



EASTERN NIGERIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

OFFICIAL REPORT

SECOND SESSION (1960 - 61)

SECOND MEETING

6th and 8th October, 1960



EASTERN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

(Formed by Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, December, 1959)

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- PREMIER—Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.
MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS—Hon. I. U. Akpabio.
MINISTER OF FINANCE—Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.
MINISTER OF TOWN PLANNING—Hon. E. Emole.
MINISTER OF WORKS—Hon. P. O. Ururuka.
MINISTER OF INFORMATION—Hon. B. C. Okwu.
MINISTER OF COMMERCE—Hon. J. U. Nwodo.
MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT—Hon. P. O. Nwoga.
MINISTER OF EDUCATION—Hon. G. E. Okeke.
MINISTER OF HEALTH—Hon. E. P. Okoya.
MINISTER OF STATE CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ESTABLISHMENT AND CHIEFTAINCY MATTERS—Hon. O. U. Affiah.
MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE—Hon. P. N. Okeke.
MINISTER OF ECONOMIC PLANNING—Dr the hon. A. N. Obonna.
MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—Chief the hon. D. Jaja, the Amanyanabo of Opobo.

PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONERS

Hon. R. O. Iwuagwu	...	...	...	...	Onitsha Province.
Hon. E. A. Chime	...	...	...	...	Enugu Province.
Chief the hon. A. N. Onyiuke	...	...	...	...	Umuahia Province.
Hon. M. E. Ogon	...	...	...	...	Ogoja Province.
Chief the hon. J. H. E. Nwuke	...	...	...	...	Port Harcourt Province.
Hon. P. A. Onwe	...	...	...	...	Abakaliki Province.
Hon. N. L. P. Apreala	...	...	...	...	Yenagoa Province.
Hon. E. Chidolue	...	...	...	...	Annang Province.
Hon. C. A. Okafor	...	...	...	...	Degema Province.
Hon. E. W. Udonkim	...	...	...	...	Calabar Province.
Hon. H. U. Akpabio	...	...	...	...	Uyo Province.
Chief the hon. S. E. Onukogu	...	...	...	...	Owerri Province.

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER AND MINISTRIES OF GOVERNMENT

Premier's Office:—

Premier: Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.
Minister of State: Hon. O. U. Affiah.
Parliamentary Secretaries: Hon. J. O. Umolu; Hon. S. N. Alo.

Ministry of Internal Affairs:—

Minister: Hon. I. U. Akpabio.
Parliamentary Secretary: Chief the hon. R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER AND MINISTRIES OF GOVERNMENT — *continued*

Ministry of Finance:—

Minister: Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. J. E. Eyo.

Ministry of Town Planning:—

Minister: Hon. E. Emole.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. O. Aligwekwe.

Ministry of Information:—

Minister: Hon. B. C. Okwu.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. S. O. Masi.

Ministry of Works:—

Minister: Hon. P. O. Ururuka.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. O. Nnamani.

Ministry of Commerce:—

Minister: Hon. J. U. Nwodo.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. K. Kiri.

Ministry of Local Government:—

Minister: Hon. P. O. Nwoga.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. P. U. Amaefunah.

Ministry of Education:—

Minister: Hon. G. E. Okeke.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. S. A. Agim.

Ministry of Health:—

Minister: Hon. E. P. Okoya.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. M. U. Obayi.

Ministry of Justice:—

Attorney-General: Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. A. Nnaji.

Ministry of Agriculture:—

Minister: Hon. P. N. Okeke.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. R. O. Anoke.

Ministry of Economic Planning:—

Minister: Dr the hon. A. N. Obonna.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. L. O. Uzoigwe.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

The President: Chief the hon. Nyong Essien.
Deputy President: Chief the hon. James Okosi II, the Obi of Onitsha.
Clerk of the Legislature: Mr A. E. Eronini, I.S.O., M.B.E.
First Clerk-Assistant: Mr L. O. Okoro.
Second Clerks-Assistant: Mr R. C. Oyedu; Mr V. C. Anigekwu.
Acting Editor, Official Report (*Hansard*): Mr S. B. C. Melifonwu.
Secretary-Typist: Mr J. A. Okoh.
Serjeant-at-Arms: Mr B. O. Ajumogobia.

