daily circulation had hit 17,000 and advertisements were streaming in. We declared a dividend of 15 per cent, partly to recoup the loss of the previous year and to build up a sufficient reserve for the bank we had started to operate as from September 1 that year. In 1949 our circulation continued to spiral upwards, so that by 1950 it had topped the 20,000 mark, the highest in the history of West African journalism.

By 1947 I had slackened my journalistic activities. True, I was nominally editor-in-chief, but most of the detailed work, like selecting manuscripts, editing, proofing and inserting them for publication, was handled by my assistants, who had received a thorough on-the-job training. Instead of putting in over 12 hours daily, as I had done between 1937 and 1947, I was only able to remain in the office for six hours at the most. I wrote editorials occasionally and it was with difficulty that I filled my 'Inside Stuff' column.

Towards the end of 1951 I stood for another election, this time to the Western House of Assembly, as a representative

of Lagos, under the Macpherson Constitution, and I topped the poll. The NCNC was under the impression that it had won the election with 43 members out of 80. As it turned out, 20 of the legislators who were known or regarded as NCNC members or supporters or sympathisers decided to align themselves with another party. Some of these legislators who disappointed the hopes of the NCNC are as follows:

- (1) Chief Arthur Prest was Legal Adviser of the NCNC at Sapele.
- (2) Chief Anthony Enahoro had been a supporter and sympathiser of the NCNC from time immemorial. The officers and members of the NCNC were of that opinion until after the election.
- (3) Chief W. J. Falaiye was the NCNC representative at Akure. In fact, he was a local agent and correspondent of the *West African Pilot* and was nominated by me, as National President of the NCNC, to fill a vacuum created when neither the Ondo NCNC nor the Idanre NCNC were prepared to accede to the wishes of the Akure NCNC. I was asked to use my good offices to settle the dispute, hence the nomination of Chief Falaiye, which satisfied this constituency.
- (4) Chief F. O. Awosika was a candidate supported by the NCNC Ondo branch.
- (5) Chief S. Akinola was a candidate supported by the NCNC Ilesha branch.
- (6)-(10) Chief A. M. A. Akinloye was a candidate supported by the Mabolaje-NCNC Alliance at Ibadan. Chiefs Aboderin, Akinbiyi and Lanlehin were also supported by the Mabolaje-NCNC Alliance at Ibadan. Only the late Alhaji Adegoke Adelabu, also of the Mabolaje-NCNC Alliance, associated with the NCNC after the election.
- (11) Chief Kessington S. Y. Momoh was supported by the NCNC in Afenmai Division. He attended a caucus of the NCNC at Ibadan on the eve of the inaugural meeting of the Western House of Assembly. His running mate, Chief J. A. Ogedegbe associated with the NCNC after the election and joined another party later.
- (12) Mr Coker was supported by the NCNC at Iseyin. He entertained NCNC delegates in his house during the electioneering campaign.
- (13) Chief Bishop Fisher was supported by the NCNC at Badagry. He entertained the NCNC delegates in his house during the electioneering campaign.
- (14) Mr R. A. Olusa was supported by the NCNC in Owo Division.
- (15) Mr J. G. Ako was supported by the Urhobo Progress Union and the NCNC in Urhobo Division. His colleagues, Chief G. B. Ometan, Chief P. K. Tabiowo, Chief O. Oweh, Chief J.

Otobo and Chief Yamu Numa associated with the NCNC after the election. Chief Otobo joined another party later.

(16) Mr C. A. Tewe was supported by the NCNC at Okitipupa.

With the remaining 23 members in the Western House of Assembly, out of a membership of 80-plus, the NCNC decided to go into opposition, since the Action Group had been invited by the Lieutenant-Governor to form the Government of the Western Region. The Government party refused to accord official recognition either to the Opposition or to me as Leader of the Opposition. Nevertheless, an opposition existed *de facto* and the Action Group could not ignore or extinguish it. Before the end of 1952 a crisis loomed in the ranks of the NCNC as a result of the unwillingness of certain NCNC-appointed Federal and Regional Ministers to toe the party line. (This is a long story which I hope to expand in a later volume.) Consequently, I was drafted to contest an election into the Eastern House of Assembly and regularise this irregularity.

Before the elections, a constitutional conference had taken place in London to replace the unpopular Macpherson Constitution, one of the effects of which was to saddle ministers with responsibility without power. It was decided by all parties that Nigeria should become a federation of three regions, with Lagos excised from the Western Region and treated as a federal territory. The new Constitution reinforced the cabinet system of government and introduced the post of regional premier, leaving the Federal Government to follow suit three years later. In January 1954 I was sworn in as Minister of Local Government, and on October 1, 1954, I was inducted into office as Premier of Eastern Nigeria. This meant the relinquishing of all my business connections as from the beginning of 1954.

Being opposed to the use of officially-sponsored newspapers for purely partisan purposes, I prevailed upon the board of directors of the Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited, printers and publishers of the *Guardian*, *Spokesman* and *Defender*, to consider establishing a daily newspaper at Enugu and another one in the Ibibio country. On December 15, 1955, the *Eastern Sentinel* began publication as a daily newspaper at 7 Oghe Lane, Agukwu Street, Enugu. Its motto was 'That democracy shall continue to flourish'.

Its first editor was J. A. C. Onwuegbuna, who had been with the Zik Group of newspapers since 1940. I did my best not to interfere directly or indirectly in formulating or implementing its policy, editorially or otherwise. I directed the chairman of the company to warn the staff of all the Zik Group of newspapers not to mention my name or the names of my family in their newspapers except with my expressed permission or with the sanction of the chairman himself.

In the same manner, I summoned the Chairman of the Eastern Nigeria Information Service, Abdul Karimi Disu, to see that the *Eastern Outlook and Cameroons Star*, printed by the Government Printer and published by ENIS, at Enugu, was not allowed to be converted into a party organ. I exhorted him to use the space of this officially-sponsored newspaper for publishing the activities of the Government of Eastern Nigeria, together with the official and semi-official acts of ministers, parliamentarians—including Opposition members, Government departments, local government bodies, statutory corporations and bodies, etc. Mr Disu assured me that he would enforce my directives.

It was not long before Opposition members began to accuse my Government of transforming the *Eastern Outlook* into a party organ. Naturally, I was unhappy about the allegation and I demanded full explanation from the Minister responsible. Both he and Mr Disu satisfied me that it had never been their intention to subvert this official publication for partisan purpose, although it was obvious that certain junior members of the staff were becoming intractable. Later, I met the Leader of the Opposition and explained the position to him.

Before I entered politics to participate actively in its activities, I had yearned to start a daily newspaper in each of the old Provinces of Eastern Nigeria, including the Cameroons. I was grooming Namme to edit the *Cameroons Voice*, Ndem Abam to edit the *Ogoja Advocate*, D. F. E. Essessien to edit the *Calabar Champion* and P. C. Agbu to edit the *Owerri Guide*.

When the Cameroons became excised from Nigeria and Namme joined the *Daily Times*, I decided to shelve this idea. Then Abam died in the bloom of youth. As for Essessien, I found it difficult to understand this over-zealous patriot. His explosive behaviour puzzled me. After all, I had been his

'big brother' from his secondary school days at the Christ the King College (CKC), Onitsha, to his football exploits with the Zik's Athletic Club. But he left me with the impression that he was a spoiled baby, that must be petted and lullabied.

The unstable nature of this fine athlete and student delayed the establishment of the *Calabar Champion*. However, when I left Enugu to become President of the Senate, in 1960, the Associated Newspapers of Nigeria decided to start a daily newspaper at Uyo, in the heart of the Ibibio country, to serve the Efik, Ibibio, Annang, Qua, Ejagham, Oron, Eket and other Efik-speaking peoples of that area.

On October 1, 1960, the date of the independence of Nigeria, the first issue of the *Nigerian Monitor* was printed and published at Uyo-Oron Road, Uyo. Its motto was: 'That Nigerian unity may survive.' It was published in English and Ibibio, and its first editor was Samuel Chike Okonkwo. The significance of this newspaper is shown in its maiden editorial comment, entitled 'Facing a Challenge', which reads as follows:

'In 1937, shortly after his return from the Gold Coast, now Ghana, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe sparked off the crusade that has culminated today in Nigeria's statehood, by setting up the *West African Pilot* to show the light and let the people find the way. At the close of this successful crusade for freedom, another milestone has been reached by the birth today of the *Nigerian Monitor* in Uyo.

'After almost a quarter of a century of energetic journalistic direction, we feel particularly happy to come on to the stage in order that we may continue the fight for the establishment of the rights of man. The beginning of the fight against imperialism with the *West African Pilot* and the closing of the phase with the birth of the *Nigerian Monitor* is one significant but historic coincidence.

'While our predecessors battled against white imperialism, we shall dedicate ourselves to the task of fighting black imperialism because, our birth coming at a time when colonialism has abdicated political power, it will not be to the best interest of this new nation to substitute black imperialism for white imperialism.

'Therefore, in a locality so fertile for political vandals; in an area that rises late because of political mis-education, it is our fervent wish that we shall succeed at creating a reputation for truthful, honest and accurate reportorial function.

'The people of the old Calabar Province, or the Ibibio, the

Annang and the Efik are particularly fortunate at having this powerful organ at their disposal. The form of support of the people of this area towards the Government of the East in spite of the latter's material accomplishments, disregards fundamental aspects of progress.

'It is our duty as the watchdog of the people to interpret the Government to the people and the wishes of the people to the Government. We are, therefore, appealing to every son and daughter of this area and of Nigeria in general, who has the progress of this area at heart, to throw aside every prejudice and put on the cap of reason so that according to the motto of this newspaper "Nigerian Unity May Survive".'

4. TRAINEES OF THE ZIK NEWSPAPERS

When I arrived on the scene of journalism in West Africa, I realised that I had to train my own staff. Personally, I did not attend any professional school of journalism, but gained practical experience from 1926 to 1930 when I was associated with the student publications of the institutions of higher learning I attended, namely: *Storer College Record*, *Howard University Hilltop*, *Lincolnian*, and the *Lincoln University Daily Bulletin*, which was a hand written news-letter posted on the board in front of Cresson Hall. During this period I also acted as resident correspondent of the *Baltimore Afro-American* and the *Philadelphia Tribune*, newspapers owned by American Negroes. It was not until July 1930, after obtaining my BA degree in June, that I attended Columbia University in New York and took a special course in newspaper production and management at the Teachers College of that university. I wound up my course by becoming an associate editor of the *Columbia University Summer Session Times* produced by my class.

In effect this meant that I should organise the editorial section of our newspapers for an on-the-job classroom-cum-newspaper-office assignments. I feel proud that during my sixteen years' service as managing director of the Zik group of newspapers I was able to give theoretical and practical training in journalism to over sixty of the most eminent journalists and leaders of my country. The names and some of the later achievements of these alumni of the Zik group can be found in Appendix I.

The young men who flocked to me were not only eager to absorb the secrets of successful journalism; they already had good basic training in the tools of this profession. Although some of them were products of the elementary school system, yet their grasp of spoken and written English was remarkable. I can reveal with joy that most of the editorials published in the newspapers of our group during my tenure of office, for which I received credit or discredit depending upon the nature of the topics discussed, were written by them. Of course, I wrote some and edited others, hence I can not escape from vicarious responsibility!

So much for the editorial staff. As for the business section, the trained staff available were book-keepers, cashiers, store-keepers and typists who had gained practical experience by working previously with individuals or firms. They were serviceable, and I had to recruit such senior staff as circulation manager, advertisement manager and office manager from this lot. Some were diligent, hard-working, good-natured and honest; while others were lazy, shifty, dishonest and unstable.

5. COMPETITION FROM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

In 1949 we realised that the demand for our product was greater than our productive capacity. Not only that, the press lords of the United Kingdom, like hawks, were taking a keen interest in the development of newspaper industry in Nigeria. On one occasion Mr Cecil H. King conferred with me in Yaba and I encouraged him to invest money in the newspaper business in the country, because I believed that it would enhance the progress of journalism purely from the professional and technical points of view.

At the end of 1949, after twelve years of active journalism, we recorded our highest profit when we declared a dividend of 20 per cent. At this point I warned the shareholders that we had reached the peak of our profitability with the type of flatbed machinery that we operated. I also reminded them that the millionaire press in England were primed to invade what was hitherto a virgin territory for the printing and publishing of newspapers.

In any case, I told them that after twelve years of operation

under my direct leadership and administration, the company had succeeded in paying dividends totalling 122½ per cent, representing an annual average of 10 per cent. In other words, we had earned for the shareholders over 100 per cent of their investment in twelve years, and their capital was still intact, although it was subject to depletion in value due to the unequal, if not unfair, competition envisaged from the press lords of Britain.

'The Battle for the Nigerian Press' had now begun, and it meant looking for capital to purchase the modern weapons needed for this type of business warfare. By 1944 I had started a small bank which did not function immediately because I was busy accumulating capital before opening it to the general public. With the challenge of the British press lords scaring us, we had to prove equal to the occasion.

I had managed to raise £5,000 and held it in reserve as an initial capital for the new bank, which I had christened the African Continental Bank Limited. After the bank had started to function, I was advised that the Zik Group could scrape together up to £15,000 to make a paid-up capital of at least £20,000. The nominal capital of the bank was increased to £250,000, as follows: 200,000 Ordinary Shares at £1 each and 50,000 8 per cent Preference Shares at £1 each. By the end of 1953, when I entered politics, the Zik Group had invested in the bank £18,000 for its individual shareholders, as follows: Zik Enterprises Limited £14,500, Nigerian Commodities Limited £4,000, African Book Company Limited £100, Nigerian Paper Company £100, and Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited £100.

It was maintained that since these moneys were accumulated assets reserved for distribution as bonus to our shareholders, they should be invested so that, if the bank should be sold or be nationalised, the money should be refunded to the individual shareholders of each company and not necessarily treated as assets of the companies. If we had not saved this money from 1950 onwards there would have been insufficient working capital for the bank. Hence it was providential that this idea emerged to make it possible for the shareholders of the company to receive this refund.

With a vested interest in the bank, the Zik Group was

enabled to have credit facilities at the bank to enable it to purchase the sophisticated plant and machinery needed to compete with the British press lords. Later, when the bank was 'nationalised', the individual shareholders of these companies were paid for their shares as follows: Zik Enterprises Limited, 15s per pound sterling worth of shares held by each shareholder; African Book Company Limited, 3s 2½d; Nigerian Paper Company Limited, 3s 2½d; Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited, 3s 1¼d; Nigerian Commodities Limited, £1 12s 3¼d.

In other words, the individual shareholders of Zik Enterprises Limited received 75 per cent of their nominal shares when the bank bought them off. This meant that in twenty-eight years, that is from 1938 to 1965, the investors in the Zik Group received an average yield of 7 per cent annually on their investments. In view of the difficulties confronted over the years, I think that the investment was worth while.

* From 1950 to the end of 1953 economic factors influenced the fortunes of the company. Since the London *Daily Mirror* group had decided to invade Nigeria, it was obvious that to survive we must be prepared to compete on equal or near-equal terms. My solution was to improve the production of the *West African Pilot* from manual to mechanical.

This meant a complete change-over from hand composition of type to mechanical typesetting on the one hand, and the introduction of rotary printing press machinery, with stereotype equipment and appropriate accessories to substitute the wharfedale flatbed printing machines we operated, on the other.

To the novice (and I was clearly still a novice in this vital respect), this would give the impression that the exercise would involve a capital expenditure of not more than £50,000; but our painful experience has demonstrated that it exceeded £400,000, which in the long run led to our undoing.

The matter relating to mechanical typesetting was straightforward. I visited the United Kingdom and sought for expert advice. After considering our limited funds, I made arrangements with the Monotype Corporation at Salford for the purchase of two composition-casters, two keyboards and one supercaster. This was all new machinery and, with our financial resources, they were very expensive.

When it came to the question of a rotary press together with ancillaries, it was not an easy proposition. Our accredited agents warned us to purchase new machinery, if we had the funds. As against this down-to-earth advice, some high-powered salesmen talked us into buying second-hand machinery because it was cheaper; and that was how our tale of sorrow and woe began.

By the time we finished paying for second-hand printing presses, linotypes, monotypes and keyboards bought from different sources, we realised that with the possible exception of the rotary press equipment, the rest were dud. Even the rotary press equipment was bought *in situ*, and we had to arrange for its overhauling, dismantlement, packing, crating, handling, shipping, discharging, carting, delivery, housing, sorting, cleaning, assembling, electrical connection and trial runs.

To do these things successfully we had to retain the services of consultants, mechanics and operators at a tremendous cost, paying for their travelling and accommodation expenses, in addition to their fees, emoluments and perquisites. They were all expatriates. Having plunged into the stream with our eyes wide open, thinking that it was not so shallow and not so deep, we realised that its depth was abnormal. Our obvious course of action was to swim harder in order to get out of the fast current. But we discovered to our discomfiture that it was not just a stream but a roaring torrent that had engulfed us.

In order to operate this 'sophisticated' machinery, it was necessary for us to train our own staff abroad. Hence, we introduced a scholarship scheme in the form of a bursary of £500 for each trainee. This included the fare to and from United Kingdom plus a daily maintenance allowance of one pound. The bursary was to last for one year for the technical staff and six months for the editorial and business staff.

We selected six men and a woman for this trainee scheme as follows: Laban N. Namme and Henry Kanu Offonry of our editorial staff, went to London and found sanctuary in the Beaverbrook organisation, thanks to my friend Sir Max Aitken, whom I had met in 1952 through an introduction from Sir Mobolaji Bank-Anthony. He had said then that he would be pleased to assist in training my editorial staff on his group's

newspapers. Namme and Offonry worked on Beaverbrook newspapers in London and Glasgow.

The Monotype Corporation undertook to train Reuben Nnajide Anakor at Salfords in monotype mechanical type-setting and casting. St Clement's Press of London took responsibility for training Aniemeka Omenye in process engraving and Mrs Veronica Nwadiafor Nzekwu in book-binding. The *Oxford Mail* kindly undertook to train Ladipo Onanuga at Oxford in the modern techniques of distribution and circulation of newspapers. Whilst Louis Mbanefo Chude was accepted for training in rotary press operation at Blackburn, Lancs., through the good offices of Messrs Sanford.

On their return, most of them left our service to join our competitors. Mr Namme and Mrs Nzekwu joined the *Daily Times*. Mr Offonry joined the Shell Company. Mr Anakor left us in 1962. Mr Omenye left us in 1967. Only Mr Onanuga and Mr Chude remained.

We never asked these beneficiaries of ours to refund to us the company's money used in training to improve their technical skill. On the contrary, we had issued 'bonus' shares to all of them except Mr Namme; and we redeemed these shares later by paying them in cash at par value. Of course their excuse for leaving us was because our salaries were not attractive enough to retain their services in a competitive market. The morality of their action was extraneous.

Just when the two rotary presses and their ancillaries were being installed, the demands of politics compelled me to resign my post as managing director of Zik Enterprises Limited, as it was later identified, and as editor-in-chief of the *West African Pilot*. I have always regretted my incursion into active partisan politics 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.

CHAPTER XI

ZIK NEWSPAPERS AND THE LAW

*How we tried to navigate our newspapers between Scylla and Charybdis
with proud and obstinate captains at the helm*

'Never throw mud. You may miss your
mark and you must have dirty hands.'

JOSEPH PARKER

1. THE LAW OF THE NIGERIAN PRESS

Between 1859, when the first newspaper was published in Nigeria, and 1903, when the first newspaper law was enacted, our newspapers were regulated generally by the laws which prevailed in the United Kingdom. Since 1903 the pattern of our newspaper legislation has been based on ten categories of tortious and criminal offences. They range from purely regulatory decrees to protective edicts, as follows:

- (1) Laws regulating the conditions for printing and publishing of newspapers:
 - (a) Newspapers Ordinance, 1903;
 - (b) Newspapers Ordinance, 1917;
 - (c) Newspapers Act, Cap. 129;
 - (d) Newspapers (Amendment) Act, 1964;
 - (e) Evidence Act, No. 47 of 1956;
 - (f) Printing Presses Regulation Ordinance, 1933;
 - (g) Eastern Nigeria Newspaper Law, 1955;
 - (h) Eastern Nigeria Newspaper (Amendment) Law, 1956;
 - (i) Eastern Nigeria Newspaper (Amendment) Law, 1961;
 - (j) Western Nigeria Newspapers Law, 1957;
 - (k) Northern Nigeria Newspapers Law, 1962;
 - (l) Mid-Western Nigeria Newspapers (Amendment) Law, 1965.
- (2) Laws regulating the publication of advertisements in newspapers:
 - (a) Undesirable Advertisements Ordinance, 1932;
 - (b) Pharmacy Act, Cap. 152, Part VIII.

- (3) Laws regulating the exercise of the freedom of the press without bringing the state or government or their agents into hatred, contempt or public obloquy:
 - (a) Seditious Offences Ordinance, 1909;
 - (b) Seditious Ordinance Treaty with Abeokuta on November 18, 1909;
 - (c) Criminal Code Act, Cap. 42, chapter VII (Sedition and the importation of seditious or undesirable publications).
- (4) Laws relating to the publication of obscene matter:
 - (a) Obscene Publications Act, 1857 (United Kingdom);
 - (b) Criminal Code Act, Cap. 42 (section 232 of the schedule);
 - (c) Obscene Publications Act, 1961.
- (5) Laws regulating the exercise of the freedom of expression without defaming any person:
 - (a) Criminal Code Ordinance, 1916 (section 373);
 - (b) Defamation Act, 1961;
 - (c) Eastern Nigeria Newspaper Law, 1955 (sections 16-23);
 - (d) Western Nigeria Defamation Law, 1958;
 - (e) Northern Nigeria Penal Code Law, 1959 (section 23);
 - (f) Eastern Nigeria Defamation Law, 1962.
- (6) Laws regulating the exercise of the freedom of the press without scandalising the court or its agents:
 - (a) Criminal Code Ordinance, Cap. 42 (section 133).
- (7) Laws regulating the possession and dissemination of official information:
 - (a) Official Secrets Ordinance, 1911;
 - (b) Official Secrets Act, 1962;
 - (c) Official Secrets (Amendment) Act, 1962;
 - (d) Western Nigeria Official Secrets Law, 1959.
- (8) Laws regulating the transmission and reception of messages by means of telecommunications:
 - (a) Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1962;
 - (b) Wireless Telegraphy (Amendment) Act, 1964.
- (9) Laws regulating the ownership of literary and graphic productions:
 - (a) (Imperial) Copyright Act, 1911 (section 14: Importation of copies)
 - (b) Copyright Act, 1918.
- (10) Laws regulating the exercise of the freedom of expression and freedom of the press, etc. during a war or during a period of emergency:

- (a) The (Imperial) Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939;
- (b) Nigeria Defence Regulations, 1939;
- (c) Emergency Powers Act, 1961;
- (d) Emergency Powers (Jurisdiction) Act, 1962.

The first newspaper law was enacted in 1903 to regulate the preliminary requirements to be satisfied before a newspaper could be printed and published. While, under the English law, all that was necessary was for the newspaper to identify accurately its title, proprietor and address, the Newspaper Ordinance (No. 10 of 1903) introduced a new element by making it obligatory for intending newspaper proprietors to make, sign and swear an affidavit containing the correct title of the newspaper, its true printing address and the real and true names and addresses of its proprietors, printers and publishers. In addition, it required that the owners should give and execute a bond for £250 with one or more sureties with the condition that they shall pay to the Crown.

'every penalty which may at any time be imposed or adjudged against him or them upon any conviction for printing and publishing any blasphemous or seditious or other libel at any time after the execution of such bond, and also any damages and costs on any judgment for the plaintiff in any action for libel against any such printer, publisher or proprietor.'

This law also required newspaper proprietors to append an imprint 'at the foot of the last page of every newspaper published the correct names and addresses of the printer and publisher'. It imposed an obligation on every newspaper owner to deliver to the Government 'a copy of every newspaper so published, and of every supplement thereto, upon each such day, signed by the printer and publisher thereof', *to be paid for by the Government.*

I have quoted this law at length because it was the first newspaper legislation in Nigeria and because it created a dangerous precedent, in that it interfered with the freedom of the press, and set a desirable precedent, in that it gave the citizen freedom to own and enjoy his property undisturbed.

There are arguments in favour of requiring a bond for £250 or depositing that sum with the Government as a guarantee against the commission of the tort of civil libel and the crime

of libel or sedition. But the freedom of the press is a basic human right which no democratic government can afford to violate with impunity. The situation today demands a radical change of attitude in this particular respect.

As a member of the Legislative Council of Nigeria, I introduced a Private Members' Bill, during its budget meeting at Ibadan in April 1949, to repeal this bond or deposit requirement. The colonial régime, supported by virtually all the African members excepting four of us (Chief Nyong Essien, Dr I. B. Olorun-Nimbe, Adeleke Adedoyin and myself), killed the bill. However, I successfully accomplished my objective when, as Premier of Eastern Nigeria, I piloted the Eastern Nigerian Newspaper Law in the House of Assembly and, as far as Eastern Nigeria was concerned, repealed this obnoxious requirement. That was in 1955, six years later.

The desirable precedent which the 1903 legislation established, compelling the Government to pay to newspaper owners subscription for copies delivered to them, was repealed in 1917; and since then newspaper owners have been deprived of the enjoyment of their properties without adequate or fair compensation. Manifestly, this is unjust, because it is a violation of a fundamental human right, which should be repealed with the least possible delay.

The second category in our newspaper legislation is the regulation of advertisements. On July 21, 1932, the Government enacted the Undesirable Advertisements Ordinance, placing restriction on any advertisement or public notice or announcement, offering treatment to any person for venereal disease, offering to prescribe a remedy, or offering to give any advice on such a matter. It also prohibited the advertisement of aphrodisiacs. But it exempted from penalty professional notices sent to licensed medical practitioners.

The third feature of our newspaper law is the attempt by the state to maintain and protect its integrity. On November 6 1909, the Government enacted the Seditious Offences Ordinance and defined what constitutes a seditious publication against the Crown, of the government established by law, to include all malicious or unconscious endeavours to promote or tendency to promote hatred or contempt, disaffection, disloyalty or feelings of enmity. When the Criminal Code

Ordinance was enacted in 1916, the law of sedition as we know it today was codified.

The fourth milestone in the laws relating to newspapers affects obscenity. On October 5, 1961, the Federation of Nigeria repealed the Obscene Publications Act, 1857, of the United Kingdom, which was a statute of general application. It enacted a local law which restrained any person from distributing or projecting any article deemed to be obscene. According to section 3 (1) of the new Act:

'An article shall be deemed to be obscene, for the purposes of this Act, if its effect taken as a whole is such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it.'

The fifth category of our newspaper law is that relating to defamation. Hitherto, the Common Law usages and customs formed the basis of the case-law which had developed in England and was applied in Nigerian courts. Section 373 of the Criminal Code Ordinance, 1916, stipulated as defamatory any matter likely to injure the reputation of any person by exposing him or any member of his family, whether living or dead, to hatred, contempt, or ridicule or likely to damage any person in his profession or trade by an injury to his reputation. In other words, this law transformed defamation in Nigeria so that it became not only a tortious act but also a criminal act.

In 1955 I incorporated some of the provisions of the English Defamation Act, 1952, in the Eastern Nigerian Newspaper Law, to bring our libel law to desirable modern standards. Three years later the Government of Western Nigeria enacted its Defamation Law to make provisions with respect to libel, slander and malicious falsehood. A year later the North incorporated it in its Penal Code. In 1961 the Federal Government followed suit.

The sixth feature in our newspaper law is the offence of contempt of court. Originally, it was not a statutory offence. Its application in Nigeria was based on the conventional practice in England. In 1916, when the Criminal Code Ordinance was enacted, section 133 made it an offence to scandalise a court or judge. In our judicial history, this rare

offence appears to have adorned the pages of our printed law reports on not less than three occasions.

First, Thomas Horatio Jackson, editor of the *Lagos Weekly Record*, was imprisoned on October 31, 1925, for two months; he was ordered in addition to pay a fine of £25, 'the cost of these proceedings.' He was accused of making 'grave aspersions against the integrity and impartiality of the judges of the court'.

Secondly, on October 5, 1926, three leading Nigerian journalists—Ernest Ikoli (editor of the *Nigerian Daily Times*), S. H. Braithwaite (editor of the *Nigerian Advocate*), and Adeoye Deniga (editor of *Eko Akete*)—together with the printers of their newspapers, were ordered to pay £15 each for the costs of proceedings. Braithwaite and Deniga had published an unreserved apology. For publishing a 'disingenuous' apology, Ikoli was ordered, in addition, to pay a fine of £25. Their offence was that they had published a statement in their newspapers calculated to prejudice the minds of the public against an accused person.

Thirdly, on December 15, 1952, the Service Press Limited was fined £150 and ordered to pay costs totalling twenty-five guineas for publishing an article calculated 'to destroy the confidence of the public in the courts'.

How do we define 'contempt of court?' In a classic Nigerian case it was submitted by the Crown, and upheld by the court, that any publication which contained scandalous reflection upon the integrity of the court, tending to render it contemptible in the eyes of the public, constituted a contempt of court.

In the English courts, that form of contempt, which is generally referred to as 'scandalising a court or judge', is an offence which can be dealt with summarily by a court. The reason for this abnormal power of the court to be its own judge is because 'it is considered necessary for the proper administration of justice. It is not to be used for the vindication of a judge or a person. . . . Committal for contempt of court is a weapon to be used sparingly, and always with reference to the interests of the administration of justice.' (In re. Read and Huggonson, cited by Sir Ralph Combe, Chief Justice of Nigeria, in *Rex versus Thomas Horatio Jackson*, 6 Nigeria Law Reports 49.)

