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A SELECTION
FROM THE SPEECHES OF
NNAMDI AZIKIWE

*Governor-General of the Federation of Nigeria
formerly President of the Nigerian Senate
formerly Premier of the Eastern Region of Nigeria*

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1961

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521091350

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First published 1961

Re-issued 2010

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-09135-0 Paperback

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PREFACE

Many well-wishers have urged me to arrange for publication the speeches which I have delivered over a number of years. With the help of Mr Alphonso Okolo, Secretary of the Zik Enterprises Limited, and of Mrs Beryl Glew, Confidential Secretary to the Premier of the Eastern Region, I gathered together a large number of my speeches; Mr Philip Harris has now made a selection from these papers arranged in a series of chapters each dealing with a particular topic.

It is my hope that the publication of this selection from my speeches will enable critics to appraise more intelligently the rôle which I have played in many spheres of activity over three decades. It will, I hope, enable my compatriots to appreciate my unrelenting stand on issues of fundamental importance. It will, I am sure, provide a source of information for those who are interested in the study of Nigerian development.

It has been suggested that it would be helpful if I were to knit this collection of speeches together with a short biographical sketch. I was born in Zungeru in Northern Nigeria in 1904, where my father was serving as a clerk in the Nigeria Regiment. I attended mission schools in Onitsha, Lagos and Calabar before travelling to Lagos for further education in 1921. After a period as a government clerk in the Treasury office in Lagos, I sailed for the United States in 1925. Here I enrolled in Storer College, but soon transferred to Lincoln University and subsequently to Howard University in Washington, D.C. After securing my degree I lectured in political science at Lincoln University and while there obtained postgraduate degrees at Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania. I returned to Nigeria at the end of 1934, but soon moved on to Accra, where in 1935 I became editor of the *Accra African Morning Post*. In 1938 I returned to Nigeria, where I established the newspaper *West African Pilot*. After a period of political activity in the Nigerian Youth Movement, I combined

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with the late Herbert Macaulay to found the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons. From that time, through journalism and through political leadership, I have fought consistently for the greatness of Africa and for her citizens everywhere. In particular I have constantly striven for the freedom and unity of Nigeria. I led the NCNC delegation at the 1953 London Conference on the Nigerian Constitution and again in 1957.

From 1954–59 I was Premier of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. In December 1959 I resigned from that office and was in January 1960 elected President of the Senate. From November 16 1960 I shall continue to serve my people in the post of Governor-General of the Federation of Nigeria.

As a young man, I saw visions: visions of Nigeria becoming a great country in the emerging continent of Africa; visions of Nigeria offering freedom to those in bondage, and securing the democratic way of life to those who had been lulled into an illusion of security under colonial rule. Many of these visions have now been fulfilled. The reader of this book who knows the present Nigerian scene will quickly be made aware of the rapid rate of change. Racial segregation and discrimination which featured in the social life of Nigeria in the thirties and forties are now things of the past. The senior ranks in the army, which were then a European preserve, today contain many fine Nigerian officers.

My most consistent theme has been that there must, in Nigeria, be an end to colonial bureaucracy. Today Nigeria is free from colonialism, free to work out her own great destiny and free to show the light to the peoples of Africa, everywhere.

As a young man, I saw visions. I do not doubt that as an old man, I shall dream dreams. Some of the dreams must be of my relentless struggle for the peoples of Africa, and for the cause of Nigerian freedom and unity. I trust that I shall dream my dreams amid the peace and ever-increasing prosperity of the people of my native Nigeria. The motto of the independent Federation of Nigeria is 'Unity and Faith'. I pray that we may guard our unity and keep our faith.

Summer, 1960, London

NNAMDI AZIKIWE