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Thursday, 6th October, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m. for the purpose of the ceremonies of the formal Presentations of a Mace, Staffs of Office to the First-class Chiefs, Certificates of Recognition to the First and Second-class Chiefs and Certificates of Appointment to the Special Members of the House of Chiefs.

The President (Chief the hon. Nyong Essien), preceded by the Clerk (Mr A. E. Eronini, I.S.O., M.B.E.), the First Clerk-Assistant (Mr L. O. Okoro), and the Second Clerk-Assistant (Mr V. C. Anigekwu), and led by the Serjeant-at-Arms, entered the House in procession.

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Exemption from Standing Order

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): I rise to move the Motion standing in my name:

That the proceedings on the business of the House at this day's sitting be exempted from the provisions of Standing Order 6—Sittings of the House.

I have no doubt that Members are getting well acquainted with their Standing Orders but for the benefit of those who are not yet acquainted with theirs, I would like to refer them to Standing Order 6, paragraph (9).

The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio): I beg to second.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjournment

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): I beg to move the Motion standing in my name:

That at its rising this day this House do adjourn until Saturday, 8th October, 1960.

The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga): I beg to second.

Question put and agreed to.

MR PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The President: Hon. Members, as you are all aware, the object of this Meeting is the presentation of—

- (a) The Mace for the House of Chiefs by Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, President

of the Senate, and Governor-General designate of Nigeria;

- (b) The Staffs of Office for First-class Chiefs by the hon. the Premier of the Eastern Region;
- (c) Certificates of Recognition to First and Second-class Chiefs by the Premier;
- (d) Certificates of Appointment of Special Members by the hon. Premier; and
- (e) Bound and Inscribed Volume of *Erskine May* for the House of Chiefs by a Delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, United Kingdom Branch.

Pending the arrival of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, sitting is suspended.

Sitting resumed.

ARRIVAL OF DR AZIKIWE

The Serjeant-at-Arms made three obeisances to the Chair and reported the arrival of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe as follows:—

“Mr President, Sir, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, President of the Senate and Governor-General designate of Nigeria is in attendance and waits to know the pleasure of this House.”

The President: Is it the wish of hon. Members that Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe be admitted?

Hon. Members: Aye.

The President (to the Serjeant-at-Arms): Please admit him.

The Serjeant-at-Arms in obedience to the command returned to the door to conduct Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe to his seat. Upon Dr Azikiwe entering the House the Members stood. On reaching his seat Dr Azikiwe and the Serjeant-at-Arms bowed to the Chair and the latter withdrew. The President welcomed Dr Azikiwe as follows:—

SPEECH OF WELCOME

The President: Hon. Members, the august visitor to the House this morning in the person of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe needs no introduction. But it would be difficult to resist the temptation of saying a thing or two about him on an occasion like this. Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe since his return to this country from the United States over twenty-five years ago has spearheaded the struggle of the African for freedom from the thralldom of

[THE PRESIDENT]

foreign rule. It was he who aroused political consciousness in the African and made him take pride in himself as the equal of any other species of the human race. He was dedicated and devoted to the cause of African freedom and thanks to God that his relentless efforts and those of other nationalists have borne fruit in this year of grace by the grant of Independence to this country on the 1st of October.

A short while ago, Dr Azikiwe was the Premier of this Region. He ungrudgingly relinquished this high office in order to stand for election to the Federal Legislature in obedience to the wishes of the people. He was duly elected and later surrendered the membership of the House of Representatives for the office of President of the Senate.

Since then, events have moved fast and the people of this country have received with great joy the announcement that Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe will succeed Sir James Robertson as the Governor-General of the Federation of Nigeria—a fitting climax to his struggles for African emancipation. No honour can be too high for Dr Azikiwe for his outstanding contribution to this country's Independence! Rightly has one of the Press in this country said in commenting on the appointment that "Dr Azikiwe is one of, if not the greatest, living Nigerian nationalist".