The seventh category of our newspaper law is the one concerned with the illegal possession and leakage of official secrets. In 1920 a law to this effect was enacted. The objects and reasons of the Official Secrets Act, 1962, were to make further provision for securing public safety.

The eighth feature of our newspaper law is concerned with the regulation of the emitting or receiving messages by means of telecommunications and wireless telegraphy. Section 6 of the Wireless Telegraphy Act vests the Minister of Communications with the discretion to grant, renew or revoke licences upon certain conditions.

The ninth category deals with copyright. On April 18, 1918, the Copyright Ordinance was enacted and it was related to section 14 of the (Imperial) Copyright Act, 1911. This section protects from importation copies made of any work in which copyright subsists which, if made in the United Kingdom, would infringe copyright.

The last feature of our newspaper law relates to emergency regulations, in time of war or peace, with the object of maintaining the public safety and the defence of the realm. Immediately at the start of World War II, in September 1939, the Nigeria Defence Regulations were promulgated by the Governor. Part II of the regulations provided for censorship and suppression of publications, communications, means of communication, etc. It established censorship of postal matter and telegrams and made provisions for safeguarding information.

In 1940 an amendment was made to the Defence Regulations appointing the Information Officer the competent authority for censoring news received from outside Nigeria. This amendment stipulated that no person should print or publish any matter or information received by means of a wireless receiving set without obtaining the sanction of the Information Officer, unless such matter or information was transmitted by the BBC or Reuter or Havas.

2. OUR INVOLVEMENTS WITH THE LAW

With these ten categories of our newspaper law, as background, it will be pertinent to see how some of them were applied to the printing and publishing activities of the Zik group of

newspapers. In the cases summarised below, it will be observed that, apart from the laws affecting conditions for printing and publishing newspapers, publication of obscene matter, contempt of court and official secrets, our newspapers did fall foul of the other six laws; and we were penalised accordingly.

Up to 1945 the Zik group of newspapers were the exclusive distributors for Reuter's news agency messages by wireless telegraphy for West Africa. By then we were granted a Class B listener's licence for receiving wireless messages by means of *Hellschreiber* wireless radio operated on Morse code signals. In January 1946, following the general strike of the previous year, and the banning of the *West African Pilot* and the *Daily Comet* under the Nigerian Defence Regulations, the competent authority, who was the Information Officer, refused to renew our licence and gave no reason for this highhanded official act.

We submitted a petition to the Colonial Office but, as usual, it was an appeal from Caesar to Caesar, for this agency of the British Government implicitly trusted their man on the spot, whatever his idiosyncrasies. In our petition we said that the refusal to renew our licence was inconsistent with the liberty of the press and was tantamount not only to an attempt to disorganise our business for no just cause, but was a deliberate effort to prevent our newspaper readers from receiving reliable world news from an unofficial and disinterested source. We shall now review some of these cases as they affected the Zik Enterprises.

R. M. Williams versus Zik's Press Limited

Early in 1938, R. M. Williams, General Manager of the United Africa Company Limited, sued us in the Supreme Court of Nigeria, claiming £10,000 damages for libel. He alleged that a series of articles in the *West African Pilot* narrating the experiences of Mrs Darlington Williams, a pretty and buxom damsel from Sierra Leone, who worked as a sales clerk in that company's department stores, defamed his reputation and reflected adversely on his integrity. His counsel were Irving and Bonar. We were represented by E. J. Alex. Taylor.

In our defence we pleaded that it was not our intention to defame him. We published an apology three times on the front page, unreservedly withdrawing all imputations which might

be calculated to besmirch his reputation. Then we paid £100 to the court to make amends to him. The plaintiff was not satisfied and so the issue was joined. Since this was the first civil case against our newspaper, it attracted attention all over the country.

Sir William Geary, leading Mr Taylor, submitted before the court that we regretted the publication, particularly the imputation inferred by the plaintiff. Sir William further submitted that having thrice published an apology in the *Pilot* and having paid some money into the court, by way of amends to the plaintiff, the issue before the court was the quantum of damages. He expressed regret to the plaintiff for the inconvenience caused by the publication. In view of the mitigating tone of the defence, the judge awarded the sum of £100 as damages.

At this juncture Sir William rose and asserted that, since we had deposited the sum of £100 in court, we had satisfied the judgment. Moreover, in accordance with section 2 of Lord Campbell's Act, which was applicable to Nigeria, if the damages awarded by the court was not more than the amount paid in court, then the defendant was entitled to costs. He respectfully submitted that the costs of this particular case should be awarded to the defendants.

The judge was taken aback. He asked whether, as a matter of fact, the sum of £100 was actually paid into court? Sir William tendered the receipt issued by the Registrar of the court to substantiate his plea. After giving this issue a second thought, the judge decided to alter his original judgment to the effect that we should pay £101 as damages to the plaintiff. He ordered that, consequently, the defendants should bear the costs of the litigation. With his winning manner, Sir William rose and said: 'As Your Honour pleases.' Outside the court I asked Sir William why he had not questioned the right of the judge to alter his judgment in such an apparently questionable manner. Sir William advised that we should acquiesce in the judgment of the court.

Nnamdi Azikiwe versus 'Nigerian Daily Times'

It was not long before the *Nigerian Daily Times* appointed an

expatriate, H. A. C. M. Bates, as its general manager and editor-in-chief. That newspaper then published an article in which it criticised me as an irresponsible journalist who disseminated falsehood and purveyed filth in the columns of my newspapers with a view to mulct the public of their hard-earned money. He accused Zik's Press Limited of publishing libels in order to rake in profits. I consulted legal opinion and was advised that the publication disparaged my professional reputation and also libelled Zik's Press Limited. So was sued the Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company Limited (proprietors of that newspaper) and Mr Bates, claiming £10,000 damages.

Our solicitor was E. J. Alex. Taylor, and the *Daily Times* was represented by Sir Adeyemo Alakija. The first defendants admitted the libel, publishing an apology thrice in their newspaper, and offered to pay some moneys to the plaintiffs in full settlement of the case. This offer was accepted by Mr Taylor on our instruction. When the case was called in court, Sir Adeyemo informed the court that the first defendants had made satisfactory amends to the plaintiffs. Mr Taylor confirmed the submission and asked that judgment be delivered against Mr Bates, who was alleged to have left Nigeria unceremoniously and proceeded to Southern Rhodesia. The court then gave judgment in our favour and awarded damages of seventy-five guineas each to the plaintiffs plus costs to be taxed. These are yet to be collected.

Ademola versus Zik's Press

As a result of the increased circulation of the *West African Pilot*, it became necessary to instal at 100 Broad Street, Lagos, the second set of printing machinery we had ordered in August 1937. This meant the operating of our plant and machinery for up to ten hours daily from twelve midnight. This was the background of a nuisance case instituted by Sir Adetkunboh Ademola (he had not then been knighted), a Crown Counsel, against Zik's Press Limited, in the Saint Anna Magistrate's Court, Lagos, in 1938.

The plaintiff claimed that the noise made by the printing machinery which produced the *West African Pilot* made such

a terrible noise that it disturbed his sleep. Moreover, the vibration caused by the machines threatened his house, which was adjacent to the printery; it might undermine the foundations of the building. He sought redress from the court in these respects: stoppage of the noise and an injunction to restrain the defendants from continuing to endanger his health and his house. The plaintiff was represented by A. B. Caxton Martins.

Appearing on behalf of Zik's Press Limited, W. O. Euba submitted that the printing machinery did not make any abnormal noise; it was the nature of such machinery, and adequate care was taken by the defendants to muffle any untoward noise. He said that the foundations on which the machinery was erected conformed to British standards and the vibration from the printing machines could not endanger adjacent buildings.

Mr Euba further submitted that to close down the press would jeopardise hundreds of workers and investors. He expressed regret over the circumstances which gave cause to the complaint of the plaintiff to litigate, and pleaded that, in the circumstances, the redress sought should not be granted.

In his judgment, Magistrate O. Jibowu ruled that he was satisfied that the printing machinery made noise such as to disturb the peace of the plaintiff and threatened to cause the possible collapse of his house. He delivered judgment in favour of the plaintiff and granted the injunction sought, but gave the defendants three months to abate the nuisance.

Since we were faced with the prospect of closing down our business establishment, I was perplexed as to what to do next, because the judgment had set a precedent for other possible litigation, in case we shifted our printing operations to any other part of the densely populated business sections of Lagos. Having discussed with our legal adviser the problems confronting us, we decided not to appeal but to try to find a way out of our dilemma.

The afternoon of the next day, I went to Government House tennis courts for a game; and the Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, commiserated with me. He asked me what I proposed to do, in view of the judgment against my company. I confessed that I was perturbed because there seemed no alternative but to wind up my business in Lagos and transfer

it elsewhere. He advised me to consider moving to Yaba Estate, which was then bush country but had plenty of space for industrial purposes. I thanked him for his human interest and kind gesture.

After considering the relevant circumstances and taking legal advice, we decided to remove our printing and publishing activities to Yaba. Through the good offices of the Surveyor-General and his staff, I and my company were granted crown leases with which I erected my residential buildings at 74 and 76 King George Avenue and 34A Commercial Avenue. Zik's Press Limited was able to erect its offices and works at 34 Commercial Avenue, in addition to the Yaba Stadium and the Yaba club building and four tennis courts.

As a result of these land leases, we persuaded people, through editorial comments in the *West African Pilot*, to settle in Yaba. First, we agitated successfully for a police post so as to protect life and property. When the police gave the impression that they had no land, we surrendered to them gratuitously part of our temporarily occupied land. Part of this land was also assigned by us to my friend, Sir Odumegwu Ojukwu (not then knighted), free of charge, to operate his transport business. Then the post office was established, so that Yaba became a thriving community in addition to being a 'garden city'.

I would like to place on record the yeoman service rendered to me and my business at the material time by Mr Rasmussen, a Swedish businessman who ran the Lagos Timber Company Limited and was, to a large extent, responsible for the expansion of Yaba Estate as a business centre. He advanced me and my company the money with which the buildings at 34 Commercial Avenue were erected on a mortgage basis. Within five years the debt was liquidated and we were free to operate our business without fear of financial embarrassment, which stared us in the face, following the fateful judgment of the Magistrate's Court.

Since I have reproduced this case from memory, not having access either to the records or to the judgment, I hope that indulgence would be granted to me for any errors or omissions. I have tried to give the gist of the case, the judgment of the court, and its effect on my business.

Inspector-General of Police versus Zik's Press Limited

Some time in 1939 we were served with a writ which alleged that the *West African Pilot* had published an advertisement for the sale of 'Young's Stimulator', purporting to be an aphrodisiac and brain pill, contrary to section 3 of the Undesirable Advertisements Ordinance of 1932. According to this law, 'a person shall not hold out or recommend to the public by any notice or advertisement, or by any written or printed papers or handbills', certain drugs including aphrodisiacs. Any person who offered drugs of this nature for sale was guilty of an offence punishable by a fine not exceeding £50 or imprisonment not exceeding six months or to both fine and imprisonment.

The case came before Magistrate H. Betuel. The Inspector-General was represented by C. S. Pollard, Crown counsel; while we were represented by W. O. Euba. After Mr Pollard had stated his case, Mr Euba rose and calmly submitted that the defendants had no case to answer. He argued that this was a statutory offence and that it was not clearly expressed that the publisher of a newspaper was necessarily liable for offering for sale a product which contravened this law, within the strict interpretation of the relevant section of this particular ordinance. Since the person who offered the drugs for sale was 'J. M. Stuart-Young', the plaintiff had misconceived the prosecution. In the circumstance, Mr Euba submitted that the defendants should be discharged. The Magistrate agreed with him and we were discharged.

Again we were a test case for this law, as we were in the issues regarding payment of money into court. The Government repealed the Undesirable Advertisements Ordinance and enacted sections 56 and 57 of the Pharmacy Act, amending its loose drafting. The new law said: 'No person shall take any part in the publication of any advertisement by any method . . . referring to the sale, supplying, or offering for sale, or offering to supply any medicine . . . for the promotion of sexual virility, desire or for the restoration, or stimulation of the mental faculties.'

Onatade versus Zik's Press Limited et al.

In 1942, Olalekan Onatade, a free-lance press photographer,

sued Zik's Press Limited and myself, claiming £100 damages because we had reproduced in the *West African Pilot* seventy-seven photographs taken by him and of which he alleged he was owner of the copyright. He also sought an order for delivery to him of all these photographs. Finally, he prayed the court for an injunction to restrain the defendants from further publication of fifty-five photographs taken by him and in our possession.

On May 13, 1942, Mr Justice William Butler Lloyd, acting chief justice, delivered judgment ruling that he was satisfied that the defendants bought the photographs, which were not taken by Mr Onatade while in their employment, outright for publication. That being so, the request for an injunction could have no effect. The judge also decided that he was satisfied that the defendants owned the copyright in the other sixteen photographs taken while the plaintiff was in their employment. The action was dismissed with costs assessed at ten guineas. This was a copyright test case in Nigeria.

Rex versus Zik's Press Limited et al

The Crown prosecuted Zik's Press Limited, Abdul Yekini Tinubu and Obafemi Soley for publishing a seditious libel contrary to the section 51 (1) (c) and 52 (2) of the Criminal Code Ordinance. Tinubu was editor of the *West African Pilot* and Soley was the circulation manager. They were found guilty by the court and ordered to pay a fine.

Section 51 (1) (c) reads: 'Any person who prints, publishes, sells, offers for sale, distributes or reproduces any seditious publication, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction, for a first offence to imprisonment for two years or to a fine of one hundred pounds or to both such imprisonment and fine, and for a subsequent offence to imprisonment for three years; and any seditious publication shall be forfeited to His Majesty.'

Section 52 (2) reads: 'Any person who without lawful excuse has in his possession any seditious publication shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction, for a first offence to imprisonment for one year or to a fine of fifty pounds or to both such imprisonment and fine, and for a subsequent offence

to imprisonment for two years; and such publication shall be forfeited to His Majesty.'

On January 13, 1947, the appeal of the defendants was decided by the West African Court of Appeal comprising Sir John Verity (Chief Justice) and Judges Jibowu and Abbott, whose joint judgment was to the effect that since the Attorney-General did the actual prosecution, the ground that he did not give actual consent to the prosecution was untenable.

The West African Court of Appeal observed that 'There was also before us a document purporting to be a notice of application for leave to appeal by an individual therein described as "Blankson, General Manager of Zik's Press Limited" against his conviction of the offence of publishing a seditious publication contrary to section 51 (1) (c) of the Criminal Code. No such person has been convicted. Zik's Press Limited, a limited liability company, was the first accused in these proceedings and was convicted. . . .'

The appeal court held that, although by the rules of the court, notice required to be given for leave to appeal may be signed by the manager of such a corporation, 'they must obviously be signed by him on behalf of the company and not purport to be signed on his own behalf in regard to a conviction which does not lie against him personally and from which he personally has no right of appeal'. It therefore refused to grant leave to Zik's Press Limited to appeal.

The main points in this case are purely technical. In the first ground of appeal, counsel for the appellants submitted that the law required the written fiat of the Attorney-General before the criminal prosecution could be started. Since this was not done, he submitted that the trial was irregular. The appeal court ruled that since the Attorney-General had instituted the case, his fiat must be assumed. The second issue was the application by Zik's Press Limited for leave to appeal against its conviction. The application was signed by 'A. K. Blankson, General Manager, Zik's Press Limited', instead of 'A. K. Blankson, General Manager, *for and on behalf of* Zik's Press Limited'. The omission of the underlined phrase cost the company the appeal!

Rex versus Zik's Press Limited

This was an appeal by the defendants from the Supreme Court to the West African Court of Appeal against their conviction for having published a seditious libel, contrary to section 51 (1) (c) of the Criminal Code Ordinance. They contended that a corporation could not be regarded as a person within the provisions of the Criminal Code either for the purpose of pleading or committing an offence on trial by information.

The WACA on July 29, 1947, dismissed the appeal, maintaining that in England a corporation was a person within the provisions of the Criminal Code Ordinance and the Criminal Procedure Ordinance. It held also that although, in the enactment of the Administration of Justice Act, 1933, there was in England no specific provision for the recording of a plea against a corporation; however such a provision had become necessary, hence the incorporation of section 33 in that Act, which was applicable to Nigeria.

Ikoku versus Zik's Press Limited

Alvan Ikoku, member of the Legislative Council and Principal of Aggrey Memorial College, Arochuku, instructed his solicitor to request the defendants to publish an apology with a withdrawal of the publication, about him, in two issues of the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, as being false; and in addition to pay a certain amount to him for expenses incurred; otherwise an action would be instituted. Since this request was ignored, plaintiff claimed £5,000 damages for libel.

E. E. E. Anwan and Mr Balogun represented the plaintiff, whilst Dr E. Udo Udoma appeared for the defendants. On August 23, 1950, Mr Justice Myles Abbott delivered judgment. The court held that it 'was bound to take a serious view of the unjustifiable neglect of the company to publish the correction and apology demanded by the plaintiff for what was a grossly irresponsible libel'. He ruled that the defence of fair comment was completely misconceived.

The Judge rejected the submission of defendants' counsel that the words complained of could not refer to the plaintiff. In his opinion, they did refer to the plaintiff, because he was

known to be a member of the scholarship committee, had his three children abroad, and held the OBE decoration. In assessing damages, he maintained that he was entitled to look at the whole conduct of the defendant company from the time when the libel was published down to the very moment of the delivery of this judgment. 'That conduct,' he concluded, 'appears to me to aggravate rather than minimise the damages.' Consequently, he awarded damages of £1,000 to the plaintiff.

On appeal, the appellants were represented by J. I. C. Taylor and Dr Udoma, whilst the respondent was represented by Messrs Anwan, C. D. Onyeama and Balogun. The appellant requested the West African Court of Appeal to say that the trial court sitting alone awarded excessive damages. On April 23, 1951, Sir John Verity (Chief Justice) with Mr Justice J. de Comarmond, concurring with the judgment written by Mr Justice J. A. Lewey, dismissed the appeal on the ground that the WACA was reluctant to exercise such power and would not do so 'unless it is established that the trial Judge proceeded upon a wrong principle of law, or that his award was clearly an erroneous estimate'.

Attorney-General versus Mbonu Ojike et al.

This was a criminal case preferred by the Crown against Mbonu Ojike, Increase Coker, and Zik's Press Limited on a complaint filed by the Attorney-General on June 10, 1950. The first accused was general manager of the *West African Pilot*; the second was the editor; and the third was the printer and publisher. The complaint reads as follows:

'The complaint of Arthur Ridehalgh, Esquire, acting as His Majesty's Attorney-General for Nigeria', on behalf of our Lord the King, sheweth that—

'1. MBONU OJIKE on a date unknown between the 8th and 14th days of April, 1950, at Yaba in the Lagos Judicial Division, published in the form of a manuscript entitled "Week-End Catechism" a seditious publication containing the seditious words set forth in the first appendix hereto, and thereby committed an offence against section 51 (1) (c) of the Criminal Code.

'2. ZIK'S PRESS LIMITED, INCREASE COKER AND MBONU OJIKE, on the 15th day of April, 1950, at Yaba in the Lagos Judicial

Division, published in the form of an article entitled "Week-End Catechism" in a newspaper called the *West African Pilot*, a seditious publication containing the seditious words set forth in the second appendix hereto, and thereby committed an offence against section 51 (1) (c) of the Criminal Code.

'3. ZIK'S PRESS LIMITED on the 12th day of May, 1950, at Yaba in the Lagos Judicial Division, without lawful excuse, had in their possession in the form of a manuscript entitled "Week-End Catechism", a seditious publication containing the seditious words set forth in the first appendix hereto, and thereby committed an offence against section 51 (2) of the Criminal Code.

'Excerpts from the first appendix are as follows:

'FIRST APPENDIX

'*Tayo, Kaduna:* (1) What was the punishment meted to the murderers of late Private Danga Peri?

'*Answer:* The reward for late Danga Peri's war services was to shoot him to death. There was neither a trial nor any known inquiry into Danga Peri's death. There would not have been any such thing as Fitzgerald Commission, if we did not form the NEC and pressed for justice. So we get only what we fight for under alien rule. This Imperial Govt. is not created by us. Therefore, it is not responsible to us. It makes no difference to it what Nigerian public opinion is towards it. Hence I am unalterably convinced that it is time for us to rule ourselves.

*

'*Mallam Abdul Murmuni, Nguru:* Will Chukwunanka Ugokwe be released after our Independence is attained?

'*Answer:* Assuming that Ugokwe's sentence is neither reduced nor commuted, as soon as we are free he will be set free because his offence was political rather than criminal. Also a free Nigeria will scrap many British laws and systems not consonant with our national goal.

*

'*Omo Oba, Ibadan:* In which law book did Mr S. B. Rhodes read that a type of Ugokwe's charge was punished by life imprisonment?

'*Answer:* Justice Rhodes' sentence was unprecedented. Of course, to the Imperial stooge or his master, justice is what imperialism orders to be done. The aim of punishment is corrective not destructive of a personality. I am sure that the judge did not intend Ugokwe to repent and forgive. If so, he would not have given him so severe a sentence. My fear is that this sentence may strain the relations and intensify the already tense political atmosphere in oppressed Nigeria. Of course no one waits to be

told that those hours preceding dawn are usually the darkest of hours.

*

'A. Irondi, Lagos: Do the British use tear gas on their women? If not why do they apply gas on our women?

'Answer: I have not known of any occasion when British police opened tear gas on British women. But how dare you draw a parallel? Do Nigerians rule Britain? Do Nigerians make and own tear gas or rifles? Why dare you draw a parallel? He who rules another does so only by might of his arms and diplomacy.

*

'Nationalist, Bauchi: Ugokwe is sentenced to life imprisonment for attempting to murder Mr H. M. Foot. What did Britain do to the European who attempted to murder Mallam Zungur with a revolver?

'Answer: Not even a year sentence was given the European who attempted to murder Sa'ad Zungur. He was merely fined £5. Again you are daring to draw a parallel between a Nigerian and a Briton. You can only be right were we are a free nation just as Britain is.

'Lawyer, Ilesha: Why must an accused be asked to state his linguistic family?

'Answer: Attempts have been made from time immemorial, without our realising the danger to national unity being done, by asking an accused to state whether he is Yoruba, Hausa, Efik, Ibibio, Ijaw, Ibo, Bini and so on. It is not useful to national unity. In Britain no such thing is done. We are either Nigerians or aliens. So let Government scrap this vicious practice of always in public as in private life making us provincial and small.'

After the usual formalities, the accused put up a spirited defence against this particular section of the criminal code which defies any effective defence to offset a conviction. However, the court was disposed to be lenient; so it convicted the three persons and inflicted a fine on each of them. Thus ended a strange interlude in a most interesting journalistic exercise in an explosive political background. It was the period when the Macpherson Constitution was experiencing an acrimonious attack from nationalists all over the country.

Nnamdi Azikiwe versus Service Press Limited et al.

The original action was instituted by me against the Service Press Limited, Mobolaji Odunewu and Hamzat Idewu, claiming damages for libel published in the issue of the *Daily*

Service of December 9, 1948. The offensive words referred to 'Ben Azikiwe'. I was away from Lagos when the case came up for hearing and my counsel put A. K. Blankson in the witness box to identify the person labelled as myself. In doing so, he described me as 'Federal President of the NCNC', as referred to in the article in question.

Mr Justice S. B. Rhodes, after considering the nature of the libel and the demeanour of the defendants, who were not disposed to apologise or to withdraw their imputations, decided that the publication was tantamount to a gross libel. Therefore, he awarded damages of £500 to me. I was represented by J. I. C. Taylor and the defendants were represented by F. R. A. Williams and Fanni Kayode.

On appeal to the West African Court of Appeal, defendants-appellants submitted that the publication complained of referred to 'Ben Azikiwe', whereas the name of the respondent-plaintiff was 'Nnamdi Azikiwe'. They further argued that the respondent failed to call evidence to prove that 'Ben Azikiwe' referred to in the article was the same person as 'Nnamdi Azikiwe'. Counsel for the respondents made a rejoinder to the effect that the first appellant had admitted in the defence he filed that the respondent was the man referred to as 'Ben Azikiwe'.

On November 23, 1951, the WACA delivered judgment, written by Mr Justice Jibowu with the concurrence of Sir John Verity (Chief Justice) and Mr Justice J. A. Lewey. The appeal court held that the pleading of the appellants not having contained any specific denial that the article referred to the respondent, it accepted the fact that the paragraph thereto denied each and every allegation of fact contained in the particulars of claim.

In conclusion, the judgment said: 'Taking the defence as a whole, I am unable to see that it contains any admission that the respondent was the man, Ben Azikiwe, referred to in the alleged libel, and the submission of the learned counsel for the respondent on the point must, therefore, be rejected. The onus of proving that the respondent was the Ben Azikiwe referred to in the alleged libel rested on the respondent, and that onus he failed to discharge. His action should, therefore, have been dismissed.' The appeal was thus allowed.

Nnamdi Azikiwe versus Isaac Ade Ogunbanjo, etc.

This was an action instituted by me against Isaac Ade Ogunbanjo (the author), the editor of the *Nigerian Tribune* (name not disclosed), and the African Press Limited, of Ibadan, which was printed and published by the third defendants in the issue of the *Nigerian Tribune* dated May 31, 1951, under a prominent headline: 'Ex-Officer Tells Inside Story of NCNC' with the following story:

'The leader, Dr Azikiwe, was being murmured against by the rest for having a lion's share of the £13,000 booty. During the Nigeria-wide money collecting tour, Zik provided a 70 cwt. capacity lorry, bought for £450, for hiring at £10 per day and forthwith, for which he drew from the NCNC fund the sum of £1,200 being cost of hire for four months after which the lorry still remained his property. All NCNC-paid adverts were the monopoly of his group of newspapers.

All purses presented Zik during the tour, which amounted to £4,000, was not put into the NCNC funds for certain unnecessary and unaccountable services rendered.

'Rumours also had it that it was owing to the most extravagant, dishonest, selfish and condemnable way in which the money was spent that made impossible the submission of a statement of accounts. It was also said that Zik wanted to use for himself the unaudited balance of well over £2,000.

'Citizens, the only thing that can discredit the above, in my opinion, is for Zik to order out a statement of accounts of the £13,000. Since this has never been done, I disagree with anybody who submits that the leadership of such a man is sane and uppermost.'

G. B. A. Coker appeared for the plaintiff, while Rotimi Williams, Fanni Kayode, Abiodun Akerele and Mr Adekunle, appeared for the defence. Plaintiff submitted that the article was false, malicious and defamatory. The first defendant admitted writing the article and the third defendant admitted publication, but denied any falsity or malice to the extent of using a 'rolled-up' plea in their defence.

In his judgment, delivered on January 12, 1953, Mr Justice Myles Abbott held that he was satisfied that 'Zik' was the same person as the plaintiff, which had been proved 'to my entire satisfaction'. As for the statements of facts contained in the words complained of, the judge said: 'It is abundantly

clear to me that by far the greater part of them is completely untrue.' Therefore, he continued, a most important essential of the defence of fair comment had not been fulfilled.

Mr Justice Abbott maintained that the plaintiff had proved the innuendo pleaded by him; but since the court had already been convinced 'that the words are defamatory in their ordinary meaning, the innuendo can be disregarded'. He decided in favour of the plaintiff and ruled that

'... this particular libel I consider, was a remarkably base one and published in a newspaper which is the organ of a political party in opposition to that of which the plaintiff in the leader. . . . The neglect to publish any retraction or contradiction of the charges in the words complained of is also to be taken into account in awarding damages. Finally, I find that, in their conduct of these proceedings, the defendants have exhibited malice throughout. I hold that all these various circumstances must be taken as aggravating the damages in this case.'

The judge then awarded me £2,500 damages, with costs assessed at 500 guineas. The judgment was made against the first and third defendants, since the second defendant could not be identified. The West African Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal of the defendants—appellants as having no substance and awarded costs of eighty guineas against them. The case in the Supreme Court is Suit No. 1/20/52 at Ibadan, but it was never published in any of the printed official law reports, unlike virtually all the cases referred to in this sub-chapter.

Obafemi Awolowo versus Zik Enterprises Limited et al.

Chief Obafemi Awolowo sued Zik Enterprises Limited and Abdul Yekini Tinubu for an alleged libel which appeared in the *West African Pilot* of June 10, 1952, headed 'Action Group Threatens Crisis to Win Over the Government: Secret Behind Plan Disclosed'. The first defendants were printers and publishers and the second was the editor.

The plaintiff pleaded innuendo by submitting 'that the defendants meant and were understood by their readers to mean, that the plaintiff and the other ministers planned to interfere with the course of justice and threatened to create a constitutional crisis in order to force the hands of the Governor'. He was represented by Rotimi Williams and Fanni Kayode.

J.I.C. Taylor, for the defendants, submitted that the words complained of were written about a class of persons, that is, the Action Group as a whole, and that there was nothing to show that they referred to the plaintiff as an individual. He also submitted that the innuendoes were not proved.

Mr Justice Jibowu was satisfied that the words complained of referred to the plaintiff and that the innuendoes had been proved. Consequently, he decided in his favour and awarded him £2,000 damages.

When the defendants appeared at the West African Court of Appeal, their appeal was allowed in a judgment written by Mr Justice Foster-Sutton with the concurrence of Mr Justice de Comarmond (acting chief justice) and Mr Justice Henley Coussey. The appeal court ruled that, taking the article as a whole, it was unable to agree that, upon a reasonable construction, it could be regarded as referring to the respondent. It seemed that the whole tenor of the article showed that it was the policy of the Action Group as a party which was aimed at, and not any particular individual.

On the issue of innuendo, the appeal court disagreed with the learned trial judge on his ruling that the article bore the innuendo alleged. It could not help feeling that he might well have taken a different view. The appeal court also held the view that the second defendant had not been proved by the plaintiff to be editor of the *West African Pilot*, and so plaintiff could not be said to have discharged the onus which was upon him. It followed that judgment should have been given in favour of the defendant in any event.

Consequently, the WACA allowed the appeal of the appellants and set aside the judgment of the lower court, with costs assessed at £35 10s. On a subsequent appeal to the Privy Council this judgment of the West African Court of Appeal was set aside.

Obafemi Awolowo versus Zik Enterprises Limited et al.

This was the second of a consolidated suit, the first of which was outlined above. The first defendants were joined this time by Mbonu Ojike, the writer of the offending article, headed 'Action Group by Mbonu Ojike', which appeared in the issue

of the *West African Pilot* dated June 13, 1952. The innuendo complained of by the plaintiff in the article was that he and other ministers had asked the Governor to interfere in the course of justice in the conviction of someone then on appeal. The defendants denied the innuendoes. Mr Justice Jibowu, after hearing the evidence, was satisfied that the plaintiff had been defamed, and awarded him £500 damages.

The defendants again appealed to the WACA, which, in a written judgment by Mr Justice Foster-Sutton, Mr Justice de Comarmond (acting chief justice) and Mr Justice Henley Coussey concurring, ruled that the words complained of, in conjunction with the relevant circumstances, made it reasonable for the witnesses to think that the articles referred to the plaintiff. It was also decided that the innuendoes alleged were proved. Therefore, the judgment of the lower court was affirmed. It dismissed this appeal and awarded costs to the respondent at £19 10s.

U.A.C. versus Associated Newspapers Limited

Arising out of an article in the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* of April 27, 1953, the United Africa Company Limited sued the Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited and Fidelis O. Ebuwa, claiming damages for the publication of an article entitled 'Union Tells Government of United Africa Company's Greediness'. The article read as follows:

'The Licensed African Palm Union have accused the United Africa Company Limited of monopoly and have asked the Government to cause the company to hands off running of bulk oil plants in the Eastern Provinces.

'The following resolution was adopted at their meeting held in 1 Niger Street, here, on 17th April.

'Whereas it is the view of the Licensed Buying Agents that the United Africa Company monopolised palm produce trade in Eastern Nigeria;

' "And whereas the United Africa Company own all Bulk Oil Plants in Nigeria and charges rent on these plants;

' "And whereas the Government pays the United Africa Company reasonable amount of money for the maintenance of staff and equipment of all Bulk Oil Plants in this country;

' "Be it resolved and it is hereby resolved that the United Africa Company be made to hand over the running of all Bulk

Oil Plants in this region to the Nigerian Marketing Board or cease from buying palm produce in Eastern Nigeria so that it could direct its energies to running its Bulk Oil Plants and leave all other Licensed Buying Agents to carry on with Palm Produce Trade."

'2. We must point out that the United Africa Company has made it its firm policy to monopolise palm produce trade in Eastern Nigeria so that Africans will be ousted at all costs.

'For this reason the United Africa Company has made it a common practice to refuse to receive oil from African Licensed Buying Agents at the Bulk Oil Plants, Port Harcourt.

'When waggons which in most cases evacuate oil of European firms, and lorries which convey oil of African Licensed Buying Agents, arrive at the same time at the Bulk Oil Plant area, the Manager-in-charge often orders that oil in wagons should first be off-loaded for bulking while lorries are locked out of the gate for about three or four days thus punishing the lorry drivers and incurring more expenses for the Licensed African Buying Agents.

'The fact that the United Africa Company operates wholly and entirely on the Bulk Oil Plants at Abonnema, Calabar, Koko, Opobo etc., without intrusion by any Licensed African Buying Agent notwithstanding it continues to work us out at the Oil Plant Port Harcourt which is the only place we lay our hands.

'3. The United Africa Company has deliberately refused to accept our recommendation in respect of bulking allocation vide our letter to the Allocation Committee dated June 26, 1952, a portion of which reads:

' "For any quantity above 400 tons declared by Buying Agent as its calculated stock, allocation should be one-quarter of the declared stock; from 300 tons to 100 tons, one-third of the calculated stock; 100 tons to 50 tons one-half of the calculated stock; from 50 tons to 25 tons, two-thirds of the calculated stock and from 25 tons to 1 ton, total clearance of calculated stock should be allocated."

'The above recommendation was made in good faith in order to help the Licensed African Buying Agent who has insufficient capital to meet up further purchases as soon as he is paid for only a small quantity which he is allowed to bulk.

'Where a small firm is refused clearance of the twenty-five tons it could buy, its business will automatically cease because there is no money and containers to make fresh purchases.

'Moreover the proportion of his purchases and what he is allowed to bulk is small and leaves him with a very small margin of profit which is inadequate to meet his trade expenses for the month and also pay his employees.

'4. While African Licensed Buying Agents continue to

suffer, the United Africa Company enjoys overall privileges of the Bulk Oil Plant which is under its control.

'The attached Bulking Allocation Circular will show fully the critical condition under which smaller firms are placed.

'At times notices are given that there is no space in the Bulk Oil Plant and therefore oil cannot be accepted for bulking.

'Even at this time, the United Africa Company continues to bulk its oil normally.

'The "No Space" notice does not affect the United Africa Company but the smaller firms only.

'5. It is heartrending to observe that the United Africa Company labourers at the Bulk Oil Plant, Port Harcourt, charge extra monies before operating on the oil of the African Licensed Buying Agents even though they are paid to discharge their duties.

'Quite infrequently it happens that when a report to the Bulk Oil Plant Manager is made to enable him to check this practice, he turns a deaf ear on us.

'This attitude, no doubt, is a means to discourage the African Licensed Buying Agents.

'6. The management of the Bulk Oil Plant being entirely in the hands of the United Africa Company, the Licensed African Buying Agents' oil suffer irrecoverable losses in weight.

'These surplus weights go to swell the heavy turnover of the United Africa Company while the Licensed African Buying Agent is paid on the figures shown on his Bulking Sheets which is prepared by the very United African Company.

'7. We have made several protests individually and collectively in the past to which the authorities concerned have paid no heed.

'And each time we ask why we are so maltreated we are threatened that a recommendation to the Nigeria Marketing Board would be made so that our licences may be withdrawn.

'We now cry out to the world in general and the Government of Nigeria in particular to discharge us from this economic prison by adopting the above resolution in sympathy with the African Licensed Buying Agents in Eastern Nigeria whose sole trade is on palm produce.'

In a consolidated suit with the above, the UAC also sued the African Development Corporation and eleven others for being the authors of the offending article, alleging that it was printed and published of, and concerning them, in the way of their business, as (a) merchants, Owners, managers and operators of an installation at Port Harcourt known as 'Bulk Oil Plant', where palm oil intended for export from Nigeria was bulked, processed and stored pending shipment; and (b) licensed

buying agents of the Nigeria Oil Palm Produce Marketing Board.

The plaintiff alleged that by the said words the defendants meant and were understood to mean:

(a) that the plaintiff abuses its position as manager and operator of the said bulk oil plant for the purpose of obtaining unfair and preferential treatment and facilities for itself in its capacity as licensed buying agent, in comparison with other licensed buying agents;

(b) that the plaintiff permits and encourages its employees at the said bulk oil plant to accept bribes;

(c) that the plaintiff habitually causes or permits untrue records to be prepared of the quantities of palm oil delivered to the said bulk oil plant, in which the quantities delivered by other licensed buying agents are intentionally and to the plaintiff's knowledge understated;

(d) that the plaintiff habitually and knowingly misrepresents to the board that the resulting surplus quantities of oil have been delivered by itself;

(e) that the plaintiff by these means cheats and defrauds other licensed buying agents and the board, and obtains unlawful profits for itself;

(f) that the plaintiff conducts its business as manager and operator of the said bulk oil Plant and licensed buying agent of the board in a dishonest, unfair and improper manner, and is unfit to be entrusted by the board with the management or operation of the said bulk oil plant or to be licensed buying agent of the board.

The defendants in the first suit, that is, the case against the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* and F. O. Ebuwa, its editor, pleaded that the words were a fair comment on a matter of public interest, viz. the method, system and management of bulk oil plant in Eastern Nigeria; they also made what is now called, as a matter of convenience, the 'rolled-up' plea (of justification, fair comment and privilege); and they denied that the words were capable of bearing the meaning alleged by the plaintiff or any defamatory meaning.

The fifth to twelfth defendants in the second suit admitted writing the letter, dated April 23, 1953, causing it to be published in the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, causing the original to be

sent to the Nigerian Oil Palm Produce Marketing Board and copies to the Governor, Council of Ministers (Lagos), the Eastern House of Assembly, the Eastern Regional Development Board, the Western House of Assembly, the senior shipping officer (Port Harcourt), the Principal Produce Officer (Port Harcourt), the Secretary, Oil Palm Produce Licensed Buying Agents' Commission (Port Harcourt), the press, and the Federal Minister of Commerce and Industries. They pleaded in the same vein as the defendants in the first suit.

Mr Justice Stephen P. H. Thomas gave judgment in favour of the plaintiffs and awarded (a) damages totalling £3,000 against all the defendants in the two suits, in respect of the publication in the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, and (b) damages for £1,500 in respect of the publication of the letter.

On appeal to the West African Court of Appeal, judgment was delivered on November 4, 1953, written by Mr Justice Foster-Sutton, with the concurrence of Mr Justice de Comarmond (acting chief justice) and Mr Justice J. Henley Coussey. D. O. Ibekwe appeared for the appellants and H. P. F. Milmo represented the respondents.

On the submission that the trial judge was wrong in holding that the malice of the defendants in the second action destroyed the defence of fair comment pleaded by the defendants in the first action, the appeal court held that if the statements complained of were defamatory and were of fact, not of opinion, and were proved to be untrue and made maliciously, a newspaper publishing them could not successfully sustain a defence of fair comment.

On the argument of the appellants that the trial judge was wrong in giving one judgment for £3,000 jointly against the defendants in both cases, the appeal court ruled that in consolidated actions, where the defendants in both actions were joint tort-feasors, only one judgment could be given in respect of the joint tort; it followed, therefore, that the form of judgment in this case was right. For the above reasons, the appeal was dismissed with costs fixed at £49 3s.

Odutola versus 'West African Pilot' et al.

This was a case in which Chief Timothy A. Odutola sued the West African Pilot Limited (printers and publishers of the

West African Pilot) and P. C. Agbu (editor of that newspaper), claiming £30,000 as damages for libel. A. O. Lawson represented the plaintiff while Adeniran A. Ogunsanya appeared for the defendants.

The plaintiff alleged that the defendants, on January 7, 1958, falsely and maliciously caused to be published an editorial entitled 'Odutola and His Loans' with the innuendos that the plaintiff had used his connections with the Action Group to obtain loans from the Government of the Western Region; that his apparent affluence was deceptive; that he had selfishly taken 95 per cent of the total loans given to the people of Ijebu Ode; and that he had got loans to subsidise his schools and misappropriated them for other purposes.

On April 16, 1960, in the High Court of Lagos, Mr Justice Dickson ruled that the defendants had failed to give particulars in support of their plea. Although fair comment was different from a plea of justification, the defendants were entitled to plead that the facts on which their comments were based were true, notwithstanding that such facts were defamatory to the plaintiff, and there was no plea of justification.

He was satisfied that the plaintiff had been defamed and assessed damages against both defendants at £1,000 with costs to be taxed.

Enahoro versus 'Southern Nigeria Defender'

Chief Anthony Enahoro instituted legal proceedings in the Ibadan High Court against Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited (printers and publishers of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*) and S. N. Iweanya, its editor, claiming £5,000 damages for libel contained in the issues of that newspaper on April 30, and May 1, 1959. The first issue contained a report of the proceedings of the Western House of Assembly and the second an editorial comment based entirely on the former.

The plaintiff was represented by Chief Rotimi Williams and the senior Crown counsel (Mr Eboh), while the defendants were represented by Babatunde Olowofoyeku. Inexplicably, the claim against the second defendant was discontinued by the plaintiff before trial. Chief Enahoro maintained that the two publications were grossly inaccurate and that consequently

he was defamed. The defendants set up pleas of fair comment and qualified privilege.

On December 1, 1960, Mr Justice Fatayi Williams delivered judgment on the case. He ruled that for the plea of fair comment to succeed, the comment must be based on facts accurately stated; and that since the facts, as stated by the defendant, were grossly inaccurate, that plea must fail. On the defence of qualified privilege, the judge maintained that for it to succeed, the defence must prove that the report of the parliamentary proceedings was fair and accurate and was published *bona fide* and without malice. In his opinion, since the defendant had been reckless and had acted in utter disregard for accuracy, this defence also failed.

Before awarding damages, Mr Justice Williams took into consideration the fact that in spite of the plaintiff's correction of the facts, as reported on April 30, 1959, the defendant did not publish the correction. 'Instead,' he concluded, 'a more vicious attack, based on the same inaccuracies which they have made no effort to correct at any time, was launched on May 1, 1959. Bearing all these in mind, I award him £1,000 damages with costs.'

Williams, Akintola and Awolowo versus 'West African Pilot'

Chief Rotimi Williams (Attorney-General and Minister of Justice of Western Nigeria), Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola (Federal Minister of Communications and Deputy Leader of the Action Group) and Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Premier of Western Nigeria and Leader of the Action Group) brought in a consolidated action against the West African Pilot Limited (printers and publishers of the *West African Pilot*) and P. C. Agbu, its editor, claiming £30,000 each, as damages for libels published against them in a series of cartoons with captions which referred to three principal characters as 'the Brain', 'the Propagandist' and 'the Fuehrer', respectively.

They did not join the author of the cartoons; but when hearing began in the consolidated cases, on November 30, 1961, the plaintiffs withdrew against P. C. Agbu in each of the cases. He was thereupon struck out from the suits. It did not appear that he was ever served with the writ of summons.

H. P. F. Milmo and Adenekan Ademola appeared for the plaintiffs and M. E. R. Okorodudu and R. A. Akinjide represented the defendants.

Each of the plaintiffs complained of libel contained in various issues of the *West African Pilot*. to wit: (a) cartoon captioned 'History of the A.G. No. 8' appearing on page 4 of March 21, 1959; (b) cartoon captioned 'History of the A.G. No. 9' appearing at the right hand bottom corner of page 6 of the issue of April 4, 1959; (c) cartoon captioned 'History of the A.G. No. 10' appearing at the bottom of page 2 of the issue of April 7, 1959.

'The plaintiffs averred in their statement of claim that there was in 1951 a general election into the Western House of Assembly and that the principal political parties which contested the election were the Action Group (AG) and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) and that the AG formed the Government of the Region after winning a majority in that election.

'The *West African Pilot* was alleged to have published a series of the cartoons which were intended to deal and understood by the readers of the paper to deal with what happened at the 1951 election. In them it was said to have been claimed that it was the NCNC and not the AG that won the election in 1951, and the plaintiffs contended that that was untrue.

'"The plaintiffs also alleged that the person referred to as Fuehrer was intended to be, and was understood by the readers of the paper to be, the third plaintiff who had been, and still was, the Leader of the AG; that the person described as the Propagandist was intended to be, and was understood by the readers of the paper to be, the second plaintiff; and that the person referred to as the Brain was intended to be, and was understood by the readers of the paper to be, the first plaintiff who had been described in other issues and/or pages of the said paper as 'the brain behind the Action Group' and "the brain behind the Government".

'Having referred to the actual captions of the cartoons, the plaintiffs submitted that the publications meant, and were understood by the readers of the paper to mean, that: prior to the 1951 election the plaintiffs conspired to raise a colossal loan in order to win the said election by bribery; that at a top-secret meeting in 1951 the first plaintiff advocated that the AG party should employ persons of disreputable character in order to win the said election by impersonation and fraud, and that he conspired with the other two plaintiffs to use such methods to win that election; that after an NCNC victory at the 1951 election the plaintiffs conspired to bribe all waverers among the NCNC

successful candidates so that they might join the AG and so give the latter party the required majority. These imputations were said to be false and, in consequence, the plaintiffs claimed to have been injured in their characters, etc.

'The plaintiffs gave evidence on their own behalf and they confirmed one another's evidence that the cartoons referred to them. One witness testified for the plaintiffs but no witness was called by the defendants.'

The defendants admitted the professions of the plaintiffs in respect of the ownership of the *West African Pilot*, the general election in 1951 into the Western House of Assembly, the publication of the cartoons with their captions, the public offices held by the plaintiffs, but denied that the publications complained of were defamatory or were intended or understood to be defamatory by the readers of their paper. They raised the defence of fair comment and filed particulars in support of the same.

On December 22, 1961, Mr Justice Olujide Somolu delivered judgment and held that the cartoons complained of were capable of referring to the plaintiffs, that having regard to the evidence of the plaintiffs and their witness, which the court accepted, it followed that the publications complained of referred to the plaintiffs in a defamatory sense, and that grave charges of fraud and other forms of dishonourable conduct had been levelled against them in those cartoons.

The judge ruled that the defence of fair comment required that the material facts on which the comment was based should be truly stated and that the subject should be a matter of public interest. In his opinion, as the cartoons contained only allegations of facts without any comment on them, the defence of fair comment was not available to the defendants. Even if this had been tenable, the fact that these libels were not contemporaneous with the events but were a sudden crusade with no justifiable reasons to support it would destroy the protection offered by that 'rolled-up' plea.

Then Mr Justice Somolu maintained that once any publication had been found to be defamatory, the law presumed damage, but that in awarding damages the court was entitled to take account of all the circumstances of the libel. He concluded: 'Having given very careful consideration to all relevant factors in the case; having made all allowances in favour of the

defendants that I possibly can; and having regard to the amount of injury which the character and reputation of the plaintiffs must have, or are likely to have, suffered as a result of these libels, I hereby award a total of £10,500 in their favour, i.e. £3,500 each, with costs which I shall now proceed to assess. Judgment for the plaintiffs.'

This, incidentally, is the highest award of damages ever made by any court in Nigeria.

Benson versus 'West African Pilot'

T. O. S. Benson, Federal Minister of Information, sued the *West African Pilot* for libel, claiming £25,000 damages in respect of a publication in its issue of November 28, 1964, under the caption of 'Blankson did not Canvass'. In his statement of claims, the plaintiff complained against the following publication:

'4. The Chairman of the Nigeria Airways, Mr A. K. Blankson, yesterday denied that he ever canvassed for the post, as alleged by Chief T. O. S. Benson.

'Chief Benson had in a release attacking the NCNC, on the nomination of Mr F. N. Moronu as the official candidate of the party for Lagos North Constituency for the forthcoming Federal Elections, accused Mr Blankson of canvassing for the post of the Chairman of the Nigeria Airways Corporation.

'Mr Blankson told a *Pilot* reporter that he on no occasion canvassed for the post, adding that he was appointed on merit.

'He, however, challenged Chief Benson to name any of those he said [Blankson] contacted.

'The Chairman said that he had "no time for an idiot or a simpleton".'

C. E. Shyngle appeared for the plaintiff, while Mr Lardner and H. T. O. Coker represented the defendants.

Mr Benson claimed that 'by the words, the defendant meant, and was understood to mean, that the plaintiff is deficient in sense and intelligence; that he is a fool from birth and has no understanding; that he is not fit to be a minister or to practice his profession or to hold any post of responsibility'. He added that he had been thereby injured in his reputation and had been brought into public scandal, hatred, ridicule and contempt.

The defendant averred that the words complained of did not refer to the plaintiff but to the reporter who had interviewed Mr Blankson; and that they were not used in a defamatory sense and not sufficient in law to sustain the action. They further pleaded justification and fair comment. In addition, they submitted that the words spoken by Mr Blankson were vulgar abuse and were so understood by the reader of the report. They concluded that they were the innocent disseminators of the substance of the interview granted by Mr Blankson to the defendant's reporter.

On July 30, 1965, Mr Justice Chuba Ikpeazu delivered judgment in the High Court of Lagos. He was not satisfied that a reasonable reader of the article would reasonably construe the words 'idiot' or 'simpleton' to mean that the plaintiff was mentally unsound or deficient in sense and intelligence or unfit to be a minister or practise his profession or hold any position of responsibility.

He concluded as follows: 'Although I hold that the words complained of amount to no more than a vulgar abuse, they are none the less actionable. . . . In the circumstances of this case, I will hold the defendant liable to the plaintiff for the publication in writing of words which amount to a vulgar abuse of the plaintiff but which in the context of the article are not disparaging of him. Were those words spoken and not written, no action in law would lie against the publisher.'

In awarding damages, the judge said: 'As the liability of the defendant is an implication of legal technicality, there being no loss or injury to the plaintiff's reputation as aforesaid, I award to the plaintiff as damages the sum of £100 with costs.'

3. CAUSES OF INFRACTIONS OF THE LAW

It will be seen from the cases outlined above that five factors, including executive or managerial irresponsibility, contributed to the libels or offences leading to litigation, excepting in cases where the prosecution was ill-founded or misconceived or even malicious: first, articles written in good faith by well-meaning persons who are ignorant of the law of libel; secondly, articles written in good faith by sensitive politicians in utter disregard of the law concerning defamation; thirdly, articles written by

irresponsible writers regardless of their professional background or station in life; fourthly, articles written either under an erroneous impression or due to misinformation or due to a mistake or error of omission or commission, with an innuendo which could be fairly inferred to be libellous; and finally, cartoons drawn by over-zealous nationalists who are unaware of the pitfalls of libel law.

In all these instances the newspaper proprietor is ultimately responsible for any infraction of the law although, in a case of criminal libel, proved innocence completely absolves the proprietor from guilt. Apart from the proprietor, the law also holds the publisher, author, editor, and printer jointly and severally liable for printing and publishing any libel. They are known as joint tort-feasors. In the case of seditious libel, which is generally a statutory offence, the accused must be connected with the publication, as in any other crime. Thus, the person must be either the writer or publisher of the offending matter, or be in possession of same.

The onerous responsibility placed on the newspaper proprietor, enjoined by the law, makes it imperative for him to ensure that libel is not printed and published in his newspaper. The engagement of an editor charged with the specific duty of being responsible for the publication of a newspaper should be sufficient, where the editor is a responsible person not only acquainted with the laws of libel but also competent in newspaper management and administration. But the modern newspaper is not merely a vehicle for intellectuals to parade their erudition and citizens to articulate their views; it is a complex business enterprise as well.

This element compelled the newspaper proprietor to bifurcate the management of newspapers by the creation of a cadre of managers, who may be managing directors or general managers or business managers charged with the responsibility of efficient management and administration of newspaper production, distribution and accounting.

To avoid a conflict of authority, the editor is given a contract which defines his duties: to produce a readable newspaper whose literary flavour will induce respect and patronage; to prevent the insertion of libel or any illegality in the newspaper; to implement the policy formulated by the owners of

the newspaper; and by his personal demeanour, etc., to safeguard the reputation of the newspaper.

The managing director or general manager is also given a contract spelling out his duties as, generally, to manage and administer the whole machinery of newspaper production and distribution, for and on behalf of the proprietor. Such an all-powerful business potentate is expected to exercise control generally over the editor, subject to the latter's contract of employment.

This bifurcation of powers between the editor on the one hand and the managing director or general manager on the other can cause heavy losses to the proprietor where either or both of the two cardinal employees of the company is either incompetent or inefficient.

Generally, even the most efficiently produced newspapers cannot escape from the toils of the law of civil libel or the warm embrace of criminal libel. This is where the management must be on its toes to see that the newspaper is adequately safeguarded to avoid wasteful litigation and the frittering away of its financial resources. In other words, competent editorship and efficient management are essential to the healthy life and survival of a modern newspaper.

Applying the theories enunciated above to actual litigation in which our newspapers were involved, it will be found, after perusing the judgments given and the *obiter dicta* pronounced by learned jurists, that four main factors were responsible for the fate of our newspapers in the law courts: inept editorial management; inadequate legal safeguards; incompetent business administration, and inefficient general supervision of the newspaper establishment, due to individual laxity and lack of co-ordination between the various segments of the business.

It was not until 1964 that the country's first college of journalism produced its first corps of university graduates in journalism; this should mitigate the problems raised by the absence of a professional cadre of journalists required for a modern newspaper enterprise. Due credit should, all the same, be given to those who passed through the hard and grinding mill of experience, to edit newspapers steadily over a period of 105 years from 1859 to 1964.

I am not saying that university-trained journalists are

necessarily the best editors, because that is not true. As a matter of fact, the majority of such professionals, like their counterparts in the other professions, are mainly careerists who are more vocational in their approach to the problems of life in developing countries. The fact that undemocratic governments find these highly educated journalists malleable in operating officially-sponsored newspapers, radio and television stations, etc., contrary to the public interest, is not a credit to the university-trained professional journalist. But the same is unfortunately true of the journalist from the ranks.

Some of the libel cases could have been avoided if the managerial sector of our business had proved equal to the occasion. In some cases, a libel action against us would be called in court. The plaintiff would put in appearance personally or through his counsel. We would not appear in court and at times, in spite of our having retained counsel, none would appear on our behalf. Usually, someone forgot that a case against us was due in court on a particular date. Perhaps it was just a matter of nonchalance or sheer carelessness; but the effect was to antagonise the court before the merit of a case was argued.

On one of the libel cases against us the damages awarded could have been considerably reduced had managerial supervision been efficiently discharged. The plaintiff's counsel had written to the management of one of our provincial newspapers to publish an unqualified apology and make suitable amends. This request was neglected. When the case was tried the neglect aggravated the damages and costs awarded against us.

An efficient managerial machinery would have consulted legal opinion, contacted plaintiff's counsel with a draft apology for his screening and published the same without reservation. If the amount required to make amends were unreasonable, the newspaper could pay into court a nominal sum, leaving the point of the quantum of damages to be decided when the issue was joined.

This was done in the *R. M. Williams versus Zik's Press Limited* case in Lagos, in 1938; and we got away with £101 damages. This was not done in Port Harcourt in 1950, in the *Ikoku versus Zik's Press* case, and the judge awarded punitive damages of £1,000 in addition to costs. In view of the delete-

rious effect of constant and heavy damages inflicted against newspapers for libel, it is advisable that they should retain the services of competent and efficient top managerial staff to safeguard their very existence.

Most of the libel cases could have been avoided or compromised, had our top editorial executive been prudent and responsible. In many instances the publication of an unreserved apology, together with a token payment into court by way of amends, could have mollified the anger of the plaintiff, mitigated his injury, and assuaged the discretion of the court. But some of our editors were arrogant and obdurate. Not having any material stake in the business, outside of their pay packets, and not having been trained to protect the goose that lays the golden eggs of their employment, they often preferred to plunge the business into heavy payment of fines and punitive damages.

Take, for example, the *UAC versus Associated Newspapers of Nigeria* case. The timely publication of an apology, with an offer to bear the expenses of the plaintiff, could have mitigated the case. But those concerned were convinced that they had a good case; and, in spite of the importation of a Queen's Counsel from the United Kingdom, which increased the costs of the litigation, they decided to fight the case irrespective of the consequences.

The case of *Odutola versus West African Pilot* was plainly one of deliberate libel. Unable to justify the defamation, the obvious thing a wise executive would have done was to seek for settlement out of court, and immediately publish an unreserved apology withdrawing all imputations which could be calculated to injure the reputation of the plaintiff. The editor did nothing of the sort. The management appeared to be unconcerned. The result was the payment of heavy damages which the owners could ill afford.

The case of *Enahoro versus Southern Nigeria Defender* is a classic example of editorial irresponsibility. Here the plaintiff actually corrected the false publication; but instead of grasping the opportunity to make amends by publishing an unreserved apology, the newspaper published what the learned judge characterised as 'a more vicious attack, based on the same inaccuracies which they have made no effort to correct at any time'. This cost the owners of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*

£1,000 damages plus costs. It is very significant that, in spite of the irresponsibility in ignoring to publish the correction, the editor of the particular issue of this newspaper, who must be regarded as an important actor in this journalistic melodrama, was not joined in this action by the plaintiff, in spite of the *obiter dicta* of Mr Justice Fatayi Williams.

Then there is the case of Rotimi Williams *et alia* versus the *West African Pilot*. True, the preparation and publication of political cartoons are a novelty in this part of the world, but that does not necessarily absolve an alert editor from protecting his newspaper from being vulnerable to a libel action by the publication of a political cartoon which might carry innuendos of a highly libellous nature.

Again, for reasons best known to the plaintiffs, they decided to leave both the author and the editor severely alone; they confined their litigation to the proprietors, who must be presumed innocent of the tort, although they could not escape being vicariously responsible as printers and publishers of the libel, according to law. The defence, which was based on fair comment was badly dented because, according to Mr Justice Somolu, the cartoons did not contain comments but 'allegation of facts'. Even if the defence had been tenable, the judge continued, the timing of the publication was not justified and it destroyed the protection offered by the 'rolled-up' plea of the defence.

For these errors of omission and commission on the part of those they engaged to operate their newspapers competently and efficiently, the printers and publishers were ordered by the court to pay the astronomic sum of £10,500, plus the costs of the case. That it was awarded by a jurist who had had considerable experience as a working journalist demonstrates the nature of these libels.

Thus it can be appreciated why, in piloting the Eastern Nigeria Newspaper Bill in 1955, I caused to be inserted in one of its clauses a provision implicitly making the author, editor and proprietor joint tortfeasors. Section 21 (2) of the law stipulates as follows: 'In any proceedings for contribution under this section the amount of the contribution recoverable from any person shall be such as may be found by the court to be just and equitable having regard to the extent of that per-

son's responsibility for the damage; and the court shall have power to exempt any person from liability to make contribution or to direct that the contribution to be recovered from any person shall be a complete indemnity.'

During my régime I was obliged to formulate a policy for legal retainers to ensure adequate legal safeguards to our business. I was satisfied that whatever moneys were expended as solicitor's fees would be worth their weight in gold, so long as we secured the services of the best lawyers locally available. This policy was based on the idea that we should retain only first-class lawyers in the top echelon of their profession.

The result was very satisfactory and we had the following panel of lawyers to protect our interests from 1937 to 1953: W. O. Euba, E. J. Alexander Taylor, Sir William Geary, Bart., F. E. Nelson Williams, J. I. C. Taylor and G. B. A. Coker. The last two are now Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of Nigeria.

4. REMEDIES FOR THE FUTURE

After five years' experience in the *West African Pilot*, I sensed the danger of Printing and publishing a newspaper without adequate safeguards for its survival as a business enterprise. Consequently, I issued a set of rules relating to personnel, organisation, employee welfare, discipline, and provincial agencies. The aim was to provide a code of behaviour among my staff to ensure that the newspaper establishment was run competently and efficiently. Because of my rigid enforcement of these rules, order and discipline were maintained and each member of the staff realised the responsibility which devolved upon him.

Because of the indifference and utter carelessness of some members of the editorial staff, I was obliged to insert in Rule 33 that, 'as a war measure, arising from the current legislations affecting the press, no employee of the *West African Pilot* shall authorise, insert, set, make-up, chase, proof-read or re-write any manuscript or advertisement or headline or matter intended for publication without obtaining the expressed sanction of the editor-in-chief in writing.'

To maintain discipline in the precincts of the newspaper establishment, Rule 46 provided as follows:

'46. The following offences shall be punishable either by summary dismissal or by fines or by any punishment deemed sufficient by the management, and the newspaper shall not hold itself liable to give any notice or salary in lieu of notice of dismissal in any respect as below, to any of its employees:

- '(a) unlawful absence from duty;
- '(b) irregularity in attendance to duty;
- '(c) any act of insubordination;
- '(d) noise-making in the premises of the company;
- '(e) entertainment of friends in the premises of the company during or after business hours;
- '(f) irregularity in the performance of duty due to procrastination, forgetfulness, vacillation, shifting of responsibility, carelessness, negligence, incompetency;
- '(g) inefficient performance of duty, such as poor spelling, bad proof reading, bad editing, bad composing, bad chasing, bad printing, incorrect addressing or misdirecting of letters, packets and/or parcels, faulty entries in account books or records, bad typing, waste of stationery or materials belonging to the company;
- '(h) any act of disloyalty to the company.'

When, now, after an absence of about fourteen years, I decided to make a re-entry into the orbit of journalism, I tried to remain behind the scenes for some time; but I was disappointed at the apparently lackadaisical manner in which the business was run. So I expressed a desire to resume active management of the business, somehow, as from November 1966.

In this connection I summoned the executive directors, editors, managers, and accounting officers of all our newspapers, that is, the *West African Pilot* the *East Nigeria Guardian* and the *Nigerian Spokesman*, to meet me at a special conference held in the Continental Building at Nsukka, in December 1966, when a new set of rules and regulations was vetted and approved by the conference to guide the printing and publishing of our newspapers as from January 1967.

In view of the disgraceful evidence of editorial irresponsibility manifested in most of the cases against our newspapers, I insisted that in the future the editor of any newspaper of our group, without any exception, should sign an agreement entering into a bond for the sum of £1,000 'by way of security for the honest and faithful discharge of his duties under this agreement' to be executed by two responsible bondsmen

approved in writing by the company; or the editor shall deposit the sum of £1,000 in cash or kind in lieu of the bond; provided that any such cash security shall yield to the editor or the person paying same for him an annual interest of four per centum which shall be returned to him or the person paying for same at the determination of the agreement; provided further that whatever liabilities the editor might incur on behalf of the company (as a result of his culpable negligence) shall be deductible from this deposit before the balance is refunded.

All our editors were circularised with the draft of this agreement. Within one month two editors left Lagos and returned to Eastern Nigeria as 'refugees'. The others did not give the impression that they were willing to negotiate such an agreement. By April the economic sanctions imposed by the Federal Government had started to act. By the end of May, Eastern Nigeria had declared its independence. On July 6, 1967, Nigeria was at war. On December 5, 1967, the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* was ordered to stop publication. Early in March 1968, the *Nigerian Spokesman* ceased publication as a result of invasion by Federal troops and the shelling of its factory at Onitsha. Its sub-editor (S. N. C. Enwezor) and advertisement manager (C. S. Alabingo) died during these tragic incidents. Since then, matters relating to the Zik Group of newspapers have been in a flux.

In order to protect the fortunes of newspapers which are placed under the responsibility of managing directors or general managers and editors, it is important that there should be adequate remedies for the future. These executives should be obliged to perform certain acts so as to preserve the continued existence of newspapers placed under their supervision. Their contracts of employment should make it obligatory for them jointly and severally:

- (1) to guarantee that the company would retain a legal practitioner (if not already done) to handle the legal problems of the company; provided that it shall be the duty of the managing director or general manager and the editor to ensure that the legal practitioner attends court every day any case is mentioned or called against the newspaper or company concerned;
- (2) to draft and publish in three successive issues of the news-

paper concerned an unreserved apology immediately vetted by the legal practitioner, withdrawing all imputations that could be calculated to defame a putative plaintiff, as soon as a complaint of alleged defamation or intention to litigate is brought to his notice; provided further, that the retained legal practitioner so advises;

(3) to pay a nominal amount of not less than £100 into court and obtain official receipt from the Registrar in connection with a threatened case, for which an unreserved apology had been thrice published;

(4) to attend court every day a case against the newspaper or company is mentioned or called up in connection with a threatened or actual litigation;

(5) to sign all documents in connection with any litigation against the newspaper or company 'for and on behalf' of such a person;

(6) to enter into a bond to be executed by two responsible bondsmen approved in writing by the company for the sum of £1,000, by way of security for the honest and faithful discharge of his duties under this agreement; or

(7) to deposit the sum of £1,000 in cash or kind in lieu of the bond in his own name or in the name or names of approved persons paying the deposit on behalf of the employee; and

(8) to indemnify the company owning the newspaper one-quarter of the total sum of damages and costs adjudged and awarded against the newspaper as a result of the culpable negligence of the employee.

In addition to the above mandatory precautions and indemnities, newspapers should draft rules and regulations in precise terms incorporating a code of behaviour for editors and journalists in respect of precepts, ethics, and policies, vide Appendices E, F, G, and H *infra*, proposed for use by the Zik group of newspapers as from January 1967.

The effect of these proposed remedies is to make the management and the editorial executive keep on their toes and pull their weight in order to safeguard the existence of the newspapers entrusted to their care, and thus avoid exposing them to unnecessary litigation, aggravated damages, and punitive costs, as a result of their culpable negligence. If after taking due precautions the inevitable happens, then, other things being equal, it would have to be accepted as one of the risks and hazards of the profession and business of journalism.

CHAPTER XII
IN THE COURSE OF DUTY

My attempt to build goodwill and use it as a means to create a platform of understanding between the colonial rulers and their protégés; only to be rebuffed and persecuted

'What you have to attempt: to be yourself. What you have to pray for: to become a mirror in which, according to the degree of purity of heart you have attained, the greatest of life will be reflected.'

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD

I. AMBASSADORS OF GOODWILL TO BRITAIN

Sometime in 1942, C. F. Dundas arrived in Lagos as a representative of the British Council and resided in the Grand Hotel at Broad Street, adjacent to the CMS Bookshop. He invited me to come and discuss with him the possibility of establishing this organisation in Nigeria. During our discussion I told him that it was contradictory for Britain to seek to make friends in the non-English-speaking world, whilst neglecting the British-orientated countries in Africa. My advice was that Britain should strengthen the ties of friendship between it and Nigeria, for historical and economic reasons.

When the information officers serving in Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia met at Accra in May 1943, they were informed that the Colonial Office had arranged to invite seven West African editors to visit war-time Britain, under the auspices of the British Council. While these colonial civil servants suggested that the editors should be housed in the Colonial Centre, which offered inferior accommodation, it was decided in England that, compatible with their professional dignity, the West African journalists should be housed in the Hyde Park Hotel.

The conference advised that advantage of the presence of these journalists in London should be taken to arrange for

them to visit certain newspaper establishments so as to impress upon them the importance of high standards of technical production and what was needed in order to attain it. Lord Swinton, then Resident Minister to British West Africa, also alerted the information officers on the need for a visit of this nature to help impress the Americans with a proper appreciation of British colonial policy.

The following journalists were invited to make this historic visit: (a) from Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe, editor of the *West African Pilot*; Abubakar Imam Kagara, editor of *Gaskiya taƙi Kwabo*; and Isaac B. Thomas, Editor of *Akede Eko*; (b) from the Gold Coast, R. B. Wuta-Ofei, editor of the *Gold Coast Spectator*; and Daniel G. Tackie, editor of the *Gold Coast Independent*; (c) from Sierra Leone, Dephon Thompson, editor of the *Sierra Leone Weekly Mail*; and G. V. Jarrett, editor of the *Sierra Leone Standard*; (d) from the Gambia, C. W. Downes Thomas, editor of the *Gambia Echo*.

In July 1943 the seven ambassadors of goodwill sailed on the Dutch liner *Amstelkerk* bound for the United Kingdom. On arrival at Liverpool their luggage was thoroughly searched by military intelligence officers who were grossly discourteous and left the impression of being intransigent. For no just cause my luggage and that of Mr Wuta-Ofei was subjected to unnecessary searching so that we were obliged to ask if they desired any particular information which we could give.

While on board and having been elected secretary of the delegation, I urged my colleagues to join me in presenting a memorandum to the Colonial Office demanding independence for British West Africa, in two stages, over a period of fifteen years, either immediately or after the ending of the war. That is, that the four British West African colonies should be independent either in 1958 or in 1960. Whilst Messrs Thomas, Wuta-Ofei, Tackie, and Jarrett supported the contents of this memorandum *in toto*, Mr Downes Thomas made a number of reservations on behalf of Gambia, while Mr Dephon Thompson and Alhaji Abubakar Imam refused to identify themselves with it because they said they were not mandated to do so.

It is ironical that, in spite of the apparent snubbing by the Colonial Office of the contents of this memorandum and the fears expressed by three of the delegates, the Gold Coast

became independent in 1957 and changed its name into Ghana; Nigeria became independent in 1960; Sierra Leone became independent in 1961; and Gambia became independent in 1965. So the stone which the builders rejected ultimately became the corner.

Among the places visited by the ambassadors of goodwill were the offices and works of the *Daily Herald* of London and the *Oxford Mail*. We were given a civic luncheon by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham. While we were afforded the opportunity to visit a battle school, where newly recruited soldiers were toughened by means of a simulated environment of the war front, this particular assignment was nervewracking to us as well, because explosives detonated at unexpected places as we watched some of the troops in a mock war interspersed with a make-believe action which was all too realistic.

This visit to war-time Britain enabled me to make a reunion with many friends and to make contacts with new ones. Mr Justice Chuba Ikpeazu and Chief M. O. Ibeziako, whose boats were torpedoed in mid-Atlantic and who were saved by the British Navy, had settled down to their law studies. Godfrey Amachree, Dr Jumbo and Dr Peterside, who had gruesome experiences of this nature, were also rescued. Mr Amachree returned home ultimately to become Solicitor-General of the Federation of Nigeria, while his two companions rose to the highest ranks in the country's medical service.

At the West African Students' Union, I had a reunion with many students, including Dr E. Udo Udoma (Chief Justice of Uganda), Chief S. O. Awokoya (Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Education), Dr Sasegbon (senior medical officer), Mr Justice Beoku Betts, Robert Kweku Gardner (Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa), Josiah Obianwu (Chief Magistrate, Eastern Nigeria), Rhodes Vivour (Chief Magistrate, Western Nigeria), etc.

2. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ASSASSINATION STORY

In the afternoon of July 13, 1945, during the general strike, Mr C. U. M. Gardner, Managing Editor of the *West African Pilot*, handed me a monitored wireless message which, he said, Paul West (now known as M. B. M. Orualali) told him that he

had intercepted in metre 51 at 5.15 p.m. on that day. Mr West was one of our three wireless operators on monitoring duties in connection with our Reuter's service. I took delivery of this message and read its sinister contents. I was shocked and terrified.

The message contained suggestions for the assassination of 'two most important persons who continue to instigate strikers' between that day (Friday) and Monday, July 16. Marksmen were alleged to have been detailed to watch cinemas and dancing halls. Arrangements were said to be in the offing to get Mr 'A' to give a lecture 'where all possibility of assassination can take place in the hall'. If that failed, then the targeter would shoot into the blue car by night. He was said to have been detailed to watch King George Avenue.

Now, my surname starts with 'A', and I was well-known as a public lecturer. I had a blue Packard limousine and I frequented cinema halls. Occasionally I attended dances. I resided at 72 King George Avenue, Yaba, and in the afternoon of the day in question, Herbert Macaulay and Dr Olorun-Nimbe were in a car at Yaba. Moreover, two of our papers were banned and the strikers insisted that, unless the ban was removed, they would not resume their duties. In the light of these considerations, and considering the circumstances under which the wireless message was monitored and delivered to me, I naturally became apprehensive for my safety.

Immediately after reading the wireless messages, I sent for my cousin, Samuel Nwachukwu Obi, then an accountant in the Treasury, and my friend Sir Odumegwu Ojukwu. On their arrival I showed them the messages. After ruminating, they advised me to retreat to Onitsha and remain *incomunicado* for some time. Sir Odumegwu arranged with his relative, Benson Okoli, who was in Lagos then on business, to give me a lift in his new Chevrolet saloon car. We left Lagos at midnight and arrived in Ilesha at about six in the morning.

We detoured and stayed in the bush for the whole day to avoid detection. At 7 p.m. we resumed our journey and arrived Asaba at 1 a.m. I made private arrangement with a canoe puller who ferried me across to Onitsha. On arrival, I went to my friend Sir Louis Mbanefo (Chief Justice of Eastern Nigeria), where I was given sanctuary for the next two weeks.

He was then a successful lawyer. Only my father and mother, in addition to the senior members of the Mbanefo family, knew that I was in town.

Because of the general strike and the tense atmosphere in Nigeria at that time, I was given legal advice not to disclose the whole contents of the monitored messages, since they referred to a colonial government which could institute legal proceedings for sedition in accordance with the criminal law. A lawyer vetted the messages and approved the publication of an expurgated version, if for no other reason, at least to vindicate that I was actually handed a message purported to have been intercepted by our chief wireless operator.

Since this incident happened nearly twenty-five years ago, I think that it would be in the public interest to release the actual monitored messages that were handed to me, omitting certain names and titles. I am doing this for two reasons: first, although the original monitored messages intercepted were never, to my knowledge, released by me or by Messrs West and Gardner, yet I discovered an exact reproduction of these messages among discarded miscellaneous papers when I assumed office as Governor-General fifteen years later; secondly, Mr Orualali, who was known as 'Paul West' at the material time, visited me at State House, Lagos, 1961 and again confirmed the authenticity of the monitored messages. He explained to me that he was shadowed by the special branch after my flight to Onitsha, and that he was obliged to abscond from Nigeria to Europe for safety.

Subject to the above, the following is the edited text of the monitored messages which were intercepted by Mr Orualali and handed to me by the late Collins Gardner:

Priority xxx 1213 xxx Blankety Blank arriving town by camouflaged seaplane 21st xxx plane shall alight sea ten miles to town xxx imperative you arrive by latest 10 pm 21st inst xxx special camouflaged plane shall leave town 20th for yours xxx on arrival we shall board special seaplane which due here from Gibraltar meeting Blankety Blank in mid ocean to confer from 12 midnight till 2 am xxx naval destroyer shall be in attendance at five miles radius to hammer intruders xxx strictly private xxx several discussions on agenda xxx after which demand of workers shall be given full xxx imperative you order bonfires at major airports to direct plane leaving for yours xxx you will fly back

immediately meeting ends as not cause any consternation in community xxx disguise in military habiliments and arm selves with loaded pistols xxx take great care only European military officers to be in charge of bonfires at airports and no African sentinels should be on duty xxx orders certain seniors made several arrests of strikers still on bases of intimidation and no victimisation xxx allow bail each time and keep adjourning cases xxx reference my priority air letter today first item on agenda is assassination of the two most important persons who continue instigate strikers xxx already started on steps towards cancellation ban on papers but proposed assassination will take place before officially released xxx military targeters are detailed watch cinema halls and dancing halls xxx arranging get round people beg 'A' give lecture where all possibility assassination can take place in hall xxx reward of hundred guineas to European military targeter who will get at him xxx if that proves futile they will watch by night to shoot into blue car xxx strictly private and till then xxx ENDS

Priority xxx your air letter unreceived yet xxx shall suggest workers demand immediately given and hold on bloody act yet unless imminent riot xxx

Your todays flash priority xxx big meeting shall save country from disaster xxx suggest workers demand be met before arrival of Blankety Blank xxx shall give personal opinion on tragic move xxx

Priority xxx your priority flash xxx pleasant meeting enough xxx shall wait for plane and set as ordered xxx your air letter not received yet xxx suggest all messages come by code next time fear interception xxx also suggest postpone assassination till we meet but advise take off ban before then xxx

Priority xxx rfc your replies xxx am still of opinion assassination takes place between now and Monday xxx just informed two of them were in a car this afternoon xxx Sergeant Cotwall was just late who was detailed to watch king george avenue xxx shall take your various advice then till we meet xxx there shall be riot but ready bombard rioters in cold blood xxx thanks all till we meet xxx no interception of message xxx wireless officers say all is safe

Cq all very seniors and seniors xxx Priority xxx my flash 1012 xxx follows xxx Blankety Blank advises use promiscuous discretion to get back workers who present on strike xxx if still adamant give

demand immediately xxx arrangements for interview separate unions still continuing xxx use utmost tact and coax provincial strikers xxx shall wire results of interview late xxx from reliable sources today news spread round city that strikers say they not returning to work except ban on two leading papers be cancelled xxx shall see later to that and communicate Blankety Blank on Saturday xxx if possible shall do according to advice and get back strikers immediately xxx still use utmost bests and intimidate that rest shall be dismissed when greater percentage return xxx shall connect all you again xxx final decision is to remove ban on papers and warn very strictly and severely xxx use utmost means again and tactfully xxx no victimisation of whatever nature xxx ENDS

Cq all very seniors and seniors xxx Priority xxx Rfse my last flash xxx suggestions to give Blankety Blank xxx begin xxx deliberations still on with respective unions xxx if present measure fails shall act accordingly and immediately xxx recent rumour now afloat unless ban on two famous and most appreciated newspapers be abolished strikers adamant remain without job xxx but if majority returns between now and 22nd ban shall remain for the originally specified time of three months xxx if on contrary position remains same shall immediately recommend petition from proprietors just maintain morale of government xxx if that comes not and position and opinion of strikers as already given remain the same shall order for immediate reinstatement forthwith xxx your suggestion solicited xxx ENDS

Priority xxx 812 your flash came as wild surprise xxx on behalf of my seniors xxx suggesting take Blankety Blank's advice and grant adamant strikers their need shall solicit ban be revoked immediately as such news also rampant here xxx

1212 xxx Priority xxx your flash reference your flash on behalf of my seniors I advise act accordingly and save situation xxx country as whole suffers xxx am meanwhile using all means get back workers xxx shall advise also ban be removed and position be normal xxx

1712 xx Priority xxx your flash referred xxx suggest action immediately taken as position appears worse here xxx news here also except newspaper is reinstated strikers agree remain until such time thinks fit revoke ban xxx behalf my seniors am adding that ban be cancelled and let work once more resume usual life and splendour xxx hoots on streets here wives and children of strikers agree to remain on strike till death unless newspapers are reinstated xxx our united advice pray xxx

Priority xxx thanks for genuine replies and suggestions xxx am contacting Blankety Blank tomorrow xxx shall give him all united suggestions xxx shall see what can be done before 22nd xxx shall accordingly remove ban very tactfully and coolly xxx all hearty thanks to all secretariat xxx

On December 16, 1945, the Governor addressed the Legislative Council of Nigeria and while discussing the general strike, said: 'I do not propose to dwell on the many attempts to fog the issue and to disturb the public mind—such as the impossible story that I had paid secret visits to Nigeria during my leave or even the sillier invention that a certain journalist was in danger of his life. I am sure that he had nothing more to fear than the dark shadows of his own imagination.'

Continuously for two months the *Daily Service*, under the editorship of Chief Samuel L. Akintola, maintained an inspired attack on my person and insisted that I had no reasonable ground to be apprehensive about my life. It alleged that I manufactured the story in order to transform myself into a martyr. In its issue of December 27, 1945, it published a long and apparently inspired editorial accusing me of concocting 'a colossal falsehood' in order to gain cheap popularity.

An aura of mystery continues to surround this astonishing incident. The behaviour of the colonial government was perplexing. Take three examples: first, how did officialdom come into contact with the full text of an intercepted monitored message of which it denied any knowledge or being in possession? Secondly, why did the Governor in his address to the Legislative Council reproduce an allegation that he 'had paid secret visits to Nigeria' during his leave when, to my knowledge, nobody ever made such an allegation? The expurgated version of the messages, published by me in a pamphlet at the material time, did not contain any such reference to anybody visiting Nigeria or anywhere; and in the original messages, the person referred to could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be the Governor. The question, therefore is, why was such a misleading statement made?

Thirdly, why did some spokesmen of the Information Department disseminate information that Paul West invented the assassination story, because he was owed salary and had been

threatened with retrenchment, when this information was a complete falsehood which could not be substantiated? These three examples suffice to justify my assertion that an aura of mystery surrounds the assassination story. It is very unusual for official behaviour to be so cryptic, suspicious and questionable.

The statement made by the Governor in the Legislative Council is an expression of opinion which should be conceded to him. It is also a privileged statement. But it is open to questioning in order to test its validity and reasonableness. As far as the facts go, the report stating that he paid a secret visit to Nigeria during his furlough, if made in the context of the assassination story, is not true, because it was not so indicated in the published and unpublished versions of this wireless interception. The accusation that the assassination story was a silly invention is unreasonable, so long as no argument was developed to demonstrate its silliness.

To those who think that the assassination story is a figment of the imagination, I am willing to concede their right to opinion, provided such opinion is reasonable. As far as the story relates to me, it would be most unfair to accuse me of inventing it when no investigation had been made, first to disprove the fact that Mr Gardner handed the monitored messages to me as coming from my chief wireless operator; and secondly, to deny that we had a Class B licence under the Wireless Telegraphy Ordinance, and that we had three competent wireless operators, one of whom was an ex-serviceman, and all of whom were used to receiving Morse signals by wireless. These would have impeached the credibility of my evidence. Unwillingness to do so must leave to me the benefit of the doubt.

As far as the story relates to Mr Orualali (alias Paul West), it is not enough to circulate rumours that he invented the story because he was owed wages and threatened with retrenchment, which was untrue anyway. Even if it had been true, that could not be sufficient to controvert such a delicate argument. The fact that, after sixteen years, Mr Orualali returned to Nigeria and confirmed his original story shifts the onus to the side of those who question the fact that he never intercepted such monitored messages.

The assassination story was not cooked up by me, as certain

officials and political adversaries of mine maintained. All I knew was that I received certain monitored messages from my trusted colleagues and did not hesitate to consult my relatives and friends, who suggested what was the prudent thing to do. I could not conceive of either Mr Gardner or Mr Orualali feeding me such a heinous lie. Naturally, I believed them and all my confidantes believed this curious story. Who wouldn't, under the circumstances, especially during a world war, with quite a number of European troops in Lagos, not to mention the existence of an administration whose attitude towards militant nationalists was extremely hostile?

I reject absolutely the official explanation at the time that there was reason to believe that my staff had in fact hoaxed me over this story. As already mentioned, it was speculated then that my newspaper enterprise owed Mr Orualali some overdue wages and that we threatened to demote him when our newspapers were banned; the speculation added that he begged to be given another chance to make good and I insisted that he should get us some news if he wished to escape retrenchment of the termination of his appointment. In order to please me, he was alleged to have become inventive and so he cooked up the assassination story.

This explanation is without even a basis of truth. The *West African Pilot* did not owe its staff, Mr Orualali included, any wages either before, during or after the ban on our newspapers. Our staff were paid regularly, Mr Orualali was never threatened with demotion or retrenchment or termination of appointment as was speculated. He never begged me to reconsider a situation which never existed except in the imagination of those who concocted this cock and bull story. Sixteen years later, Mr Orualali came to State House and confirmed that he actually intercepted the monitored messages and that he was obliged to leave the country for personal safety.

In the many years that have elapsed since the assassination story was disseminated, many articles and books have been written on Nigeria, and some of the authors have had reason to refer to this incident. While quite a number of these seekers after truth have swallowed the bait of officials that the story was a silly invention, others have attempted to probe through the veil of secrecy which enshrouds it.

So far there has been no positive argument to disprove either the version of the story told by me or that told by Mr Orualali. The basis of official and unofficial denials had been purely speculative. Since human life was involved I deemed it prudent not to take things for granted. If I had not taken seriously the advice given to me by Mr Obi and Sir Odumegwu, it is possible I might not have lived either to tell the story or to see Mr Orualali return home after sixteen years to confirm his original role in this melodrama.

My conclusion will be based on my original stand in 1945, which I incorporated in my pamphlet entitled, *Assassination Story: True or False?* This is what I said then:

'I have stated the facts in connection with the assassination story according to my knowledge. I have not embellished same. As a British protected person, I have a right to tell my fellow citizens if I have reasonable ground to be apprehensive of the safety of my person. That is a civic duty, so long as I did not accuse any person and so long as I did not incite any person to commit lawlessness.

'It is up to any person to believe or disbelieve the assassination story for whatever it may be worth, but none with justice can question my right to be apprehensive of the safety of my person when I know that I have reasonable ground for doing so. If any person denies my right to do so, then it is evidence of intolerance. Even His Excellency did not question that right. He merely mentioned that it was a silly invention whose merits or demerits he was unwilling to discuss.

'I think that it is unfair to vilify my reputation on this matter, as a section of the press had done wantonly. To attack successfully the assassination story, any doubting Thomas must not attack the person of the story-teller, but the credibility of his story. It is my evidence which should be scrutinised in order to know whether, as a matter of fact, Mr Gardner did deliver to me the wireless message, and whether Mr West did intercept that message. Failure to probe into the credibility of the story from these material points is evidence of malice. I cannot but regard such attitude as one of needless persecution buttressed by prejudice.

'Charles Simons, an American clergyman and litterateur, wrote some years ago: "The resource of bigotry and intolerance, when convicted of error, is always the same; silenced by argument, it endeavours to silence by persecution, in old times by fire and sword, in modern days by the same tongue".'

3. CLOSING DOWN OF THE 'PILOT' AND 'COMET'

Towards the end of World War II, the civilian population of Nigeria was restive as a result of various hardships created by the war. At that time the Nigerian worker was one of the lowest paid wage-earners on the face of the earth. Because of intolerable living conditions our trade unions became more articulate and militant in their demands for redress. When a humanitarian of the type of Sir Bernard Bourdillon was Governor, he had the patience and tact to probe the basic causes of labour unrest. But when somebody else acted for him, or an entirely new personality replaced him, all his efforts towards peace and stability were neutralised.

Because Michael Artokhamen Ominus Imoudu, leader of the Railway Workers' Union, was unwilling to be supine as far as the exercise of the right of collective bargaining was concerned, he was arrested and his movements were restricted to Auchi in Afenmai Division of Benin Province. This riled not only the railway workers, but it provoked the generality of workers in Nigeria. The cost of living was soaring; wages were marking time; and the workers expected the Government to redress the imbalance. Among their leaders' demands was periodical publication of a cost of living index. They maintained that the Government should accept the principle that, in view of the paltry wages of the workers and the difficulties created by the war, whenever the cost of living index increased, the wages index should also increase proportionately. This implied the freezing of wages at the material time and using the maximum as an index for the purpose of calculating the upward or downward movement of wages and the cost of living.

The Governor, Sir Bernard, on July 24, 1942, had broadcast over the Lagos radio rediffusion when announcing the Government's decision to award a cost of living allowance as a temporary war measure, and said: 'I do not of course mean that the cost of living allowance which is being awarded today will necessarily remain at the same figure for the duration of the war; it will be subject to constant review and will be revised whenever a rise or fall in the cost of living appears to make such a revision necessary.'

On May 21, 1945, the African Civil Servants Technical

Workers Union presented to Sir Gerald Whiteley, the Acting Governor, a memorandum demanding an increase in the cost of living allowance in view of the fact that the cost of living index, as published by the Government in the *Gazette*, had increased considerably and caused hardship to the workers. They referred to the promise which Sir Bernard had made three years previously and threatened that, if their demands were not met, they would go on strike at midnight of June 21, 1945.

Unfortunately, Sir Gerald had not the stature of Sir Bernard. Not only that, his immediate advisers lacked the humanitarian touch which would have enabled those who ruled to be sympathetic towards the lot of the lowest income group of wage earners. Consequently, the Government was pig-headed and rejected the demand of the workers. The reaction of the latter was to go on strike for forty-four days, thus paralysing the economy of the country.

As a newspaper whose policy was egalitarian and which believed in fair play and equality for all sections of the various communities in Nigeria, the *West African Pilot* and the *Daily Comet* justified the stand of the workers by reminding the Government that Sir Bernard had actually promised to reconsider the cost of living allowance if and when the cost of living index rose to make a revision necessary. Therefore we advised the Government not to be too rigid in its stand.

Instead of taking our constructive criticism in good faith, the Government became hostile towards the Zik group of newspapers and proceeded to visit us with a series of official victimisations. In the first place both the *Pilot* and the *Comet* were banned for thirty-six days. Secondly, all official advertisements were withdrawn from us. Thirdly, all official notices were no longer circulated to us for publication or comment in our newspapers. Fourthly, our Class B Listeners Wireless Licence was revoked. Fifthly, we were barred from reporting proceedings of the Legislative Council. Lastly, we were prevented from having any official association with the Public Relations Department. In view of the intensity of official persecution, we were obliged to petition the Colonial Office.

In July 1945, the Acting Governor summoned me (as managing director) and Mr Gardner (as managing editor) of the *West African Pilot*, and Mr Enahoro (as editor of the

Daily Comet) to Government House. Present on this occasion were the Acting Governor (Sir Gerald Whiteley), Chief Secretary to the Government (Sir Beresford Stooke), the Attorney-General and the Public Relations Officer (D. C. Fletcher).

Sir Gerald informed us that under the Nigeria Defence Regulations he was empowered to ban the publication of any newspaper which, in his opinion, published false news or incited sections of the community against the Government or acted in such a way as was calculated to bring the name of the Government into hatred and contempt. He added that he was of the opinion that both the *Pilot* and the *Comet* had incited the workers against the Government and that I had personally instigated the strike. Finally, Sir Gerald asked me to show cause why the two newspapers should not be banned for three months.

I thanked His Excellency for his fairness in deciding to invite us to Government House and apprise us of his intentions under the Nigeria Defence Regulations. I expressed appreciation of the fact that he was good enough to indicate the nature of our offence and also extended to us the courtesy of allowing us to defend ourselves before exercising the powers vested in him under the law. I thought that this conformed with the norms of democracy, in contrast with what obtained in fascist and communist régimes, where a person is presumed to be guilty and not given an opportunity to know the nature of his crime or to defend himself.

With respect, I submitted that I had not instigated the strike and that my newspapers did not incite the workers against the Government, as alleged. I also denied the allegation that we had published false rumours contrary to the Nigeria Defence Regulations. I pleaded that the name of our accuser should be released to us and that we should be given the opportunity to hear his evidence and also to cross-examine him.

If, however, for reasons of policy, our accuser was not to confront us, and we could not cross-examine him, then I submitted that the accusation was exaggerated. I pleaded that the editorial commentaries in the two newspapers were based on fact. With the Acting Governor's permission, I produced an official copy of the script of Sir Bernard Bourdillon's broad-

cast in 1942 and submitted that in the light of its contents, he should reconsider the stand of the Government towards the strikers, because a Governor's word was his bond and His Excellency was in duty bound to fulfil the promise made to the workers by his distinguished predecessor, after taking into consideration all the relevant factors.

Because we had acted in good faith, by calling on the Government to check up the claims of the workers and to realise that Sir Bernard actually made the promise, in spite of the hollow denial made by the Public Relations Department to the effect that such a promise was never made; because we quoted *verbatim* the promise made by a previous Governor and did not invent it; because we were concerned with harmonising the relationship between the Government and the workers by placing historical facts before them and interpreting them objectively; because I, personally, was not directly or indirectly linked with the decision of the workers to go on strike and, therefore, had not instigated it, I humbly submitted to the Acting Governor that we were not guilty as to make it necessary for him to exercise his powers under the defence regulations.

Sir Gerald then pontificated that he did not accept my explanation that Sir Bernard ever made such a promise; and even if he did, I had quoted the Governor out of context. He added that it was the Public Relations Officer who accused us of publishing false rumours and he was not prepared to request him to enter into any debate with us or to allow us to cross-examine him. He concluded that we had played a despicable role and that we would hear from his office later that day. Then we left Government House.

In the evening an extraordinary *Gazette* was published banning the *West African Pilot* and the *Daily Comet* for three months, on the ground that we had violated the Nigeria Defence Regulations. Naturally, we lost thousands of pounds in our business as a result of this ban, but I had no difficulty in containing this type of official tyranny. I did not hesitate to swear a new affidavit changing the venue of the publication of the *Southern Nigeria Defender* from Warri to Lagos. Then I used the format of the *West African Pilot* for its make-up; and hey presto, we were back in the streets of Lagos selling our newspapers.

In spite of the title emblazoned as *Southern Nigeria Defender*, most of our readers rejoiced that the ban had been lifted and believed that they were reading the *West African Pilot*! Even His Excellency was said to have contacted the Attorney-General and requested that I should be arrested for having published the *West African Pilot*, contrary to the ban he imposed. When the Attorney-General respectfully pointed out that no such thing had happened the Acting Governor realised that he, like thousands of other Nigerians, had been the victim of optical illusion. Our strategy worked and neutralised the stratagems of the Government. It was not long before the ban was lifted!

On November 23, 1945, W. Tudor Davies, as commissioner, accompanied by F. W. Dalley, as assessor, arrived in Lagos to undertake an inquiry into the general strike with the following terms of reference: 'To consider the representations made by the Nigerian Government and Native Authority employees concerning an increase in the cost of living allowance and, having regard to the present cost of living and to all other relevant factors, to make recommendations as to whether any action should be taken by the Nigerian Government, whether by variation of the cost of living allowance, or by controlling the cost of living, or in any other way; and to make recommendations as to the future compilation and computation of cost of living indices in Nigeria.'

When the Tudor Davies Commission submitted its report to the Colonial Office, it recommended that the cost of living allowances, existing in July 1945, should be increased by 50 per cent, with effect from the various dates on which work was resumed after the strike. The Secretary of State for the Colonies accepted the recommendation and thus vindicated the cause of the striking workers and of our newspapers as well.

4. PETITION AGAINST OFFICIAL TYRANNY

The incidents narrated above demonstrate the precarious position in which I and my newspapers were placed under a colonial regime which flagrantly exercised its powers without regard to the dictates of conscience and equity. Realising how uneven this struggle was, I was obliged to forward a petition for redress from official tyranny, addressed to 'The Right Hon-

ourable George H. Hall, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, Downing Street, Whitehall, London, SW1'. It was dated February 15, 1946, from Nigerian Spokesman Building, New Market Road, Onitsha, and it reads as follows:

'The Humble Petition of Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chairman of Zik's Press Limited and of the Comet Press Limited, Member of the Institute of Journalists (London), Fellow of the Royal Economic Society, Master of Arts, Master of Science, etc., respectfully sheweth:

'(1) that the business undertakings known as Zik's Press Limited and Comet Press Limited (incorporated in Nigeria) are undergoing a process of attrition which might lead to social and economic ruination of the individual shareholders, directors and employees of the two companies, together with their families and dependants, who are British subjects and British protected persons, due to specific activities of the Government of Nigeria;

'(2) that these two companies are printers and publishers of five daily newspapers whose circulation exceeds the rest of the newspapers published in Nigeria, and whose influence had been favourably commented upon in Great Britain, the United States of America, and elsewhere;

'(3) that the capital of these newspapers amounts to £20,000, representing investments which were made by native Africans in order to be free from want, to be more secure economically, and to be able without strain to perform their civic duties and obligations;

'(4) that in their business organisation and management the two companies have succeeded in co-ordinating African brain with African capital and African labour in order to carry out the socialist ideal which activated their founding;

'(5) that the two companies have a staff exceeding one thousand, including editors, managers, reporters, proof readers, accountants, auditors, book keepers, cashiers, store keepers, printers, book-binders, machinists, electricians, carpenters, motor drivers, news vendors, messengers, labourers and commission agents, of British nationality but representative of the various tribal and linguistic groupings of the various communities of British West Africa;

'(6) that during the World War II, Zik's Press Limited, in particular, expended over £5,000 in six years in order to provide comforts to West African troops overseas: (a) by supplying newspapers to the West African troops, free of charge; (b) by publishing official and unofficial advertisements in connection with the war effort either free of charge or at an uneconomic

rate; (c) by staging social and athletic activities for war charities gratuitously; (d) by dispatching groups of soccerists and lecturers to tour the country on two occasions in order to raise funds for prisoners of war; (e) by willingly publishing official notices and communiques in order to disseminate war news; and (f) by co-operating with the military and civil authorities in every way possible in order to speed up victory;

'(7) that since the transfer of His Excellency Sir Arthur Richards, GCMG, from Jamaica, British West Indies, to be Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria, British West Africa, the happy relations which had existed between the Zik group of newspapers and the Government during the regime of His Excellency Sir Bernard Bourdillon had become strained, due to factors which are not beyond amicable solution, provided there is mutual confidence;

'(8) that the general strike in June 1945 was unique in this part of the world, but cannot be said to be a novelty in other parts of the world, especially during the immediate and difficult days of the post-war era of reconstruction

'(9) that the newspapers owned by our company are vigorous in their editorial policy: (a) being uncompromisingly opposed to privilege in any form, whether among/between Africans or non-Africans; (b) insisting that African and non-African leaders should live up to the standard which they profess; (c) believing in efficiency and remuneration according to a person's worth, irrespective of race, colour, creed, sex; (d) willing to offer helpful and constructive criticism of Government policy as occasion demands; (e) honestly striving in our humble way to realise our socialist concept of a co-operative commonwealth in Nigeria, by constantly suggesting practicable reforms in the executive, legislative and judicial institutions of our polity in order to make life more secure and more tolerable for our people—that is, to give the mass of Nigeria hope to live for a new and better society, under the aegis of Great Britain. The mottoes of our newspapers are an index of our editorial policy, to wit:

'*West African Pilot*: "Show the light and the people will find the way";

'*Eastern Nigeria Guardian*: "That universal brotherhood shall become a reality";

'*Nigerian Spokesman*: "That man shall not be a wolf to man";

'*Southern Nigeria Defender*: "That man's inhumanity to man shall cease";

'*Daily Comet*: "Truth, Liberty, Justice";

'(10) that such an editorial policy has won for us a very large following throughout British West Africa as well as enmity among certain classes of people, African and non-African; the latter classes seem to be opposed to our socialist ideology and are un-

willing to appreciate the complex problems of a racial, social, political and economic nature facing Nigeria today, with a spirit of realism and scientific objectivity;

'(11) that certain highly placed officials of the Government of Nigeria, who are supposed to protect us in our enjoyment of the fundamental rights of the subject, unfortunately belong to the class which regards our editorial policy with suspicion and treat us with intolerance, prejudice and injustice;

'(12) that such an attitude has produced reactions which had done neither party any good, because we are left under the impression that we are being oppressed, due to our experiencing samples of official vindictiveness; whilst the Government of Nigeria labours under the misapprehension that we are anti-British, anti-European, and anti-Government;

'(13) that during the régime of Sir Arthur Richards, the Zik group of newspapers have been officially victimised as follows:

(a) Both the *West African Pilot* and the *Daily Comet* were suppressed for 36 days, under the Defence Regulations, on the one-sided evidence of a highly placed European civil servant, which was given in privacy, and we were not allowed to cross-examine him. This unconstitutional act cost the two native newspapers a loss of not less than £4,749.

'(b) During the general strike, Sir Gerald Whiteley, Officer Administering the Government of Nigeria, threatened to deport the undersigned who, he said, was responsible for the strike because he is chairman of a newspaper group which has made the workers of Nigeria conscious of their rights and to yearn for the realisation of collective bargaining.

'(c) During the general strike, Sir Gerald also threatened official victimisation of the newspapers of the Zik group by the withdrawal of all official advertisements and notices from our newspapers and by withdrawing official recognition of our newspapers.

'(d) During the general strike, the life of your humble petitioner was threatened with assassination by certain unknown persons, but for the providential interception of the diabolical plot by a wireless operator of the *West African Pilot*, which not only saved his life, but made bare the facts regarding the conspiracy to commit a political murder and thus fog the essentially socio-economic issues raised by the general strike.

'(e) At the inception of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*, at Ibadan, the District Officer there, Mr A. F. Abell, was reported to have advised the Ibadan Native Authority not to recognise our activities, because newspapers of the Zik group are anti-British. He has not denied this allegation, to our knowledge. It was made in November 1945, and he was reported to have confirmed same during an interview with the *Defender*.

'(f) At the same time, the Electrical Engineer of the Public

Works Department, at Ibadan, has refused to supply us with current (for power) to enable us to print the *Southern Nigeria Defender*. When the Government of Nigeria was apprised of this strange official behaviour, the Chief Secretary replied that due to technical reasons our request could not be granted. The excuse may be plausible, but our past and present experiences of official victimisation have made us very sceptical of this official excuse.

'(g) In his address to the Legislative Council of Nigeria, Sir Arthur without just cause made reference to your humble petitioner's story of assassination and was free in using invectives in order to discredit him and make him look ridiculous. He said the story was a silly invention and that I had 'nothing to fear than the dark shadows' of my own imagination. Now, I am an African Negro and I am proud of it, but I do not think that it is civil for a colonial Governor to pay me the compliment of impugning my integrity and reminding me of my blackness, publicly.

'(h) Sir Arthur directed all Government departments in Nigeria that no official advertisements or notices should be sent for publication in any of the following papers: the *West African Pilot*, the *Daily Comet*, the *Nigerian Spokesman*, the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* and the *Southern Nigeria Defender*. Incidentally, all these five daily newspapers are members of the Zik group.

'(i) Acting under His Excellency's orders, the Public Relations Officer rescinded all the advertisement contracts existing between us and the Government and even cancelled standing contracts, as from November 1, 1945. When the Chief Secretary was requested to explain this unilateral and arbitrary act, he said that Government reserved the right to advertise or not to advertise in any newspaper.

'(j) Sir Arthur placed a ban on the *West African Pilot* by preventing that newspaper from reporting the proceedings of the Legislative Council, due to an honest mistake which was made by a Reporter who, in reporting His Excellency's speech, garbled same. Whilst this error was avoidable, it is significant that the Clerk of the Legislative Council not only refused to furnish the Reporter with a text of His Excellency's speech, as was usually done, but was said to have furnished same to the other sections of the press. Sir Arthur, apparently misled, or erroneously thinking that the mistake was deliberate, drastically exercised his power as President of the Legislative Council, pending the publication of a suitable apology approved by him.

'(k) A frank statement of facts together with an expression of deep regret and unreserved apology was submitted to His Excellency. Sir Arthur rejected same and suggested an alterna-

tive. This was more than a Carthaginian treaty. In reality it was a "dictated" peace. We had but one choice—Hobson's. We published the officially drafted apology and His Excellency "graciously" lifted the ban.

'(l) Since his assumption of duty in this country, Mr G. Beresford Stooke, Chief Secretary to the Government of Nigeria, has given us impression that he is antagonistic towards our business organisation, in spite of the fact that he is a newcomer to Nigeria, from a part of Africa which has been notorious for its lack of sympathy in handling the race problem and the social, political and economic aspirations of the Africans in Northern Rhodesia. During the interview at Government House, when Sir Gerald accused us of having violated the Defence Regulations, Mr Stooke was particularly hostile towards us, even though that was his first contact with us. Evidently, he had been influenced by local prejudice.

'(m) On July 26, 1945, your humble petitioner posted a letter, addressed to "G. Beresford Stooke, Esq., Nigerian Secretariat Lagos", enclosing a petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies together with the evidence at my disposal regarding the plot made for my assassination. He has given us impression that this petition was deliberately suppressed.

'(n) On November 15, 1945, your humble petitioner posted another letter addressed to "The Honourable the Chief Secretary to the Government of Nigeria, Nigerian Secretariat, Lagos", enclosing a petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies regarding the losses sustained by the *Pilot* and the *Comet*. Mr Stooke left us under the impression that the petition was extraneous by not acknowledging receipt of same until over two months later, after we had sent him a reminder.

'(o) On January 3, 1946, your humble petitioner posted another letter to the Chief Secretary, reminding him of the non-acknowledgment of receipt of my letters of July 26, 1945 and November 15, 1945, together with the two petitions to the Secretary of State. He left your humble petitioner under the impression that, as a British protected person, he had no rights which he, as a European civil servant, was bound to respect.

'(p) On January 25, 1946, the Chief Secretary replied to my letter of January 3, 1946 acknowledging receipt of my letter of November 15, 1945 (which was addressed to him officially) and denying the receipt in his office (not by him) of my letter dated July 26, 1945 (which was addressed to him personally). Your humble petitioner in explaining why the letter of July 26, 1945, was addressed to Mr Stooke personally, begs to say that the request that he should submit his evidence of the assassination plot was sent to him personally by Mr Stooke. Consequently, his impression is that, as a British protected person,

he had not been given a square deal by Mr Stooke in these particular instances.

'(q) On January 19, 1946, Sir Arthur declined to renew the Class B Wireless Broadcast Listener's Licence of Zik's Press Limited, refusing to assign any reason for this act. Your humble petitioner is Reuter's agent for British West Africa and the Reuter's African Coastal News Service is used exclusively by the newspapers of the Zik group. Reuter Limited is a British news agency. It is significant that it was a wireless message which we intercepted that saved me from possible assassination. The refusal of His Excellency is therefore regarded by us as inconsistent with the liberty of the press and tantamount not only to an attempt to disorganise our business, for no just cause, but also to prevent newspaper readers in Nigeria from being educated, by reading reliable news of the world from an unofficial and disinterested source, in view of the constitution of Reuter Limited.

'(14) that by the acts enumerated above, and in the absence of an immediate change of policy, we have been forced to become alarmed and to wonder whether it is a studied official policy to consummate the ruination of law-abiding citizens and their property, simply because they exercise the 'liberty to know, to think, to believe, and to utter freely, according to conscience, above all other liberties' within the ambit of the law;

'(15) that we regard the acts enumerated above as an abuse of discretionary powers calculated to victimise us, since it is an accepted canon of law that, no person may be punished except for a breach of the law, proved in a legal manner, before an ordinary tribunal;

'(16) that we regard these acts of victimisation as repugnant to natural justice, because we have been singled out for these strange visitations of official indiscretion, in view of the fact that during the general strike, the *Daily Service*, a newspaper apparently in the good graces of the present régime, made false publications as follows:

'(a) that Mr M. A. O. Imoudu, a labour leader, had instigated the strike (*Daily Service*, June 22, 1945). This was false; it published an apology withdrawing same, at the request of Mr Imoudu (*Daily Service*, June 23, 1945);

'(b) that the Nigerian Railway was reported to lose £93,000, daily, as a result of the strike (*Daily Service*, June 26, 1945). The Public Relations Officer denied same as without foundation;

'(c) that the strikers had called off the General Strike and would resume work that day (*Daily Service*, July 5, 1945). This was false and without any foundation of truth.

'In spite of these false publications neither the Defence Regula-

tions nor any other law was invoked against the *Daily Service*, as was done in our case;

'(17) that Government advertisements are still published in other newspapers outside the Zik group, in spite of a breach of contract which had been committed by the Government of Nigeria;

'(18) that up till the moment of writing, the Government of Nigeria has yet to reply or justify its unilateral act in denying us the grant of a wireless licence, in spite of Sir Arthur's opinion that the assassination story (which was intercepted by wireless) was a silly invention. The educational value to newspaper readers of Reuter's African Coastal News Service cannot be successfully questioned;

'(19) that we view with apprehension the tendency to depart from the principles of the four freedoms, for which sons of Nigeria had died and had been maimed during the World War II. If we, who are natives of Nigeria—British subjects and British protected persons, cannot enjoy (a) "Freedom of worship", (b) "freedom of speech and expression", (c) "freedom from want . . . which will secure to every nation a healthy peace-time life for its inhabitants" and (d) "freedom from fear", then we are doomed to live under the grinding heels of despotism of a most ignoble type. The question arises: what price the sacrifices made by Nigeria in World War II?

'(20) that we have been inspired by the statements of war aims expressed by two of the most illustrious sons of Great Britain, as follows:

'(a) The Right Honourable Ernest Bevin, MP: "This is a people's war—it is not a rich man's war. . . . What really has to be determined is whether we are to be allowed to evolve and work out our destiny, carried forward by the great spiritual urge that is within us for higher achievement and higher civilisation, or whether we are to be dominated and made mental and spiritual slaves for generations to come by a few people who happen to have command of the weapons of destruction. . . . Therefore, if it is a people's war it must be a people's peace."

'(b) The Right Honourable Sir Stafford Cripps, KC, MP: ". . . This is in reality a people's war, a people's war of liberation. Each one of us is right in the front line, each one of us is partaking to the full—or we should be—in the dangers and the efforts which mark its prosecution. And so we all claim the right to have a say in what shall happen after the war, because we are fighting not only to prevent our country being subjected to the cruel brutality of Hitlerism, but also to create after the war a better and happier world for all—not merely for some privileged sections of humanity. . . . Each one of us,

to whatever class we may have belonged in the past, can make a great contribution to the present and to the future if we will adopt an outlook of comradeship, devoid of all fears, resentments or jealousies and instinct with that sympathy and friendship which has marked so signally the deepest hours of our trials. Let our humanity and not our material interests rule our lives. As comrades we have, without thought of class or creed, fought the war. As comrades too we must build a happier and more abiding peace."

'(21) that we cannot harmonise the catalogue of victimisations demonstrated in Paragraph XIII above, either with the professed "war aims" of Great Britain, or with that portion of the Royal Instructions to His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria to the effect that "the Governor is, *to the utmost of his power to promote . . . education among the native inhabitants, and he is especially to take care to protect them in their persons and in their free enjoyment of their possessions, and by all lawful means to prevent and restrain all violence and injustice which may in any manner be practised or attempted against them*" [Italics mine].

'(22) that the hostile atmosphere in which the newspapers of the Zik group and the journalists who control them subsist in Nigeria cannot be said to be consistent with the established law of the press, as was enunciated by Lord Shaw:

'"The freedom of the journalist is an ordinary part of the freedom of the subject, and to whatsoever lengths the subject in general may go, so also may the journalist, but apart from statute law his privilege is no other and no higher. The responsibilities which attach to his power in the dissemination of printed matter may, and in the case of a conscientious journalist do, make him more careful; but the range of his assertions, his criticisms or his comments, is as wide as, and no wider than, that of any other subject." (Arnold v. King-Emperor (1914), 41 L.R. Ind. App. 169.)

'(23) that your humble petitioner respectfully requests His Majesty's Government, as a protecting state, that His Excellency Sir Arthur Richards, GCMG, and the Government of Nigeria be advised

'(a) to modify their present attitude of antagonism towards the Zik group of newspapers;

'(b) to take care to protect the persons and the possessions of the directors, shareholders and employees of the Zik group, as British subjects and British protected persons, together with their families and dependants, and by all lawful means to prevent any act of injustice from being practised or attempted against them;

'(c) to rescind the order which unilaterally cancelled the contractual relationship between the Government of Nigeria and the Zik group, so far as advertisements and public notices are concerned;

'(d) to make good to the Zik group the loss of revenue which the arbitrary action of the Government of Nigeria had caused, due to an inexcusable breach of contractual obligations;

'(e) to regard the assassination story of your humble petitioner as the honest belief of a law-abiding citizen who, upon being apprised by his faithful business associates that his life was in danger, and having no reasonable ground to disbelieve these tried and tested loyal comrades-in-arms, became apprehensive of the safety of his person and so disseminated the news to the public, as would any other normal human being;

'(f) to persuade the Chief Secretary (Mr Stooke) to be more business-like and less hostile in handling correspondence from the Zik group of newspapers to the Government of Nigeria and to His Majesty's Colonial Office;

'(g) to renew the Class B Broadcast Listener's Wireless Licence which was granted to Zik's Press Limited for the past five years, according to due process of law;

'(h) to extend to the Zik group that measure of co-operation which is extended to other sections of the press of Nigeria, without favour or prejudice;

'(i) to win the peace in Nigeria, by implementing the solemn obligations of Great Britain during the dark hours of her trial during World War II, with particular reference to the "freedom of speech and expression", "freedom from want", and "freedom from fear";

'(j) to be just and equitable in all official dealings with our business organisation and our personnel, no matter where they may be located in Nigeria;

'(24) that, for guidance and action, your humble petitioner begs to call attention of His Britannic Majesty's Government to the statements made by an eighteenth-century student of British colonial government and administration and an eminent statesman, Edmund Burke, who is credited with the following statements:

'Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government;—they will cling and grapple to you; and no force under heaven would be of power to tear them from their allegiance.

'But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another; that these two things may exist without any mutual relation; the cement is gone; the cohesion is loosened; and everything hastens to decay and dissolution.

'As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you.

'The more they multiply, the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. . . .

'Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond, which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the empire.

'Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce.

'Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole.

'These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them.

'It is the spirit of the English constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member. . . .

'All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us, a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine.

'But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth everything, and all in all.

'Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and *a great empire and little minds go ill together*. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our places as becomes our station and ourselves. . . . We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us [My italics].

'By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire; and have made the most extensive, and the only honourable conquests, not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness of the human race.

'(25) that in spite of the circumstances under which those

noble words of wisdom and statesmanship were uttered in 1775, your humble petitioner submits that they constitute a safe lamp to guide the feet of Great Britain, as a colonial power, towards the path of national righteousness and international goodwill in the realms of government and administration even in the continent of Africa.

'And your petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray, etc.'

CHAPTER XIII

SAFEGUARDS AND PITFALLS

How I made honest efforts to protect my newspaper ventures from the pitfalls of human frailty, and yet they succumbed to the irony of fate and the will of constituted authority

'He is not bravest on the battlefield who leads the charge and dies upon his shield. But he who lives on nobly with a smile when all is lost that made the strife worthwhile.'

LUCY S. DOWSE

I. SAFEGUARDS BEFORE MY EXIT

During our first year's existence as a newspaper organisation, it occurred to me that certain safeguards must be devised in order to protect ourselves and survive. Since it was obvious that advertisements were not forthcoming and we had to rely on circulation for subsistence, my task was to see that money was wisely expended on newsprint and printing accessories. Thus I reasoned that if the expenditure for newsprint plus the day-to-day accessories and office needs could be scaled down, the saving would offset the loss in advertisement revenue.

We regularly consumed hundreds of reams of newsprint and gallons of printing ink monthly. As for printing ancillaries, like types, quads, rules, borders, reglets, quoins, etc. their hard service in the workshop made it necessary that within three months we had to replace or augment them. We also regularly consumed stationery like envelopes, pins, clips, pencils, pens, writing inks, blotting paper, writing paper, typing sheets, ribbons, carbon sheets, glue, erasers, sharpeners, etc.

After consulting the heads of the editorial, business and technical sections, I decided that, instead of frequently buying by retail the stationery and accessories we used regularly, the answer was to make bulk purchases and thus save from 15 to 25 per cent of the cost. In so doing we would build up a reserve which might conceivably offset any potential revenue losses.

But then I thought of making direct bulk purchases from the manufacturers and discovered that I could save up to 30 per cent. The idea of buying stationery in bulk appealed to me, but I realised that the consumption of one newspaper office alone would not make much difference. Hence I decided to include the selling of British newspapers and magazines, provided we could build up a reliable local clientele. This done, we would then advertise such companies that retailed to the *Pilot* in the columns of that paper at a discount of 50 per cent. This would give our newspaper advertisements of some sort.

So in 1938 I founded the African Book Company Limited to sell stationery to the *Pilot*; the Nigerian Paper Company Limited, to sell newsprint to the *Pilot*, and the Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited to sell machinery and printing accessories to the *Pilot*. After operating this experiment for two years, I found out that it worked to our advantage. When the other provincial newspapers were founded, they caused us to earn more revenue, since we ensured that Zik Enterprises Ltd. controlled the subsidiary companies that published these newspapers.

Of course, the establishing of these three companies to function alongside Zik's Press Limited was worth while, but it took strict supervision and efficient management to operate the plan satisfactorily. Without strict supervision, a man in charge of the purchase of stationery or newsprint can easily be tempted by retailers to pass the business to them for a private consideration in the form of a commission. An employee without character who sees the prospect of making additional earnings of up to 100 per cent above his salary, as an invisible income, could easily fall for this kind of temptation. That done it would spell ruin for the subsidiary companies.

Take the vital matter of supplying newsprint, for example. Assuming that the *Pilot* consumed 50 reams a day and the combined provincial papers did likewise, it means that the Zik group would consume 100 reams of newsprint daily, or 600 weekly or 2,400 monthly. If the wholesale price of newsprint is 10s per ream and the retail is 15s, it means that the Nigerian Paper Company Limited would make a minimum of £600 a month or £7,200 a year.

But if a newsprint dealer could contact an employee responsible for providing newsprint to any one of our newspapers which consumed 20 reams a day, and lure him into allowing him to supply newsprint at a retail price of 15s, that would prevent the Nigerian Paper Company Limited from making one penny from such a newspaper. On the other hand, the employee would be guaranteed 50 per cent of the differential between the wholesale and retail price, amounting to £12 10s. weekly or at least £600 annually for each provincial newspaper, or in the case of the *West African Pilot* £25 weekly or at least £1,200 annually.

The fact that neither the Nigerian Paper Company Limited nor the Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited was able to live up to their owners' expectations can be explained by the various problems which crop up from time to time to fog issues and mislead well-meaning employees to become wayward. I will not say that this actually happened to our newspapers, but it is a fact that it was not possible to channel the supply of newsprint through the Nigerian Paper Company Limited.

In 1944 we took over the *Daily Comet* as the fourth member of the Zik group. Under our co-operative system, it received its supplies of newsprint from the Nigerian Paper Company Limited, its printing supplies from the Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited, and its stationery supplies from the African Book Company Limited. Membership in the group enabled all concerned to obtain supplies on credit.

When the competition from across the Atlantic became a reality, I thought that one answer would be for us to decentralise our activities and thus preserve our properties. I suggested that we change the name of the parent company to Zik Enterprises Limited to make it a holding company. This meant that it held controlling or substantial shares in the printing, publishing, building, financing and transportation activities of a many-sided business concern. It was not the profit motive and the itching for gold which impelled us to adopt this measure, but rather circumstances forcing us to ensure our survival.

In 1951 we founded six companies to give us protection from the expected formidable foreign competition. Thus we founded the African News Agency Limited as a co-operative endeavour to furnish our newspapers with syndicated press materials;

the Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited to relieve the parent company of the responsibility of being printers and publishers of our provincial newspapers; the Nigerian Commodities Limited to stimulate the commercial activities of the African Continental Bank and increase the volume of its cash transactions; the Nigerian Real Estate Corporation Limited to handle our housing problems; the Suburban Transport Limited to distribute our newspapers by means of rapid transit; and the West African Pilot Limited to control the printing and publishing of the *West African Pilot* in Lagos.

I will now summarise the history of the individual members of the Zik group, indicating when they were founded, their capital, and the nature of their functions. They are ten companies, excluding Zik Enterprises Limited, the parent company, and the African Continental Bank Limited, which was nationalised, with the consent of the Zik group, by the Government of Eastern Nigeria. Here they are in alphabetical order:

The *African Book Company Limited* was incorporated on August 17, 1938, as a limited liability company to print, publish, sell and distribute books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, stationeries, etc. Its original capital was £1,000 fully paid up; but this was increased to £50,000 on my re-entry into journalism after an absence of fourteen years. This company was founded to encourage African authorship.

It has published a number of books and pamphlets, mainly written by me and other Nigerians. During the war it did a roaring trade in retailing Nigerian and overseas periodicals until Kingsway (UAC) and the CMS Bookshop, with superior management, intensified competition and edged this young company out of this competitive market. Its recent activities have been confined to retailing text-books and stationery to students of the Lagos City College; and the turnover has been worth while.

The *African News Agency Limited* was incorporated on May 13, 1951, as a limited liability company with an initial capital of £1,000 fully paid up. After my resumption of limited activity in my profession of journalism, the capital was increased to £35,000. It was founded with the main object "to gather, edit and distribute news, editorials, articles, features, photographs, cartoons, illustrative material, columns and other syndicated

matters to the Zik group of newspapers and any other newspaper which might be interested in such a syndicated service.

Before this idea occurred to us we had introduced Reuter's service in 1944, following my contacts with the representatives of this British news agency during the visit of the West African editors to Britain. When our wireless licence was cancelled in 1946 and our newspapers were starved of fillers, we had to resort to the idea of syndication on a group basis. Even then we ran into trouble, for the Posts and Telegraphs services were so primitive that they refused to co-operate with us on the ground that they hadn't the facilities.

It took another decade before they were able to accommodate Reuter and lease their land-lines to them for the purpose of syndication. Of course the French news agency (Agence France Presse) by-passed this artificial barrier by establishing its own radio-telecommunications system. This has worked efficiently and is sustained the rebel Ministry of Information during the civil war when Nigeria blacked out Eastern Nigeria from communication with the outside world. Besides, the AFP maintains a first-class syndicated news service which covers the Francophone African states.

The *Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited* was incorporated on May 30, 1951, with an initial capital of £5,000 fully paid up. Its object was to take over the printing and publishing of existing provincial newspapers of the Zik group and to undertake the printing and publishing of new ones. When it was founded, it took over three daily newspapers: the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* (Port Harcourt), the *Nigerian Spokesman* (Onitsha), and the *Southern Nigeria Defender* (Ibadan). Later, it started the *Eastern Sentinel* (Enugu) and the *Nigerian Monitor* (Uyo).

The idea of founding a separate company to print and publish our newspapers in the provinces stemmed from three factors: first, the communications system in Nigeria was so primitive that distribution of newspapers was slow; secondly, by devolving the printing and publication of newspapers locally, the heavy expenditure on postage, freight and handling of newspapers could be saved; also the inconvenience of long hours (with wear and tear on plant and machinery) spent on

printing thousands of newspapers for sale in the provinces, after printing those for Lagos; thirdly, lack of sufficient capital to import rotary printing presses with stereotype equipment.

Of course, devolution created the danger of inefficient management, which, as we have seen, involved us in embarrassing libel cases with heavy damages and costs. In 1938 the European manager of the *Daily Times*, Mr MacPherson, warned me not to venture to devolve the publication of any of our newspapers in the provinces because it would not pay. He suggested an improved transport system to distribute the newspapers, provided fast-printing machinery was available. At that time, limited capital made this impossible.

The full programme of the Associated Newspapers of Nigeria was to start publication of the following daily newspapers whenever our financial and technical resources permitted: *Aba Chronicle*, *Abeokuta Herald*, *Bende Interpreter* (Umuahia), *Benin Crusader*, *Calabar Champion*, *Cameroons Voice*, *Enugu Sentinel*, *Ilesha Critic*, *Jos Advocate*, *Ogoja Clarion* (Ogoja), *Ondo Pathfinder* (Akure), and *Warri Guide* (Warri). With the requisite capital, and a competent managerial cadre plus an efficient staff, I believe we could have succeeded, as long as I was directly connected with the management of these newspapers, which would have meant my permanent exit from the arena of partisan politics.

Nigerian Commodities Limited was incorporated as a limited liability company on May 30, 1951, with an initial capital of £5,000 fully paid up. The object of this enterprise was to collaborate with the African Continental Bank to enable advances to be made to middle men and women, who were buyers of produce like rubber, timber, pepper, etc. The interest paid by these produce dealers was more than ample to justify its existence. It thrived for some time, but collapsed due to lack of efficient management.

The report on Nigerian Commodities Limited presented to shareholders showed that it had been dormant for fifteen years.

The *Nigerian Paper Company Limited* was incorporated as a limited liability company on August 17, 1938, with an initial capital of £1,000, later increased to £5,000 fully paid up. The aim of this venture was to import and sell newsprint and printing paper to all the newspapers of the Zik group and any

other buyers. Up to the end of the World War II, it was a profitable concern.

Since the newspapers of our group were heavy and constant consumers of newsprint, I thought that bulk purchases would cut down overheads and make it possible for this company to retail newsprint to our newspapers at the prevailing local prices and still give it a reasonable margin of profit. This was what actually happened.

According to a report presented to its shareholders, this company had been inactive for more than fifteen years. In my own judgment, it was obvious that the bulk purchase of newspaper was still valuable in the newspaper enterprise; therefore, the shareholders decided in June 1967 to resuscitate this company to assume its usual role as the supplier of newsprint to the *West African Pilot*, the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* and the *Nigerian Spokesman*.

The circulation of the *Pilot* in the last quarter of 1966 was 40,000, the *Guardian* 25,000, and the *Spokesman* 15,000. This would have given the Nigerian Paper Company Limited a gross income of £12,000 a year, assuming that 160 reams plus would be consumed by all its clients daily, at £1 a ream less 25 per cent discount.

The *Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited* was incorporated on August 17, 1938 with an initial capital of £1,000 fully paid up. After my return to business it was increased to £30,000. It was decided originally that this company should own all the plant, machinery and equipment used by the Zik group of newspapers. This was necessary because the threats of litigation and the imposition of fines, damages and costs on our newspapers endangered their existence. At times a successful litigant, who was bent on mischief, would seek to attach the printing presses of our newspapers and thus cause us embarrassment; this was avoidable.

We arranged to transfer to this company the ownership of our Duplex web perfecting press and wharfedales, plus all the ancillary equipment and materials used in the printing and allied industries, including the process engraving plant and machinery and stereotype equipments. This company actually ordered the two Hoe rotary printing presses and their accessories now used in printing the *West African Pilot* in Lagos.

It was planned that this machinery should be leased to each of our newspapers, who should pay a nominal rent monthly, subject to the terms of a model agreement, thus securing our plant and machinery. If any newspaper ran foul of the law, it would have to pay damages from its resources without endangering the property of the lessors of its means of production. It was a practical idea conceived to preserve the investments of the pioneer shareholders, which had made it possible for all the newspapers of the Zik group to thrive. Once this company exists and protects its property, newspapers may suspend publication, but the property of the owners will be safe and available for any other newspaper to lease or hire.

The shareholders of the Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited decided that, rather than wind up this company, its capital should be increased from £5,000 to £30,000 and that, thenceforth, it should purchase all the plant and machinery not belonging to it used by the surviving newspapers; and that a rental agreement should be negotiated leasing all such machinery to our three newspapers at a nominal rent, as was originally envisaged when the company was formed. Again, the civil war frustrated the consummation of this plan.

The *Nigerian Real Estate Corporation Limited* was incorporated on March 1, 1951, as a limited liability company with an initial capital of £5,000 fully paid up. The aim was to transfer all the house and landed property of the Zik group of newspapers to this company and avoid their being attached in case any of our newspapers should be unable to discharge any financial liability imposed by the courts. At first I wanted to transfer most of my landed property and buildings to this company, for self-preservation, but this did not prove possible.

The plan was for this company to negotiate an agreement with our newspapers, which would rent their offices and works from it for a nominal sum. In Lagos, certain premises of the *West African Pilot* and the Lagos City College are owned by Zik Enterprises Limited, who are entitled to rent accumulated over fifteen years. Probably, when the war is over, these rent accounts would be adjusted.

Suburban Transport Limited was incorporated on May 30, 1951, as a limited liability company with an initial capital of £10,000 fully paid up. Due to shortage of transport in the

country, it was devised to provide rapid transport for the distribution of newspapers of the Zik group. The aim was for the company to purchase motor vehicles and operate them for distributing the *West African Pilot* daily from Lagos to Ikorodu, Shagamu, Ijebu Ode, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ife, Ilesha, Akure, Owo, Ifon, Sobe, Benin, Agbor and Asaba.

When the company started operations I was optimistic and observed in correspondence: 'With proper management this company can be a gold mine in view of the appalling transport shortage throughout the country. It will require a first-class traffic manager and transport manager to turn the trick; but these posts cost money. Unless you can recruit efficient mechanics, drivers and conductors, the Suburban Transport Limited may turn out to be another "white elephant".'

The fate of Suburban Transport Limited was pathetic. All the six second-hand army lorries that were bought from United Kingdom motor dealers for distributing the *West African Pilot* were so recklessly handled locally that they went into disuse after a short time. Not only that, but dishonesty played a decisive part in disorganising this transport business. To an extent the selfishness of Nigerian newspaper proprietors made this sad experience inevitable.

Previously I had advocated the formation of a Nigerian Newspaper Proprietors Association to enable all concerned jointly to operate a competent and efficient transport system for the distribution of the newspapers of its members throughout Nigeria. This idea did not appeal to those who felt they had the capital, the managerial skill and the resources. So it was 'Each man for himself and the devil takes the hindmost.' The result was a sort of foreign monopoly in this aspect of newspaper enterprise, of which the deleterious effect on indigenous newspaper ownership was a foregone conclusion.

2. THE FATE OF THE 'PILOT'

The *West African Pilot* Limited was incorporated as a limited liability company on June 13, 1951, with an initial capital of £10,000 fully paid up. The object of founding this company was to take over the printing and publishing of the *West African Pilot* from Zik's Press Limited. Our difficulties in making

provision for heavy capital expenditure, such as was occasioned by the incursion of competition from the British press lords, made it necessary for us to reorganise. A change of ownership of the *Pilot* resulted.

In my handing-over letter to my successor, as I left business for politics, I penned down the following observations to Mr Blankson:

'With a level-headed editor, with a co-operative and satisfied staff, with a rotary printing press capable of turning out 60,000 eight-page newspapers an hour, with sufficient supply of newsprint, with an efficient management, the *Pilot* can yet vindicate our faith in the ability of African business.

'Don't forget, Kofi, that it is the *Pilot* which has proved to be the teacher of the leading journalists of Nigeria today, some of whom are now using the *Daily Times* to attack the NCNC and to attack my person.

'One thing I know: when these embryonic journalists were on the staff of the *Pilot*, I did not dictate what they should write about and they left the *Pilot* not because they disagreed with our editorial policy or with our ideology of socialism; no—they wanted more money and we could not afford to pay them more money, because we were not in position to do so, and we had no parent company in London to make capital available to us, outside the ACB [African Continental Bank], and they had to go.

'Let me stop reminiscing lest I suffer from hypertension. I do believe that the reaction of employees to money is an indication of their reaction to the fate of their country.

'Money is important, it is true, but money made Judas sell his master; and money made Lord Haw Haw what he was; and money made Quisling do what he did. Money will ultimately transform our journalists into scamps unless they wake up in time.

'I mean those journalists who allow money to influence their judgment—including the judgment necessary to decide whether to work for those who are doing everything possible to destroy the faith of our people in themselves. . . .

'My last charge to you is that this newspaper needs a first-class journalist-administrator who is loyal, competent, efficient and willing to work with an African pioneer newspaper business organisation.

'If we must search for him all over the world and get him, and pay him a decent salary plus commission, if necessary, and then get him to be satisfied, then all our headaches and heartaches will be a thing of the past.'

When I resumed business activities I was confronted with a sort of balance sheet of what had taken place since I last

participated actively in moulding their fortunes. What I observed was enough to crush the spirit of the most visionary optimist. It was sufficient to convince any cynic to believe that the African lacks the integrity to operate big business, and indeed any commercial transactions other than those of a petty nature. If one were sceptical about the capacity of the African to be entrusted with the responsibility of guiding the destiny of a really modern newspaper business venture, my experience would justify such scepticism.

Of the three newspapers which survived, the *West African Pilot* had lost heavily in the previous year and faced a suit from the African Continental Bank claiming over £255,000 as outstanding debit in its current account.

The *West African Pilot* had a most embarrassing experience after 1950 for three reasons: first, the existence of three sister newspapers in the provinces, which dissipated its financial resources; secondly, preparing itself for the competition with the press lords of Britain, which disorganised its orderly progress; thirdly, the use of its columns to publicise the NCNC, which stultified its independent and non-partisan editorial policy.

Between 1940 and 1951 the funds of the *Pilot* were used to finance the preliminary expenses and contingencies of the *Guardian*, *Spokesman*, and *Defender*. If these reserves of the *Pilot* had not been so committed, it is possible that its financial strength would have been unassailable.

The preparations made to face competition from the London *Daily Mirror* group involved the *Pilot* being divorced from its original owners and to maintain an independent existence. This meant a totally different organisational structure in place of its previous set-up. Moreover, as far as financial arrangements with banks were concerned, it had to fend for itself.

My being President of the NCNC and an executive of the *Pilot* affected the editorial policy of that newspaper to be inclined to the NCNC, in spite of the honest endeavours of the editorial staff to be independent in their approach to Nigerian problems. It was this factor, more than anything else, that created an impression which has lingered, to the effect that the *Pilot* was the organ of the NCNC.

In spite of this awkward position, the *Pilot* also could not escape from being accused occasionally of being 'anti-NCNC' in

its policy, and this led several times to an exchange of broadsides between party leaders and the editors of the *Pilot*. This of course did the business no good. Both opponents and adherents of the NCNC began to withdraw their patronage and thus paralyse the revenue potential of the newspaper. It was part of the sacrifice the *Pilot* had to make for the freedom of our country from foreign rule.

For some time efforts were being made for the NCNC to buy the West African Pilot Limited. The preliminary negotiations took the greater part of five years to conduct, until ultimately it was realised that the NCNC was not in a financial position to take over this newspaper. Thus the fate of the *Pilot* hung in the balance until the military revolution.

3. THE FATE OF THE 'COMET'

The Comet Press Limited was incorporated in 1943 as a limited liability company with an initial capital of £5,000 fully paid up. We took over this newspaper from its owners in 1944 but it had become a white elephant by the time it was closed down in 1966, after its liquid assets were frozen by a bank on the ground that the company could not discharge its liabilities. Subsequently, I understand, its machinery was attached. The legal implications are yet to be unravelled.

After a precarious experience in Lagos, the *Daily Comet* was transferred in the early 1950s to Kano, where it maintained an exiguous existence. Then the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) approached the owners to let it operate this newspaper for party propaganda purposes. Although an element of co-operation between NEPU and the owners was established, the business was not viable in spite of its being published bilingually in English and Hausa. Like other politically-orientated 'party' newspapers, the *Daily Comet* went the way of all flesh.

In a report submitted to me in 1967 by its former managing editor, M. P. Iweanya, he complained of the persistent efforts made by the NPC and the Action Group political parties to 'kill' it. Being a bilingual paper, it had two editors, one for the English and the other for the Hausa section. According to Mr Iweanya:

'The Hausa pages were edited by the Hausa editor, employed by NEPU. And these pages brought more trouble to the paper and the managing editor who knew no word of Hausa. Many a time I was dragged along with the paper to the court for offences I hardly could give account of.

'In some cases I won and in some others I was convicted or fined heavily. Some of the fines were borne by the *Comet* itself and the NCNC, but this on rare occasions.

'But it must be placed on record that the NEPU was a sort of a draw-back on the *Comet* in Kano. By this I mean that it was the actual party the newspaper was serving. Many printing jobs and publications were done for the NEPU on the instructions of its President, Alhaji Aminu Kano.

'The NEPU could hardly pay. But it was difficult to stop serving the party then, because of promises given to the *Comet* and its management and directors by the leader of the NEPU assuring that it was going to put some money into the coffers of the *Comet* in order to effect the smooth running of the paper. But lo and behold, the promises later proved to be mere summer dreams.

'It is true the *Comet* succeeded in serving the north, but its failure to succeed economically was due to the fact that the parties it was serving could not help financially.

'The *Comet* under my editorship fought the greatest battle of its life in the north. The life of the editor was threatened time and again, but fearless as I was, I managed to keep the flag flying until the directors of the *Comet* called for its closure.

'The riots and killings of southerners in the north made the continued existence of the *Comet* practically impossible.'

4. THE FATE OF THE 'GUARDIAN'

The *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* had operated at a small profit in 1966 but had a deficit with its bankers, who were alleged to have frozen part of its recurrent revenue without its knowledge and consent.

On December 5, 1967, the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* (now rechristened *People's Guardian*) was requested by the rebel Government to cease publication and all its assets were frozen. Its offices and works at Port Harcourt were sealed. Military and police personnel guarded them.

We were not told what the *Guardian* had done nor were we allowed to defend ourselves. The newspaper had fifty-five employees, more than half of whom had been in our employment for over ten years. The *Guardian* was the oldest daily newspaper in Eastern Nigeria.

On January 9, 1968, the general manager of the *Guardian* petitioned Colonel Ojukwu requesting that the *Guardian* be allowed to resume publication and that its impounded assets should be released. The following is the full text of the petition:

'The humble petition of Emeka Azikiwe [my second son—N.A.], General Manager of the African News Agency Limited, respectfully submits:

'(1) that the African News Agency Limited is the *pro tem.* printer and publisher of *People's Guardian*, a daily newspaper registered under the Newspaper Law, whose office is at 37 Bathurst Street, Port Harcourt.

'(2) that on December 5, 1967, 'T. C. K. Osuji', Provincial Secretary, Provincial Office, Port Harcourt, signed letter PC (PH)2/16, marked 'Secret' addressed to 'Manager Editorial/Adviser, *People's Guardian*, Port Harcourt', which reads as follows:

' "I am directed by the Government of Biafra to inform you that your establishment — the *People's Guardian*—should cease functioning with immediate effect. By this letter, all the company's assets are hereby impounded and will remain under my custody until further directed from the Government. I therefore hereby order you and your entire staff to leave the premises without any item of the Company's property, and to keep out of the premises with immediate effect.'

'(3) that on delivering the above letter, the said Provincial Secretary (i) caused the offices and works of the *People's Guardian* at 37 Bathurst Street, Port Harcourt to be closed; (ii) impounded the assets of the *People's Guardian*; (iii) locked out the 55 employees of the *People's Guardian* from the said premises; (iv) prevented the petitioner, Emeka Azikiwe, General Manager/Editorial Adviser of the *People's Guardian* from entering the said premises; and (v) ejected the Editor of the *People's Guardian* (Chike Okonkwo) from his personal residence at the top floor of the said premises.

'(4) that since December 5, 1967, the said Provincial Secretary and his agents have been in possession of the said premises, and neither the General Manager nor the Editor or any other employee of the said newspaper has been allowed either to enter the said premises or to engage in their lawful occupation therein or to reside therein.

'(5) that on December 11, 1967, the petitioner in a letter, reminded the said Provincial Secretary that the 55 employees of the said newspaper were due to be paid their fortnightly salaries and wages on December 15, 1967, and requested advice from him on what to do.

'(6) that, not hearing from the Provincial Secretary, I sent a reminder on December 13, 1967, adding: "I hope you do

realise that by taking over the full assets of the Company, you are primarily responsible for the welfare of the staff members." I awaited in vain for the Provincial Secretary's advice.

'(7) that on the same December 13, 1967, I forwarded a letter to the Provincial Secretary, which reads as follows:

"It has come to my notice that on several occasions now, lights have been on at the premises of the *People's Guardian*.

"May I remind you about your obligations as stated in your letter to me last week. I take it that you have taken adequate measures to prevent any possible interference of our assets.

"I note with great displeasure the rumours that have been going on in certain mediocre quarters that radio transmitters were discovered in the premises of the *People's Guardian*.

"May I state categorically that I am not aware of the existence of any such sophisticated machine in our office. May I also, sir, refresh your memory that during your unexpected visit to our office last Tuesday, December 5, 1967, I offered to have your bodyguards take stock of our assets before the hand-over which is the normal procedure. This request was turned down.

"May I now implore you to make sure that adequate measures are taken to safeguard any possible infiltration or installation of any undesirable element in the premises; this would help avoid any possible frame-up."

'(8) that Your Excellency's humble petitioner respectfully submits that the action of the Provincial Secretary violated an elementary principle of natural justice, for the following reason: a Provincial Secretary having been directed to perform an executive act, to close the *oldest daily newspaper in Biafra* and to impound its assets, in a country like Biafra, whose Government is based on the rule of law, should not deprive a Biafran citizen of his property; without indicating to him what written law he had violated; without giving him a fair chance to defend himself; and without paying him adequate compensation for dispossessing him of his property.

'(9) Your humble petitioner concedes the right of the Government of Biafra to impose censorship on the press or to ban the publication of any newspaper, in the interest of the security of the state, But I respectfully submit that, the freedom of the press being a fundamental human right, the risks of national disillusionment and international criticism should be borne in mind.

'(10) with Your Excellency's indulgence, may I be permitted to refer to the experience of another newspaper during World War II, under the colonial régime. The Acting Governor summoned the Managing Director and also the Editor of the paper concerned; he indicated that, according to the emergency regula-

tions, he was empowered to close down an offending newspaper. He indicated the nature of their offence and asked them to show cause why the *West African Pilot* should not be banned. After their explanation, he said he was not satisfied and assured that he would exercise his power accordingly. The next day, an extraordinary *Gazette* was published, indicating the nature of their offence, the section of the law they were supposed to have violated, the power of the Acting Governor to penalise them, and the nature of the penalty imposed.

'(11) Recently, Your Excellency announced that, apart from a series of pogroms, we were obliged to assume an independent political existence because we were denied or deprived of certain fundamental rights. Moreover, Your Excellency had on previous occasions declared that you have set up a democratic military rule as a prelude to the establishing of a stable democratic Government in Biafra. These pronouncements are consistent with the mandate given to Your Excellency on the eve of the declaration of independence... (Here follows the context of the Declaration's proclaimed intent to defend the right to acquire, possess and defend property.)

'(12) Your Excellency, the Republic of Biafra was founded on eternal values which are based on the principles of respect for individual freedom under the rule of law. I humbly pray Your Excellency to review this petition in the light of the facts adumbrated and the principles on which Your Excellency's Government was founded, and be graciously disposed to direct:

'(a) That the offices and works of the *People's Guardian*, which had been opened for business from February 8, 1940, to December 5, 1967, should be reopened for business;

'(b) that the personal residence of the Editor be reopened and the evicted Editor be no longer deprived of his shelter;

'(c) that the impounded assets of the *People's Guardian* should be released to the owners;

'(d) that the General Manager, the Editor and the other employees of the *People's Guardian* be paid their salaries for the period they were prevented from earning a livelihood;

'(e) that the *People's Guardian* be reimbursed in the form of an honorarium or gratuity for the actual loss in earning it sustained when the newspaper was suspended from publication.

'(13) I crave Your Excellency's indulgence on the length of this letter. But the injury done to the *People's Guardian* is such that only by placing the facts and the principles involved before Your Excellency could fair play and justice be expected to be done.

'And your humble petitioner will ever pray, etc.'

On April 6, 1968, the Ministry of Information of the rebel

Government informed us that the assets of the *Guardian* had been released to its owners, but enjoined that 'the press should not publish any newspaper or newsletters or other items for public dissemination'.

5. THE FATE OF THE 'SPOKESMAN'

The *Nigerian Spokesman* also operated at a small profit in 1966 the previous year but had a deficit with its bankers.

On November 3, 1967, the *Nigerian Spokesman* (now rechristened *People's Spokesman*) published an editorial congratulating I. R. E. Iweka on his appointment as Provincial Administrator of Onitsha Province. It was entitled 'Onitsha Welcomes You, Iweka'. It expressed the opinion that 'apart from his education, Mr Iweka's social, economic and political contributions to the advancement of Biafra rightly qualify him for the post. He is, of course, not the best in the Province. It will be sheer hypocrisy to pretend that he is. . . .'

The editorial comment concluded as follows:

'The post carries a great responsibility. Mr Iweka, as all people of Onitsha Province are aware, knows it. It calls for the greatest sacrifice. And it is well known that however kind a man may be and whatever good a man may do, people must talk of him, That is one of the prices of leadership.

'But Mr Iweka knows Onitsha and his whole province. We trust that with his knowledge of the menacing problems in his area of authority, he will be very well able to face up squarely with the realities of these problems. He will be confronted with multifarious complaints. It is tact and sincerity that need be applied in such cases.

'The province is for all Onitsha. It is not for any particular ethnic group. Mr Iweka himself has been working for so long for Biafra and Onitsha Province not as a member of any ethnic group. Therefore, he is looked upon as the right peg in the right hole.

'There is one task which he should first of all tackle. The task is that of playing down witch-hunting which the Military Governor himself has seriously condemned. It is doing a lot of harm already, and we should not allow it to eat deep into our internal relations. We welcome you, Mr Administrator, and say well done to Dr Modebe for whose work Lt. Col. Ojukwu and the people have expressed great admiration. We wish him success in his new assignment.'

It was not long before the office of J. A. C. Onwuegbuna, editor of the *Spokesman*, was frequented by the police. He was requested to report to the police intermittently and asked a number of questions referring to the editorial relating to Mr Iweka. He admitted that he was the author. In its issue of November 11, 1967, the *Spokesman* carried the following advertisement on its front page:

'Apology to Iweka

'In an editorial comment captioned "Onitsha Welcomes You, Iweka" which appeared in the *People's Spokesman* of November 3, 1967, there appeared certain sentences which have been interpreted to be an attack on the person of Mr I. R. E. Iweka, the new Onitsha Provincial Administrator.

'We regret the embarrassment and inconvenience which the words may have caused Mr Iweka. We reiterate our pledge of co-operation and full support in the execution of his administrative duties.

'EDITOR'

On December 4, 1967, Mr Onwuegbuna was requested to report to the police at Awka. On arrival there he was ordered into a car and taken to Umudike, where he was detained. He was not informed what crime he had committed and was not allowed to defend himself. On January 19, 1968, he was driven in a police car from Umudike to Umuahia, where he was informed that he had been released. Lacking transport, he was given a lift to Awka, twenty miles from Onitsha, by a police officer. Eventually he reached home by begging for a lift from kind-hearted car owners or drivers.

But tragedy stalked the *Spokesman*. Sometime in March 1968, a bomb dropped at Onitsha by the Federal Air Force exploded near the offices and works of this newspaper and killed S. N. C. Enwezor, its sub-editor. A few days later the Federal troops entered Onitsha. Among the worshippers at an indigenous apostolic church who were killed in their church by shell fire whilst worshipping was C. S. Alabingo, advertisement manager of the *Spokesman*. In view of the military situation, this second oldest daily newspaper in Eastern Nigeria was obliged to suspend publication.

CHAPTER XIV

OUR ACTIVITIES IN SPORTS

My humble efforts to inculcate the spirit of sportsmanship in life's arena: my belief in playing according to the rules of the game, and my realisation that the strong make the rules

'An idealist is a person who helps other people to be prosperous.'

HENRY FORD

I. MY PERSONAL ROLE IN SPORTS

Since I learned to walk with my two feet and fend for myself in a limited way, I had become entangled in sporting activities of some sort. Either I walked or ran with my companions, or I wrestled with them. As I grew older I participated in group games. A lime would do for a football. As for individual games, we would angle for fish on our side of the River Niger. Among our best sharpshooters, we engaged in archery. These early contacts prepared me to become a natural athlete for running, wrestling, swimming, angling, archery, and football.

When I arrived in Lagos at the age of eleven I found the open space in front of King's College, known to our neighbourhood boys as 'Toronto', a mecca for juvenile sports. We played football there with mango seeds, limes or oranges or old tennis balls. Any collection of boys would be divided into two sides and a spirited game of soccer would ensue. We made and altered our rules to suit each game and so we emerged to become self-made soccerists. By watching the bigger boys as they played, we perfected our techniques.

At 'Toronto', I also learned to play cricket. Any set of three sticks would do for wickets. Bails were easy to improvise. The carpenter's shed furnished us with a wide assortment of 'bats'. Our brand of cricket was christened *Boaling Kofa* (bowling cover). The Barrackers Club, which still thrives in Lagos, is made up in the main of surviving 'old boys' of 'Toronto'!

As a student at the Wesleyan Boys' High School, I had won the junior high jump during the annual school sports. I was a member of the football and cricket teams. Those were the days when big boys, like Garnett Williams and Theodore John popularised the expression: 'If you miss the ball, don't miss your man.' But after school, the boys of my neighbourhood organised themselves into various football clubs, like 'Epetedo Never Miss', 'Araromi Hearts of Oak', 'Lafiaji Hotspurs', etc. By regular and frequent practice we improved on our self-taught techniques of soccer.

When I returned to Onitsha, I readily adjusted myself to the juvenile clubs which participated in various sports. At the CMS compound at Ozala Hill, where we lived as pupil teachers, I had become an adept at field hockey. Those were the days when Archdeacon Sidney R. Smith and the late J. N. Cheetham flourished in the CMS Niger Mission. Both of them were first-class hockey players and they popularised this game on the east of the River Niger.

Planning our great adventure in Lagos, I used my afternoons for healthy recreation. In 1923 the Diamond Football Club, of which I was secretary, won the Lagos football championship after defying all opposition. In our final game of the season played against the Lagos Athletic Club, which was then a famous European club and which up to meeting us had not been defeated, we polished them off to finish the season unscathed. F. B. Mulford, a European who was then agent of Lagos Stores Limited and patron of our club, played as right full-back. The other members of the club were Odu Williams (our captain), Isola Williams, the late M. S. Ade John, Duncan Cole, Bamgbala, Sam Ogunbamwo, Victor Davies, etc.

During my service in the Treasury as a junior clerk I joined a group of young men who went to the King's College ground on certain evenings to learn the principles and practice of boxing from a European employee of one of the firms. He taught us the noble and manly art of self-defence. I still remember when I bought a manual on boxing how I was impressed with the way Bob Fitzsimmons perfected the solar plexus blow with which he deprived 'Gentleman' Jim Corbett of his world heavyweight championship. And I marvelled at

the technique of Jack Johnson's upper cut when, coming out of a clinch, he used it to knock out the one and only Jim Jefferies to win the world heavyweight championship.

By the time I arrived in the United States I was well-grounded in archery, athletics, boxing, cricket, cross-country, football, hockey, swimming, and wrestling. At Storer College I was fascinated by the American brand of 'power' football. Then I watched American games like basketball and baseball. Because of my height I played centre in the intramural basketball, and I was an outfielder in baseball, although it was difficult for me to hit curved balls thrown by the pitchers.

As for tennis, I joined my fellow-students in learning this interesting game. Those were the days when 'Big Bill' Tilden, René Lacoste, Henri Cochet, Jean Borotra, Suzanne Lenglen and Helen Wills Moody dominated the international scene. It was not long before I learned to hit the ball over the net.

During my stay in America I was always engaged in some competitive sport—although my attempt at boxing almost ruined my countenance. Having done well at Storer College as an amateur boxer, I thought I should try my luck as a professional pugilist and earn money with which to pay my college bills.

A Pittsburgh manager gave me a chance to serve as a sparring partner to one of his boxers who later became a state champion. He had his gymnasium at the Northside, where the boxers from his stable trained. We were six partners and I was the only one to last two rounds, although I was knocked out in the last few seconds of the second round—the first and last time I was ever kayoed. The manager thought I had the makings of a champion; but I thought otherwise and hung up my gloves for keeps. My interest in boxing has, however, continued through the years.

My intense interest in athletics made me wish to represent Nigeria at the British Empire Games held in London in 1934. I had done good time in the half-mile and mile and could have placed, at least in the heats. I knew that Phil Edwards of British Guiana would be running (he was then a medical student at McGill, having distinguished himself as a middle-distance runner at New York University and during the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1932); and I had seen Stothard of Cam-

bridge run; but I was sure I could offer stiff competition to either.

My best time in America for the half-mile was 1 minute 58 seconds, and I clinched 4 minutes 30 seconds in the mile. I had watched the Oxford-Cambridge versus Princeton-Cornell universities' biennial championship and noticed how Stothard made things uncomfortable for Bill Bonthron of Princeton, then the peer of American middle-distance runners. But the winning time was 1 minute 55 seconds.

The Amateur Athletic Association of the United Kingdom allowed me, when my wish was granted and I came to London to practise with the other Empire athletes at the White City stadium. One day we practised for the mile run and I turned in 4 minutes 26 seconds. An hour later found me doing 1.59 for the half-mile. It happened that one of the men who ran with us in the mile was a South African whose attitude was challenging and provocative. He placed second behind me. Later, he was alleged to have complained to an official of his team that he disliked the idea of running against 'niggers' and saw no reason why they should be allowed to run against whites in the British Empire Games.

Not long afterwards I received a letter from the Secretary of the AAA objecting to my participation in the Empire Games because my country had not entered me formally to represent it in the games. Because the letter was signed by my university hero, D. G. A. Lowe, one of the finest middle-distance runners produced by Great Britain, I was naturally shocked. On August 2, 1934, I replied to the AAA that, after all, the games might not be an avenue for inter-racial and international fellowship.

Because I was not allowed to participate in the Empire Games since the Nigerian Government had not officially entered me, I decided to throw away my 'English' name, Benjamin. I thought that there was no use bearing a name from a country which denied me the right even to compete in a sports festival designed to knit closer its units in the spirit of sportmanship. The fact that Nigeria was subsequently represented at the New Zealand Empire Games and a Nigerian was placed second in the high jump has softened my bitterness. At the Olympic Games held in Helsinki in 1952, Nigeria was

represented by four high jumpers who qualified in Nigeria by leaping 6 feet 6 inches. I was then Chairman of the Amateur Athletic Association of Nigeria and a member of the Nigerian Olympic Committee.

I went to Helsinki on my own, just as I went semi-officially to Rome, eight years later, to cheer the Nigerian team. At the Melbourne Olympics, in 1956, Nigeria also participated. At Vancouver, Emmanuel Ifeajuna, then a student at the Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha, won the Commonwealth Games high jump with a leap of 6 feet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches to win for Nigeria its first ever gold medal in international athletic competition. At Cardiff and Kingston our athletes brought honour and glory to Nigeria. These athletic achievements have mollified my anger of 1934; but like chinaware, the crack is still there, and I was not sorry when South Africa was banned from the Mexico Olympic Games of 1968.

2. FOUNDING OF ZIK'S ATHLETIC CLUB

During my residence in Ghana I actually participated in some branches of sports. At first I trained hard to compete in the half-mile and one-mile races; but my journalistic work made training almost impossible. Besides, I was over thirty years of age, and very few top athletes can produce their best form at that age unless they have adequate training facilities and attention. Thus I transferred my interest to tennis and played regularly in the leading clubs in Accra. As for boxing, I contented myself in officiating during some tournaments.

On my return to Nigeria I followed my experience in Ghana and tried to join the leading tennis clubs, partly to improve my game and also to broaden my circle of friends. I applied for membership of the Yoruba Tennis Club. At that time it had in its membership virtually all the leading tennis players of Nigeria resident in Lagos, and most of these were well known to me. But I was debarred from membership. I asked a few friends and I was informed that an unwritten law existed in that club not to admit into its membership any person of Ibo descent no matter how eminent he might be.

Naturally I was disappointed because some of the players were my school-mates and contemporaries. In view of this act

of tribal discrimination, I decided to establish an athletic club which would open the doors of its membership to sportsmen and women of all races, nationalities, tribes and classes residing in Nigeria. So, with M. R. B. Ottun, I founded the Zik's Athletic Club early in 1938. The cosmopolitan nature of this club attracted some of the finest athletes to its colours.

The ZAC had seven divisions: athletics, boxing, cricket, cross-country, football, swimming and tennis. It had branches in Lagos and in the leading provincial towns, including Abeokuta, Ibadan, Benin, Warri, Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Gusau, Kano, Jos, etc. We voted money out of the funds of our newspapers for 'welfare services' and used this to subsidise the ZAC. Thus we were in a position to purchase materials and equipment, in addition to defraying the athletes' expenses on their transport, travelling and incidentals.

With the co-operation of E. H. Duckworth (science education officer), Mrs G. H. Holley (wife of the municipal engineer for Lagos), F. B. Mulford and Harry Bennett, the ZAC swimming section became very popular in the early 'forties. We used then to practise every Sunday morning at 'The Hope', near Mr Duckworth's residence at Ikoyi. Occasionally Duckworth, Mulford and Bennett would come and join us in our Sunday outings and we used to have lots of fun in this combined picnic and swimming pastime. By skilful use of the columns of the *West African Pilot*, we reminded the Lagos Town Council how in the early 'twenties Dr Akiwande Savage advocated the provision of a swimming pool for the ratepayers of Lagos. We expressed our support for this desirable social welfare service. Ultimately the Lagos Town Council constructed the Municipal Swimming Pool which made possible the staging of swimming regattas there.

Then we formed a Nigerian Swimming Association in 1941. Dr Mobolaji Alakija and I were extremely interested and he became the President of the Association. I became its Secretary. As a medical student at Glasgow University, Dr Alakija had been a keen swimmer, and he wasted no time in founding the Eja Nla Swimming Club to provide an opportunity for two swimming clubs to meet regularly in a dual competition. He led his team and I led mine. Among his best swimmers was Audifferen, who later joined the Royal Air Force. Among my

best swimmers were G. K. Dorgu, Dr S. E. Imoke, J. C. A. Okwesa and Dr Ecoma.

In athletics, the ZAC members included the following outstanding performers: M. O. Olaniran (putting the shot champion of Nigeria), B. Taiwo (pole vault champion of Nigeria), S. Y. Tarfa (one-mile and three-miles champion of Nigeria), Amobi (Grier Cup quarter-mile and half-mile champion), C. Ibisi (Grier Cup hurdles champion), Sho-Silva (Grier Cup one-mile champion), L. Bosah (sprint), A. B. Labode (half-mile), S. B. Folami, Okonedo, A. E. Obaseki and E. M. Bare (high jump), Munis (quarter-mile), and Baptist (cross-country).

In boxing, Mr Justice J. I. C. Taylor of the Supreme Court (an Oxford blue), then a legal practitioner, helped Mr Sibigam in coaching our team, which produced Dada Ogunbiyi, alias 'Blackie Power', middleweight champion of Nigeria; Dick Turpin, flyweight champion of Nigeria; D. U. Sibigam, alias 'Owerri Lion', lightweight champion of Nigeria; Ajose, alias 'Fighting Bajomo', heavyweight champion of Port Harcourt; Tropical Ijeh, light-heavyweight champion of Nigeria.

In cricket, one of the best players of the ZAC was Dr Maba-yoje. In tennis, Eso Efem was one-time men's singles champion of Nigeria; G. K. Dorgu and I shared the runners-up position against Messrs Okandeji and Edun in the junior doubles championship in 1939; Mrs Franklin and Miss Onyeochanam were among the best women tennis players in Lagos in those days; Messrs Johnson (father of Colonel Mobolaji Johnson), Ashcroft and S. O. Jolaoso were among those who represented the ZAC in tennis competitions.

In football, the ZAC had produced some of the best footballers in Nigeria. Goalkeepers included Adisa ('Addis Ababa'), Ajose, Pedro, Melvill Roberts, Oyetoro, Apena, Collins Gardner, Ekwuno 'Junior' and 'Gentleman' O'Dwyer. Full-backs included Ed. Natt, J. M. B. Abadom, Eugene Oba, J. A. Mensah, C. S. Kanu, Egharetsegbemi, S. Woghiren, D. C. Okwosa, C. S. Alabingo, A. T. B. Ottun, Ekwuno 'Senior' and A. E. Andrew. Half-backs included Sonny Wokoma, C. Bosah, D. O. Anyiam (national coach), George, Awani, P. Ntephe, Dr J. M. Uku, D. F. E. Essessien, Stewart of the West Indies (later in the Royal Air Force), Ekanem and the Ani-

mashaun brothers. Left-wingers included D. U. Sibigam, E. Dadson, Webber Jack and Titus Okere. Right-wingers included Bob Nwangoro, Marcus Ekenta, Herbert Allagoa, G. Effiong, G. Okogwu, M. D. Benebo, C. A. Ohiri, Sam Akpabot, and Okwosa 'Junior'. The inside-forwards included E. Ita, Yisa Animashaun, Ernest Macauley, Godfrey Igboanugo, Egbuonu, F. K. Nonyelu, B. Taiwo, G. A. Anosike, P. C. Agbu and Victor Ngwu; while the centre-forwards included J. K. Osunbah, Albert I. Osakwe, Phil Akor, Shomade Gambia, M. G. U. Anigbo and Shegboni.

In 1940 I built the Yaba Stadium outside Lagos, in spite of opposition that it was a waste of money to bother about the welfare of employees (all of whom were ex-officio members of ZAC). I also built the ZAC House and the Yaba tennis courts two years later. The Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, was very co-operative in securing us the land used for both sports centres. Previously he had allowed the ZAC tennis players to use the courts at Government House twice a week for practice until our courts were constructed.

In 1941 the ZAC football team visited Western and Eastern Provinces of Nigeria on a goodwill tour, to raise funds for the *Daily Times* Win-the-War Fund. As manager I was accompanied by Mr Justice Moses O. Balonwu, who was coach of the team. He was then a tutor at St Gregory's College, Lagos. We repeated the tour in 1942 visiting the Western, Northern and Eastern Provinces, and raised a substantial fund, for which the Nigerian Secretariat officially expressed its gratitude to us.

That year the ZAC Bombers, under the captainship of J. M. B. Abadom, won the War Memorial Cup, and the second team, ZAC Spitfires, under Collins Gardner, won the Zard Cup, in Lagos, and they respectively became senior and junior national football champions. After the senior game Osakwe, our centre forward, left us for the United Kingdom, where ultimately he became captain of the football team of Oxford University, the first Nigerian to attain this eminence in sport at a British university.

3. REWARDS OF SPORTSMANSHIP

To inculcate the spirit of sportsmanship in an individual or

group can best be done when a token reward is dangled as the *summum bonum*. This is not the end in itself but the means to a nobler end. The reward is not necessarily tangible but it is symbolic of something in the nature of an eternal truth. Thus, when prizes are offered to the victorious athletes, these connote a symbol to remind them that it is most dishonourable to take advantage of a fellow human being. It is not a negative lesson with a catalogue of don'ts; it is a positive lesson teaching human beings to adopt a code of exemplary behaviour in their relationships with one another.

In any race, all the athletes toe the line and do not leave off the mark until the starter's gun has given the signal. To 'jump' the gun and win victory thereby is dishonourable, because it is a hollow victory. In boxing, the two combatants are taught to land their blows clearly and above the 'belt'. To hit below the 'belt' is ignoble; and the boxer who expects to win this way is a dishonourable person. In tennis, too, a player who insists on winning by all means, fair or foul, is socially undesirable.

To make these ethical precepts in sports worth-while, prizes are awarded to those select few who stick to the code of behaviour stipulated for all contestants in a particular type of sport. In some cases the rewards are for the first three winners in track and field athletics, or for the eleven winning players in football, or for the winner in boxing. It varies, depending upon the circumstances of each form of sports. But the main thing is that these prizes are a token to spur sportsmen and sports-women on to nobler heights in human relations.

When the ZAC was formed, we did all in our power to provide facilities for talented men and women to vie for athletic honours. In order to leave them with a lasting impression of sportsmanship, we introduced a series of annual games. The intramural games were open only to members of the club. The dual games were limited to members of two competing clubs. The open championships were unrestricted, provided athletes obeyed the rules of such championships. Printed certificates and small cups were awarded to winners and in some cases to the best losers. From 1940 to 1947 our games and championships were popular in Lagos; and it is fair to suggest that these influenced the formation of the Amateur Athletic Association

of Nigeria and other sporting bodies which regulated the various branches of sport.

In 1949 I donated the Half-Mile National Championship Cup to be presented by the AAAN to the best half-miler in Nigeria at the annual national championship of that body. This prize has helped to scale down the time of this event from 2 minutes to 1 minute 53 seconds during a period of fifteen years. The same could be said of other events in which donors presented cups as an incentive to athletes to excel the previous performances.

In 1949 the West African Pilot Cup was presented to the Lagos and District Amateur Football Association for annual competition among the football clubs in its area of jurisdiction. That same year we presented the Daily Comet Cup to the Northern Nigeria Football Association for competition among the club-members of this regional body. It has become necessary to mention these two football trophies because I have observed a studied silence on the part of those concerned in not explaining to their athletes the origins of certain trophies so as to give them the impetus to struggle for excellence. Cups and trophies are usually awarded not necessarily to glorify the donors but to advertise the objectives of such donation as an incentive to improve the techniques in the particular line of sport concerned.

Personally, I have caused to be presented in my name certain trophies to encourage individual performance and to maintain goodwill and friendship between Nigeria and Ghana. In 1962 I donated the Putting the Weight Police Championship Cup to encourage police athletes to aim at achieving excellence in this branch of field athletics. When I presented the cup, I informed the Inspector-General of Police that I hoped that it would spur our police athletes to be able to hit the 50-foot mark, which was a novelty in this part of the world.

After representation had been made to me by the Director of Prisons, I presented the One-Mile Silver Cup to be contested during the Federal Prisons Annual Athletic Championship. I also donated the Lagos Race Club Silver Cup in 1964.

The other trophies which I presented for annual competition between Nigeria and Ghana were donated to the various bodies controlling sports in Nigeria, as follows: the International

Boxing Gold Cup to the Nigerian Boxing Board of Control; the International Tennis Silver Cup to the Nigerian Lawn Tennis Federation; the International Table Tennis Silver Cup to the Nigerian Table Tennis Association; and the International Football Trophy to the Nigerian Amateur Football Association.

The competition for these annual events has been keen and I believed that it made for considerable improvement in these branches of sport in the two countries. Nigeria and Ghana are today among the countries which dominate the African scene in boxing, football, tennis and table tennis.

On my assumption of ministerial office in Eastern Nigeria, I was requested by the Eastern Nigeria Women's Amateur Athletic Association to co-operate with them by providing cups for its women athletes. In 1954-55 I donated ten cups to be contested annually in the women's regional athletic championships.

I named these cups after some prominent women who had played an important part in the development of female education in Eastern Nigeria, including the following: Mrs Fanny Ame (founder of the Young Women's Christian Association in Eastern Nigeria); Reverend Mother Osmund (pioneer missionary in female education in Eastern Nigeria); Mrs Veronica Ifeyinwa (Arinze) Onuora (first eastern woman to earn a university degree in home economics); Mrs Oyiboka Odinamadu (first eastern woman to earn a university degree in education); and Dr Margaret (Egbuna) Ofili (first eastern woman to become a medical practitioner), etc.

Because the Methodist Boy's High School inculcated in me ideals of sportsmanship, I established prizes in sports, named after the team-mates who had played with me during my schooldays. These included P. D. Quartey, Lamina Oyekan, Lasisi Williams and Gabriel Stowe. I also created two prizes in sports at the University of Nigeria, as follows: (a) the Albert I. Osakwe Prize, awarded annually to a senior student adjudged to have excelled all others in soccer, cricket or tennis in the university; (b) the Emmanuel Ifeajuna Prize awarded annually to the student adjudged to have excelled in athletics at the university.

In addition to the presentation of prizes as an incentive for

sports, I succeeded in persuading my colleagues in the Council of the University of Nigeria to name two buildings after two individuals who had distinguished themselves in sport. They are Dr Francis Ibiam and V. B. V. Powell. During an address which I delivered to the special convocation at the official opening of the third year of the University of Nigeria, on October 4, 1962, I made the following remarks in respect of these two athletes.

In respect of Dr Ibiam I said.

'The Sir Francis Ibiam Stadium is a landmark at the University. It was named after the present Governor of Eastern Nigeria. Educated at Hope Waddell Training Institution at Calabar, Sir Francis also studied at King's College, Lagos, before proceeding to the University of St Andrews, in Scotland, where he qualified as a medical practitioner. At all the three institutions he proved himself to be an outstanding footballer and cricketer. He was one of the earliest students from Eastern Nigeria to be elected captain of the 1923 King's College football team, where he shone as a brilliant centre-forward. We hope that this stadium will produce more Ibiam's.'

In respect of Mr Powell, I said:

'The College of Physical Education offers a programme for the training of teachers of physical education as well as coaches and directors of community recreational activities.

'The aim is to enable students to acquire skills and methodology as well as academic background of the development of physical education as an academic discipline.

'There are great opportunities for qualified physical education teachers in the elementary, secondary, teacher-training and university systems of the country.

'We have named this college after V. B. V. Powell, a retired expatriate education officer, who spent a greater part of his professional life in Nigeria teaching and guiding Nigerian youth in the art and science of physical education.

'At Ibadan Government College and Edo College in Benin, Powell encouraged young Nigerians with aptitude to develop their talents along these lines.

'He was influential in organising athletics on a sound basis in this country and had the honour to accompany Nigerian athletes to international competitions as far back as 1950, when the Amateur Athletic Association of Nigeria decided to send a team to Auckland, New Zealand, for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games.

'He also accompanied the first Nigerian team to compete in the Olympic Games at Helsinki, Finland, in 1952.'

The University Tennis Courts were named after Miss Althea Gibson, a famous American Negro woman tennis star who captivated Wimbledon a few years ago. The Pendleton Swimming Pool was christened to commemorate the man who coached me at Howard University in 1928 to become a champion swimmer. It is my private pool at Nsukka and it measures 75 feet by 30 feet, with diving facilities.

The Yaba Stadium was opened in 1940 by Magistrate S. H. Baptist. It was the first time in Nigerian history that the word 'stadium' was used to identify a playing ground. I named it after Yaba, which was the suburb which gave me sanctuary after the Magistrates court in Lagos had ruled that my printing press made a noise and was a nuisance to the neighbourhood and should be removed from there. Through the co-operation of the government of the day, we removed to Yaba, which was then bush, and there we remained and flourished.

4. LESSONS IN SPORTSMANSHIP

My experience in the arena of sports taught me that athletic activities are either combative or competitive. They are combative where an individual is pitched against another, as in athletics, baseball, boxing, cross-country, judo, swimming, tennis singles or wrestling. They are competitive when more than one athlete contributes to outwit or overpower a combination of other athletes in any branch of sports, like baseball, basketball, cricket, football, hockey, lacrosse, polo, rowing, rugby, tennis doubles, volley ball and water polo.

I also realised that in combative sports the individual relies solely on his own efforts, resourcefulness and courage to survive or to emerge victorious; whilst in the competitive sports, the individual submerges his personality as a member of the team whose collective effort must be canalised to ensure victory for the team. In the first instance, it is the case of a star outshining the others; in the second, it is the galaxy that predominates.

The lesson I learned from these sports is that in the combative arena one must be on one's own, and in the competitive sphere must co-operate with others in a spirit of sacrifice, self-effacement and discipline. In other words, the combative sports

emphasise individual skill and excellence, while the competitive sports emphasise collective discipline and co-operation.

In addition to these lessons that I absorbed in the boxing arena, the athletic track, the football field, the cricket pitch and the swimming pool, it was made clear to me that, other things being equal, athletes who are appointed or selected or elected captains of their teams are usually leaders of quality. I have found that, in general, politicians who have at some time participated in team sports like football, cricket and athletics tend, in their political roles, to be more fair and reasonable—not wishing to win by all means fair or foul.

As captain of my cross-country team at Storer College, and of my soccer football team at Lincoln University, I appreciated the need for sympathy for the tired or injured athlete as a tonic for renewed efforts in the common endeavour; the need for sacrifice of individual comfort and sublimation of personal distinction for the survival and possible victory of the team; and the development of co-operation as a disciplinary ingredient in a common endeavour to achieve success for the common good. Thus I was convinced that captaincy in any branch of sports is a sound training ground for leadership in life.

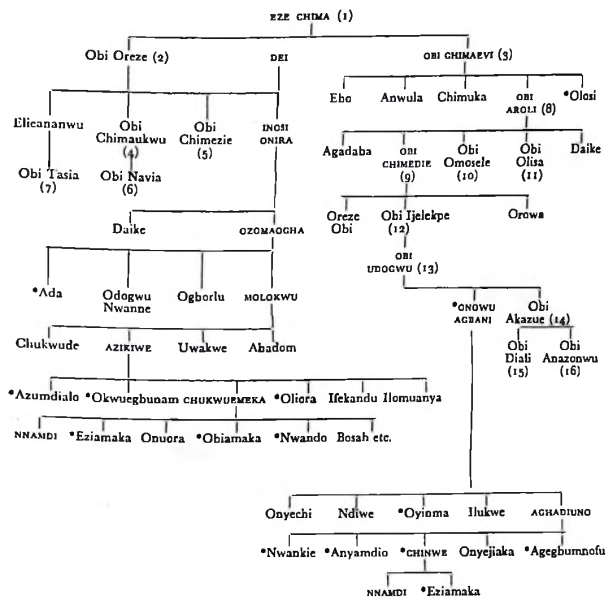
The spirit of sportsmanship made me regard my life's work as a sporting arena where I was bound to be involved in combative or competitive sports. Just as I was able to defend myself in boxing or do my best to win the race in athletics, or co-operate with my team-mates to score a clean goal during a football match, I thought that I could do likewise in my life's activities. Having worked with quite a number of young men and women and inculcated in them this philosophy of sportsmanship, I was convinced that even in the realm of politics the ideals of sportsmanship were attainable.

When now I left the editor's desk for the political arena, I tried to apply the spirit of sportsmanship in the problems which confronted me. I discovered that most politicians acted purely from their own enlightened self-interest, not caring about the effect on their 'team-mates'. I discovered that many politicians would join in signing a manifesto outlining needed reforms, but they would be among the first to abandon it and remind one that politics is a 'dirty game' where the rules are dictated by expediency.

In any case, my experience as a sportsman has not been wholly disappointing. I have made lifelong friendships and wherever I go I run across an old team-mate or an old member of the ZAC and we talk about the good old days. While it is true that most of my friends have realised that the rules of the game, in the sporting arena, are unlike those in actual life, yet they have stuck to their ideal: to play according to the rules, not to hit below the belt, not to score an offside goal, not to renege in order to gain a temporary advantage. This makes one an idealist, yes; but without idealism could any human being claim to be superior to the lower animals of creation?

APPENDIX A

MY GENEALOGY



* Female

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY OF NAMES

AGHADIUNO	Ndichie Chief Aghadiuno Ajie. The Ozi of Onitsha. Born <i>circa</i> 1860. Died 1913.
AZIKIWE	Azikiwe Molokwu. Ogbuefi Nwawularu. Born <i>circa</i> 1855. Died 1914.
AZUMDIALO	Mrs Obi.
CHINWE	Nwanonaku Rachel Chinwe (Aghadiuno) Azikiwe. Born <i>circa</i> 1884. Died January 26, 1958.
CHUKWUEMEKA	ObedEdom Chukwuemeka Azikiwe. Obuefi Orkwnwa. Born November 2, 1879. Retired first-class clerk, Nigeria Regiment (1902-25). Died March 6, 1958.
EZIAMAKA	Mrs Cecilia Eziamaka (Azikiwe) Arinze. 'Amalu Nwa Eze.'
IFEDIBA	Mrs Bessie Ifediba (Azikiwe) Egbuna. State registered nurse and midwife. Educated in the United Kingdom.
IFEKANDU	David Ifekandu Azikiwe. Formerly of Messrs John Holt and Company Limited, Onitsha.
IFEYINWA	Mrs Veronica Ifeyinwa (Arinze) Onuora. B Sc Howard University, Washington, DC, 1953. M Sc Columbia University, New York, NY Lecturer in Home Economics, University of Nigeria.
ILOMUANYA	Patrick Iloмуanya Azikiwe. Formerly of the Bank of British West Africa Limited.
JANET	Mrs Janet Chinwe (Obi) Obodoechina.
MBA	Mba Akalam Ugba. 'Osisi nami ego.' Died as the oldest man in Onitsha, said to be a hundred years old. Umudei Quarter.
MOLOKWU	Third son of Ozomaocha. Married Mbidokwu.
MOZENYE	Mozenye Agagwu. Born <i>circa</i> 1863. Died 1927.
NNAMDI	Nnamdi Azikiwe. Ogbuefi Nnanyelugo. Designated 'Ndichie Chief and the Ozizi-ani Obi of Onitsha' by the Obi of Onitsha in 1963.
NWABUNDO	Mrs Victoria Nwabundo (Azikiwe) Obiozo. State registered nurse and midwife. Educated in the United Kingdom.

- NWACHUKWU Samuel Nwachukwu Obi. Retired assistant accountant, Accountant-General's Office, Lagos.
- NWOSA Ndichie Chief Nwaolisa Chukwude. The Oziziani of Onitsha.
- OBIAMAKA Mrs Elizabeth Obiamaka (Azikiwe) Okotcha. Educated in the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union.
- OBIANWU Ndichie Chief Samuel Chukwuemeka Obianwu. The Owelle of Onitsha. Honourable Member for Niger African Traders in the Legislative Council of Nigeria (1923-33).
- ODUAH Nwabunie Dorcas Oduah Mba. Born *circa* 1859. Died 1924.
- OKECHUKWU Ndichie Chief Isaac Okechukwu Mba. The Owelle of Onitsha. Member for Ibo Division in the Legislative Council of Nigeria (1923-33).
- OKWUEGBUNAM Mrs Phillip Akor. 'Abilika.'
- OKWUSOGU Ndichie Chief Okwusogu Chukwude. The Ogbuoba of Onitsha.
- OLIORA Oliora Kpajie.
- ONIRA Inosi Onira. Ancestral founder of Ogbeabu Quarter. One of the sons of Dei, a son of Chima, the founder of Onitsha.
- ONUORA Ernest Onuora Azikiwe. BA Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, 1965.
- ONYEISI Andrew 'Onyeisi' H. MacIntosh.
- ONYEJIKA John Onyejiaka Aghadiuno. Ogbuefi Nnabuenyi. Born *circa* 1886.
- OZOEMENA Mrs Elizabeth Ozoemena (Arinze) Obiesic. BA Howard University, Washington, DC, 1954. Certificate in Education. London University, 1958. Woman Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria.
- OZOMAOCHA First son of Inosi Onira.

APPENDIX C

MEMBERS OF THE ZIK GROUP

(1) DAILY NEWSPAPERS

- West African Pilot*, Lagos. Founded November 1937.
- Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, Port Harcourt. Founded February 1940. Name changed to *People's Guardian* during the civil war. Ordered to cease publication December 5, 1967.
- Nigerian Spokesman*, Onitsha. Founded April 1943. Name changed to *People's Spokesman* during the civil war. Suspended publication in March 1968 after the Battle of Onitsha.
- Daily Comet*, Kano. Founded 1933. Ownership transferred to the Zik group, 1944. Suspended publication June 1967 after the Kano massacre 1966.
- Eastern Sentinel*, Enugu. Founded April 1955. Suspended publication 1960.
- Nigerian Monitor*, Uyo. Founded October 1960. Suspended publication 1962.

(2) SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES

- African Book Company Limited. Incorporated August 17, 1938. Nominal capital: £50,000.
- African News Agency Limited. Incorporated on May 13, 1951. Nominal capital: £35,000.
- Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited. Incorporated May 30, 1951. Paid-up capital: £5,000.
- Comet Press Limited. Incorporated 1933. Paid-up capital: £5,000.
- Nigerian Commodities Limited. Incorporated May 30, 1951. Paid-up capital: £5,000.
- Nigerian Paper Company Limited. Incorporated August 17, 1938. Paid-up capital: £5,000.
- Nigerian Printing Supply Company Limited. Incorporated on August 17, 1938. Nominal capital: £30,000.
- Nigerian Real Estate Corporation Limited. Incorporated March 1, 1951. Paid-up capital: £5,000.

Suburban Transport Limited. Incorporated on May 30, 1951

Paid-up capital: £10,000.

West African Pilot Limited. Incorporated June 13, 1951.

Paid-up capital: £10,000.

Zik Enterprises Limited. Incorporated August 5, 1937. Nominal

capital: £320,000.

APPENDIX D

LIST OF CASES CITED

- Attorney-General of Nigeria *versus* Mbonu Ojike, Increase Coker and Zik's Press Limited. Not reported.
- Nnamdi Azikiwe and Zik's Press Limited *versus* Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company Limited and H. A. C. M. Bates. Not reported.
- Nnamdi Azikiwe *versus* Isaac Ade Ogunbanjo, Editor of *Nigerian Tribune*, and African Press Limited. Suit No. 1/20/52, Supreme Court of the Ibadan Judicial Division. Not reported.
- Ndamdi Azikiwe *versus* Rex, (1937) WACA No. 1/37. Not reported.
- T. O. S. Benson *versus* West African Pilot Limited. Suit No. LD/57/65, High Court of Lagos.
- Fidelis O. Ebuwa and others *versus* United Africa Company Limited. 15 WACA 56. The case of United Africa Company Limited *versus* F. O. Ebuwa and Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited consolidated with UAC *versus* African Development Corporation and eleven others was not reported.
- Anthony Enahoro *versus* Associated Newspapers of Nigeria Limited and S. N. Iweanya, Editor of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*. (1960) WNLR 210.
- Inspector-General of Police *versus* Zik's Press Limited. Not reported.
- Alvan Ikoku *versus* Zik's Press Limited and another. (1950) 19 NLR 112.
- T. A. Odotola *versus* West African Pilot Limited and P. C. Agbu. Suit LD/36/58, High Court of Lagos. (1960) LLR 27.
- Olalekan Onatade *versus* Zik's Press Limited and Nnamdi Azikiwe. Suit No. 410/1941, Supreme Court of Nigeria, Lagos. Not reported.
- Rex *versus* Zik's Press Limited. 12 WACA 202.
- Rex *versus* Zik's Press Limited, Abdul Yekini Tinubu and Obafemi Soley. 12 WACA 110.
- Service Press Limited, Mobolaji Odunewu and Hamzat Idewu *versus* Nnamdi Azikiwe. 13 WACA 301. The case Nnamdi Azikiwe *versus* Service Press Limited *et al.* was not reported.
- R. M. Williams *versus* Zik's Press Limited. Not reported.
- Rotimi Williams, S. L. Akintola and Obafemi Awolowo *versus* West African Pilot Limited. (1961) WNLR 330.

Zik Enterprises Limited and Abdul Yekini Tinubu *versus* Obafemi Awolowo consolidated with Zik Enterprises Limited and Mbonu Ojike *versus* Obafemi Awolowo. 14 WACA 696. The cases of Obafemi Awolowo *versus* Zik Enterprises Limited *et al.* were not reported.

Zik's Press Limited *versus* Alvan Ikoku. 13 WACA 188.

APPENDIX E

EDITORIAL PRECEPTS
AND ETHICS

Members of the staff, in respect of their particular assignment, during their employment in the newspaper, jointly and severally, SHALL—

- (1) faithfully and loyally abide by the Twelve Cardinal Rules of the Zik Group;
- (2) not introduce or insert any column or cartoon or feature in the newspaper without the knowledge and consent of the company;
- (3) not use the columns of the newspaper to advertise any business or artist directly or indirectly unless such 'write up' is paid for or unless approved in writing by the company;
- (4) not insert in the column of the newspaper news or article or advertisement conveying the impression that any person possesses any academic or doctorate degree not conferred by any university mentioned in the standard encyclopaedias or directories or handbooks usually available in public libraries;
- (5) not insert in the columns of the news or article (excepting advertisements) identifying any person as 'Professor' who is not a Professor on the teaching staff of a Nigerian university or any recognised university outside Nigeria, excepting a person who is usually identified and universally recognised as Professor for historical reasons or by virtue of his having been a Professor in a recognised institution of higher learning outside Nigeria;
- (6) see that the imprint is correctly and clearly printed on each issue of the newspaper, according to law;
- (7) see that the volume, number, date, day, month, year and page are correctly and clearly printed on each issue of the newspaper;
- (8) see that the head mast and title of the newspaper are correctly and clearly printed on each issue of the newspaper;
- (9) see that all advertisements are bordered or carry the title of 'Advertiser's Notice' on their top left corner;
- (10) 'EDITOR'S NOTE:' should not precede any matter for publica-

tion. It should be used only as postscript. It must be set in 8 point or any other smaller type indicated by the Editor.

(11) All introductory paragraphs to texts or communiques and quotations should be set in 8 point or bold types. Inverted commas should be used in connection with quotations so set in 8 point or bold types.

(12) A Style Sheet exists to guide the staff with the strictly literary aspects of the newspaper. Promotion of members of the Editorial and Technical Sections shall depend on their proper grasp of the Style Sheet.

(13) If any employee of the newspaper shall authorise, insert, write, edit, proof-read, make-up, re-write or publish any matter or advertisement or headline which is deemed to constitute civil or criminal (defamatory, obscene, seditious, blasphemous) libel or statutory offence (violation of any Act, Order-in-Council, Regulations, Municipal or County or District or Native Authority bye-law) he shall be summarily dealt with.

(14) Compositors who set matter or advertisements without regard to the artistic aspect of type-setting shall be relieved of their appointment.

(15) The newspaper published by the company must always be neat, clear and fresh-looking; otherwise the individuals responsible will be replaced.

(16) No employee of the newspaper shall authorise, insert, set, make-up, chase, proof-read, re-write, any manuscript or advertisement or headline or matter intended for publication without obtaining the expressed sanction in writing of the Editor or the Assistant Editor in charge.

(17) Members of the staff are enjoined particularly not to print or publish any article or photograph or advertisement or anything in the newspaper:

- (a) about the board of directors or members of the company and the immediate members of their families without the written consent of the company;
- (b) about members of the staff of the company or newspaper and the immediate members of their families without the written consent of the company;
- (c) about charms, talisman, amulets, fortune telling, palmistry, phrenology, mesmerism, occultism, sorcery, witchcraft and black magic and related subjects without the written consent of the company;
- (d) about 'night soil' or 'night soil man or men' or 'latrine' or 'prostitution' or 'prostitute' or 'night girl' or 'red light

district or neighbourhood' or words to that effect; but advertisements containing the expression 'conservancy' may be accepted and published.

(18) In editing manuscripts or typescripts, no member of the staff shall insert either 'today (yesterday, ED.)' or 'a local newspaper (not ourselves)' or such interpolation which is calculated to insult the intelligence of newspaper readers.

APPENDIX F

EDITORIAL POLICY: POLITICAL ISSUES

(1) Our newspapers shall promote the cause of national unity and should always emphasise the ties that bind the various linguistic and cultural groups forming our nation. Under no circumstances shall the columns of our newspaper be used to foster extremes of regionalism, provincialism, parochialism and other forms of racial or tribal jingoism.

(2) Our newspapers shall support the principles and practice of the rule of law, representative democracy, universal adult suffrage based on secret ballot in a free and fair election, independence of a responsible judiciary, respect for human dignity on the props of natural justice, fundamental freedoms and human rights.

(3) In forming public opinion, our newspapers shall be guided generally by the principles enunciated in the (a) Charter of the Nigerian Youth Movement, 1938, (b) the NCNC Freedom Charter, 1948, (c) the NCNC Election Manifesto, 1951, and (d) the Manifesto of the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party, 1964.

(4) We should advocate for *each Local Authority* to be entitled to the following establishments and amenities at its headquarters, under the auspices, support and control of the Federal Government.

COMMUNICATIONS: A Post Office with central automatic telephone exchange service; postal agencies with limited telephone service, in addition to a rediffusion station in each Local Council area of authority.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY: A military unit (or a naval unit if the area is riverine); a military band (or a naval band); a police detachment; a police band.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Federal forest reserve of one thousand acres; a co-operative farm of two thousand acres for cultivating economic crops; a co-operative farm of two thousand acres for cultivating food crops; a co-operative livestock farm of two hundred acres for the breeding and distribution of livestock and meat; a co-operative fish farm of fifty acres for the production and

distribution of fish; and a co-operative food exchange spread over fifty acres for the storage and distribution of foodstuffs.

ECONOMICS: A secondary industry; a co-operative shop and supermarket for retailing capital goods and provisions; a second-class hotel of fifty rooms; a weekly periodical; a co-operative printing works and bindery; a co-operative bank; a co-operative building society.

FINANCE: 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of all Federal investment holdings to be distributed equally to all Local Authorities for retention as uncommitted reserves, to be reinvested in Federal Treasury Bills, the income of which shall be credited to the Treasury of each Local Authority, as current revenue, for exclusive use on Federally-approved projects.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS: A reformatory prison; a Federal Agency for issuing passports and travel documents; a fire fighting station.

JUDICIARY: A magistrate court building; a customary court building in each Local Council area.

LABOUR: An employment exchange.

MINES AND POWER: A central power station; a co-operative fuel shop for local distribution of coal or gas or oil, and for the sale or hire of electrical goods and associated appliances; a co-operative quarry (where rocks abound).

SOCIAL SERVICES: A general hospital of one hundred beds; a secondary polytechnic for five hundred students in an area of one thousand acres; a library; a museum; a stadium; a natatorium; a gymnasium; an auditorium; a cinema theatre to seat one thousand; a zoological garden; a wild life sanctuary; a botanical garden; a planetarium; a park of ten acres; a playground and sports centre of ten acres; a co-operative low cost housing estate of one hundred acres.

TRANSPORT: Air strip and helicopter landing stage; co-operative bus transport services (with taxicab terminal) for inter-Regional road traffic; wharf or jetty to be constructed on a selected site on the bank of any town (with population of one thousand) in each riverine Local Authority area.

WORKS: Water supply system; main boulevard (three lane street) of not less than one mile.

(5) We should further advocate that each *Administrative Division* should be entitled to the following establishments and amenities at its headquarters, under the auspices, support, and control of the Federal Government:

COMMUNICATIONS: Five post offices, each with central automatic

telephone exchanges, situated in the northern, southern, eastern, western, and central sectors of the town.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY: A battalion (or a naval base in case of riverine Province); a military band; a naval band; an air force unit; an air force band; a provincial police headquarters; a police band.

JUDICIARY: A High Court building.

TRANSPORT: A regular airport.

There should be a co-ordinating office for the activities of each Federal Ministry in each Administrative Division of the Federation.

(6) We should also advocate that *each Region or State* should be entitled to the following establishments and amenities at its capital, or elsewhere, under the auspices, support and control of the Federal Government.

ECONOMICS: Five basic or heavy industries; ten light industries; a first class hotel of one hundred rooms.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY: A regiment or an army command with massed band; in case of a riverine state a naval command with massed band; a regional police headquarters with massed band.

FINANCE: $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of all Federal investment holdings to be distributed equally to all Regions for retention as uncommitted reserves, to be reinvested in Federal Treasury Bills, the income of which shall be credited to the Regional Treasury, as current revenue, for exclusive use on Federally-approved projects.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS: A federal penitentiary; a broadcasting central station; a television central station; a branch of the Federal Information Service.

JUSTICE: A building for the Regional Court of Appeal.

MINES AND POWER: Mining and ancillary manufacturing activities in respect of the mineral resources in each Region.

SOCIAL SERVICES: A university for 1,000 or more students together with an acquisition of one thousand acres for use as campus, and four thousand acres for use as agricultural and commercial estates; a specialist and teaching hospital, preferably situated in or near a university town; a mental hospital; a rehabilitation centre for the handicapped (the blind, deaf, dumb, lame, waif, old); a Borstal institution.

TRANSPORT: International airports to be built or maintained in Lagos, Kano, Calabar, Port Harcourt and Jos; railway stations (with bus and taxi-cab terminals); the development of Abonnema, Akassa, Bonny, Brass, Burutu, Eket, Forcados, Opobo and Oron to be full-fledged ports of entry.

WORKS: A quadrangular building (four storeys) to house all Federal Ministries; a boulevard of four lanes of not less than five miles; a toll highway (three lane roads) for all inter-Regional trunk roads; toll bridges (two lanes) either permanent or Bailey or pontoons to ford the following river banks: Argungu, Atimbo, Idah, Ikom, Itigidi, Lagos (an additional bridge with four lanes), Numan, Obubra, Sapele, Yola, etc., in order to connect them with their opposite banks.

If these necessities and amenities of modern community living are made available to the various nationalities who live in each of the Local Authorities, Divisions and Regions—and they comprise the great majority of the inhabitants of this great country—the federal nature of our existence would have real meaning to the man and woman in the village. Regional Governments are incapable of satisfying the basic needs of our people, because their revenue potentials are restricted. The Federal Government can give leadership by bringing home to the doors of the people of Nigeria the blessings of twentieth century civilisation. This done, the urge to make an exodus from the rural to the urban areas could be stemmed; since there would be *even development* of all areas, the persistent agitation for separate states, or the accusations of partiality in the distribution of amenities, would recede.

The entitlements of the Local Authorities, Divisions and Regions have been devised so that each community should feel the pulse and the presence of the Federal Government in their locality, not necessarily as a distant relation but as a very close relative. This means that revenue allocation should be based primarily on the *principle of even development* for each of our 370 Local Authorities, the *principle of national interest* for each of our 98 Divisions, the *principle of needs* for each of our Regions, and the *principle of derivation* for the Federation as a whole which nourishes all its co-ordinates as a kind and benign mother does.

APPENDIX G

EDITORIAL POLICY: ECONOMIC ISSUES

- (1) Our newspapers should support the economic principles of live and let live. It is a fact that the people of Nigeria generally adhere to an economic philosophy which believes in the possession of private property, free enterprise, profit motive, communal land tenure, extended family institution, and a primordial system of social security. Interpreted in terms of contemporary economic thought, it leads to the view that the primeval and present Nigerian economic system is a synthesis of the essential elements of capitalism, socialism, and welfarism.
- (2) Consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, our newspapers should respect the fundamental freedoms and basic human rights, particularly to believe and practise any philosophy, economic or otherwise, so long as such a way of life does not violate the laws of the land and is neither repugnant to natural justice, nor revolting to conscience, and not inconsistent with the customs, traditions and ethos of most of the inhabitants of our country.
- (3) On matters affecting *labour* generally, our newspapers should be guided by the principles enshrined in 'The Workers Manifesto' published in the *West African Pilot* from August 17-30, 1941, and reproduced in permanent form two years later. (See Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Economic Reconstruction of Nigeria*, pages 77-82. African Book Company Limited, Lagos; 1943.)
- (4) Discarding abstractions on the 'iron law of wages' and platitudes regarding the theories and practices of wage in developed countries *vis-à-vis* developing countries, our newspapers should continue to remind politicians and administrators to enact a national minimum wage legislation which should secure for the Nigerian worker a wage structure that would enable him to live above the minimum subsistence level and above the poverty datum line.
- (5) We should advocate a 25 per cent reduction in the emoluments of Nigerian Workers whose salaries are scaled at £1,000 or above and a general increase of 25 per cent in the emoluments of workers who earn £400 per annum or less.

(6) We should advocate a downward revision of the salaries of State functionaries: Head of State, Head of Government, Ministers, President of Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chief Justice and Attorney General. We should support the payment of sitting allowance of £5 5s per diem to Members of Parliament plus free transport to and from their constituencies.

(7) Our agricultural policy should place emphasis on the extensive and intensive cultivation of economic crops, particularly food and cash crops. To achieve this goal, every Local Authority should be statutorily allocated with a maximum of 5,000 acres of land for use as follows: for the cultivation of cash crops 2,500 acres; for the cultivation of food crops 2,000 acres; for livestock farming 450 acres; for fish farming 50 acres.

(8) To buttress agricultural policy, we should advocate the creation of a Ministry of Food, whose assignment should be devoted to the distribution of food in every local authority area in the country through Food Exchanges strategically located. The sole aim is to flood the market with a large quantity of quality foodstuffs, during all seasons of the year, and thus depress prices and counteract forces which encourage hoarding and artificial scarcity for purpose of gain.

(9) Our newspapers should consistently press for rent control by legislation. In urban areas rent should be rationalised between 2d and 4d per square foot and in rural areas to 1d and 2d per square foot.

(10) On control of prices, we should insist that legislation be made enjoining all shopkeepers and traders to display the prices of each merchandise to be sold. Our government should control prices by limiting the sales price of any merchandise to not more than 100 per cent of its cost price, after this has been calculated according to the figures shown in the customs manifest.

(11) Our newspapers should advocate a policy that makes it compulsory for every employer of labour exceeding five persons to provide his workers annually with two sets of uniforms, to be laundered twice a week at the expense of the employer, and to be surrendered by the employee when his appointment is determined.

APPENDIX H

TWELVE CARDINAL RULES OF THE ZIK GROUP*

(1) *Be fair.* We want to make friends, not enemies. We shall not suppress the truth for fear of hurting feelings or losing revenue.

(2) *Get both sides.* As far as it is humanly possible, we should not allow this newspaper to be used by any person to vent a grudge. We should give any person or institution, under attack, a fair chance to state his own side of the story. We shall not use the big stick to prevent the other side of the story from being heard. It is professionally unethical.

(3) *Be careful in crime reporting.* When a person is charged with the commission of a crime or has done something immoral or discreditable, our journalists should not intrude the names of prominent relatives or friends, who are in no way involved. It is unfair to do so and may likely lead to litigation for libel. It is unprofessional conduct.

(4) *Be prudent in drafting obituaries.* In writing obituaries, we should not emphasise unfortunate incidents that could embarrass relatives of the deceased. If we did, we are courting action for libel on the dead.

(5) *Get names right.* Nothing does a newspaper more harm than mis-spelled or misplaced names. Names frequently appearing in the local newspapers can be verified. Their photographs can be identified. Failure to check the correct spelling or initials or identity of names can be attributed to laziness or carelessness. Negligence of this sort will definitely be a barrier to promotion; and can lead to dismissal.

(6) *Beware of seekers after free publicity.* It should be realised that space in this newspaper is worth some money. What we give away, we cannot sell. We must discourage impostors from cheating our advertising section thus making us to lose money for running our business.

(7) *Beware of your own prejudices.* The personal likes or dislikes of a

* Adapted from the rules and suggestions prepared for the guidance of the staff of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, reproduced in N. A. Crawford, *The Ethics of Journalism*, pages 211-13. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1924.

journalist should have no bearing on his writing, especially if it is a news story.

If one feels strongly on any particular subject, he could express his opinion by writing a letter to the Editor for use in a column devoted for such expression of views.

(8) *Don't offend races, tribes, nationalities, religionists or politicians.* We should always hesitate to write anything irrational or immaterial that will offend the members of any race or tribe or nation or sect or faction. One may offend thousands of readers and potential readers of our newspaper with a single word or expression. Therefore, our journalists should forget the racial or tribal origin, nationality or religious persuasion or party affiliation of a person either on the spotlight of publicity or specifically one under arrest or facing criminal prosecution, unless it is an essential and inevitable feature of the story. Under no circumstance should our newspaper be used for offending the susceptibilities of its readers because of their race, tribe, nationality, religion or politics. We can disagree from the views of others without necessarily being offensive or vulgar.

(9) *Don't promise to suppress any news story.* News which reaches our newspaper is its property. The Editor and his staff are the final arbiter of what shall or shall not be published. Requests for suppression or omission of any particular news item must be carefully reported and reasons given; but no member of our staff should commit this newspaper to the effect that any particular news item will be killed.

(10) *Keep your hands clean.* Beware of fair-weather friends who would tempt you to sell your professional birth-right for a few sticks of cigarettes or a glass of beer or a plate of rice-stew or a cup of tea or a couple of pounds. A journalist must be loyal to his country, must respect the constituted authority, and must obey the laws of his place of domicile. If his hands are clean and his conscience is clear, he should not hesitate to do his duty by exposing cant and denouncing the evils of the day, following Shakespeare's canon of human conduct: 'Be just and fear not; let all the ends thou aimest at be thy country's, thy God's, and truth's.'

(11) *Always welcome advice from our well-wishers.* Readers and friends of this newspaper are attached to it for many reasons. One of these may be emotional; or rational. No matter what may be the reason, we enjoin our staff to welcome such advice gracefully and gratefully. Some of them may be priceless, as far as the fortunes of our business are concerned. And some of them may be worthless. But an attitude of encouragement ultimately wins support that may prove invaluable to this newspaper.

(12) *Be loyal and faithful to your employer.* By being faithful we are firm in adhering to promises and true in affection. If an employee agrees to work for seven hours a day for a certain weekly or monthly wage or salary, then he should do that work, within the specified time, diligently and cheerfully. These are the traits which make one worthy of the confidence of others. By being loyal, we become constant in our faithfulness. Since the service an employee renders to an employer enables the former to earn an honest living, whereby he is provided with food, shelter, clothing and the wherewithals of life, decency demands that an employee should be loyal and faithful to his employer. As Elbert Hubbard, a famous American thinker, has said: 'If you work for a man, for God's sake work for him. If he pays you your bread and butter think well of him, speak well of him.' A word to the wise is enough.

APPENDIX I

ALUMNI OF THE ZIK GROUP

The late A. Ndem Abam, former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*, Lagos.

Oluremi Adeneye, public relations consultant, Lagos; former editor of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Ibadan.

A. Ebum Adesioye, public relations consultant, Lagos; former editor of the *Nigerian Spokesman*, Onitsha.

Pius C. Agbu, News Division, Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, Enugu; former editor of the *West African Pilot*, Lagos.

O. C. Agwuna, Igwe of Enugu-Ukwu; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

M. C. K. Ajuluchukwu, former editorial adviser of the *Nigerian Outlook*, Enugu; former assistant editor of the *Daily Comet*, Lagos.

Abiodun Aloba, former editor-in-chief of the *Morning Post* group of newspapers, Lagos; former sub-editor of the *West African Pilot*.

E. A. Anwana, former editor of the *State Express*, Aba; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

Chukwuma Anueyiagu, former editor of the *Daily Comet*, Kano.

Christian O. Anyiam, sub-editor of the *Nigerian Outlook*, Enugu; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

Kola Balogun, barrister-at-law and former Federal Minister of Research and Information, Lagos; former sub-editor of the *West African Pilot*.

F. O. Blaize, barrister-at-law, Lagos; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

A. K. Blankson, former chairman of the Nigeria Airways Corporation, Lagos; former editor-in-chief and general manager of the Zik group of newspapers.

The late E. C. Chukwuma, sub-editor of the *Nigerian Outlook*, Enugu; former proof reader of the *West African Pilot*.

Increase Coker, senior information officer, State House, Lagos, and author of *Seventy Years of the Nigerian Press*; former editor of the *West African Pilot*.

The late Kojo Conduah, information officer, Government of the Republic of Liberia, Monrovia; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

J. G. Cookey, Jnr., proprietor of the *Opobo Chronicle*, Egwanga; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

Hartley Cowan, Programmes Division, Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, Lagos; former editor of the *West African Pilot*.

Magajin Dambatta, senior assistant editor of the *New Nigerian*, Kaduna; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

A. Dokubo, former assistant editor, *Morning Post*, Lagos; former proof reader of the *West African Pilot*.

The late L. V. E. Ebo, QC, barrister-at-law, Aba; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

F. O. Ebuwa, personnel manager, Electricity Corporation of Nigeria, Lagos; former editor of the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, Port Harcourt.

E. E. Effiom, former publicity officer, Nigerian Railway Corporation, Lagos; former editor of the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*.

O. Egbutchch, former proof reader of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Warri.

The late Bonar Ekanem, sports editor of the *West African Pilot*.

George Emegokwue, former editor of the *Daily Comet*, Kano.

Anthony E. Enahoro, Commissioner for Information, Federal Military Government, Lagos; former editor of the *Daily Comet*, Lagos.

D. F. E. Essessien, former assistant editor of the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*.

G. A. Fagbure, public relations consultant, Lagos; former editor of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Ibadan.

Adewale Fashanu, chairman of the Nigerian National Press Limited; former editor of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*.

M. B. F. Ferreira, former reporter of the *Daily Comet*, Lagos.

The late C. U. M. Gardner, former regional editor of the *Daily Times*, Enugu; former managing editor, Zik group of newspapers.

Gab. I. Idigo, editor of the *Nigerian Outlook*, Enugu; former sub-editor of the *West African Pilot*.

J. A. Ifeajuna, proof reader of the *Daily Times*; former proof reader of the *West African Pilot*.

E. D. O. Iloanya, former organising secretary of the NCNC; former representative of the Zik group in Kaduna.

M. O. Iweanya, former editor of the *Daily Comet*, Kano.

S. N. Iweanya, former editor of the *Southern Nigeria Defender*, Ibadan.

Babatunde Jose, managing director of the *Daily Times*, Lagos; former assistant editor of the *Daily Comet*, Lagos.

The late George Nbadaw, former editor of the *Daily Comet*, Lagos.

Samuel J. E. Metzger, former editor of the *Daily Mail*, Freetown, Sierra Leone; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

L. N. Namme, general manager of the *Daily Times*, Lagos; former sub-editor of the *West African Pilot*.

Douglas Ngwube, former second secretary (Information), Nigerian Mission to the United Nations; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

The late V. A. Nwaesei, former chief wireless operator of the *West African Pilot*.

Alade Odunewu, executive editor, *Daily Times*; former assistant editor of the Zik group.

Mobolaji Odunewu, deputy director of information, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos; former features editor of the *West African Pilot*.

H. Kanu Offonry, director of public relations, Shell Company, of Nigeria, Port Harcourt; former editor of the *West African Pilot*.

Dr Eze Ogueri, PH D (Harvard), alias Raymond Anyanwu, former reporter of the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*.

Philip A. Ohiare, former deputy editor of the *Daily Mail*, Kano; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

H. M. Okeiyi, former assistant editor of the *Nigeria Magazine*; former reporter of the *West African Pilot*.

Kanu Okoro, former sub-editor of the *West African Pilot*, Lagos. Mr Okoro was the second Nigerian to obtain a degree in journalism, the first being A. K. Disu, Director of the Federal Ministry of Information. Mr Okoro obtained the B Sc degree in journalism from Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri, USA.

J. C. A. Okwesa, managing director of the Okwesa Printing Works Limited, Lagos; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

J. A. C. Onwuegbuna, editor of the *People's Spokesman* and former editor of the *Eastern Sentinel*, Enugu.

K. O. K. Onyioha, public relations manager Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation, Enugu; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

S. D. Opuiyo, editor of the *West African Pilot*; former editor of the *Eastern Sentinel*.

M. B. M. Orualali (alias M. Paul West), former chief wireless operator of the *West African Pilot*.

Peter C. Osugo, editor of the *Sunday Times*, Lagos; former sports editor of the *West African Pilot*.

A. B. Osula, former director of the *Daily Times*, Lagos; former circulation manager of the *West African Pilot*.

M. R. B. Ottun, general secretary of the United Muslim Party, Lagos; former sports editor of the *West African Pilot*.

The late Bello Babatunde Salami, former secretary of Zik Enterprises Limited, Lagos.

Solomon Simbi, director of *The Statesman*, Aba; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

Obafemi Solcye, former circulation manager of the *West African Pilot*.

The Honourable Olujide Somolu, Chief Justice of Western Nigeria, Ibadan; former editor of the *Nigerian Spokesman*.

Yekini Tinubu, editor, *Radio Times*, Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, Lagos; former editor of the *West African Pilot* and former editor of the *Nigerian Spokesman*.

Herbert Unegbu, News Division, Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation Enugu; former editor of the *West African Pilot*.

The late Nwabufo Uwaechia, former Chief Magistrate and Deputy Commissioner for Law Revision, Ministry of Justice, Enugu; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

The late Adisa Williams, radio commentator, Lagos; former assistant editor of the *West African Pilot*.

S. Agbaje Williams, barrister-at-law, Ibadan; former assistant editor of the *Daily Comet*, Lagos.

The late Sa'ad Zungur, former National Secretary of the NCNC, former Northern regional correspondent of the *West African Pilot*, Bauchi.

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