We are immensely proud of him and pray that God may grant him the strength and wisdom to uphold the lofty standards of that high office with credit not only to himself but to all Africans.

The Eastern House of Chiefs owes its creation to the genius of Dr Azikiwe and the Government over which he was the Head until last year. It is fitting therefore that this worthy son of Nigeria, nay of Africa, should be here today to make a formal presentation of the Mace of the House which is the symbol of the authority of the President. I shall now call on Dr Azikiwe to address the House.

PRESENTATION OF THE MACE

Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe (President of the Nigerian Senate and Governor-General designate): I consider it a great honour

to be invited by the Government of Eastern Nigeria to be present here in this august Assembly not only to join you in your deliberations but also to have the unique privilege of presenting the Mace to the House of Chiefs. Sir, I feel very puny to be worthy of the very kind sentiments expressed by you about me and may I say too, in connection with the part I played in creating this august body, that in the true tradition of sportsmanship it was the result of team work. It so happened that I was elected the Captain at that time, so that it is not so much an individual scoring the winning goal as I think it may be rightly said that the glory belongs to the team.

The Mace, according to British tradition, is the symbol of authority. This Body of Chiefs is one which is charged with the sacred duty of delaying but not obstructing legislation. Members of this august body are rightly regarded as Elder Statesmen of the Region; therefore, I pray to God to grant them wisdom so that as Elder Statesmen they will give mature judgements to any legislative matters placed before them in order to preserve the stability of this Region and the unity of the Country as a whole.

Finally, may I thank you, Mr President, for giving me the opportunity to address this House and may I through you extend my gratitude to the Government of Eastern Nigeria for doing me this honour. I pray to God to continue to shower His blessings on all of us so that in discharging our duties in this House as the most important arm of the State, we shall do so with the fear of God in our hearts and bring blessings and not curse upon our people.

It is with pleasure that I now present this Mace as a symbol of authority to the House of Chiefs. I hope that Members of this hon. House will live up to high expectation as Elder Statesmen of the Region.

The Clerk of the Legislature proceeded to the special Table on which the Mace lay, uncovered the Mace and handed it to Dr Azikiwe who formally presented it by placing it on the right shoulder of the Serjeant-at-Arms. The Serjeant-at-Arms advanced, placed the Mace on the Table of the House, bowed to the Chair and retired to his seat. Dr Azikiwe and all present then resumed their seats.

MOTION OF THANKS

The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara): I beg to move:

That we the Members of the Eastern House of Chiefs in Parliament assembled express our humble thanks to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, President of the Senate, and Governor-General designate of Nigeria, for his services to this Region, and in particular for the formal presentation of the Mace of the House made by him today. We welcome this gesture as a token of Dr Azikiwe's friendship and goodwill towards this House and the people of the Eastern Region.

It gives me great pleasure to move a motion of thanks to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, President of the Senate, and Governor-General designate of our free Nigeria, for kindly presenting this Mace to the Upper House of the Eastern Legislature.

A Mace is the symbol of authority of any Chamber of a Legislature. All Chiefs here, and I include the Ministers who are honorary Chiefs of the Government bench, must count ourselves as lucky to witness this moving ceremony which puts the finishing touches to the establishment of the important institution of the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region. There is added significance in the fact that this Mace is being formally presented by one who has not only spent the major part of his life fighting for our freedom but has also worked for the eventual establishment of this House, and is now the Governor-General designate of our beloved country.

I have no doubt that some day, the complete history of this House will be written. I would now like, however, to spotlight the highlights briefly. When Northern Nigeria was amalgamated with Southern Nigeria in 1914, Lugard quickly proceeded to graft the Northern system of Indirect Rule on to the South. In many places the Chiefs selected had not the backing of their people and they quickly fell into disrepute. In the East in particular, the system was a complete failure. Perhaps it was this failure of Indirect Rule more than any other thing which gave the impression that there were no Chiefs in Eastern Nigeria.

This wrong impression was confirmed in 1949 during the constitutional reviews, when N.C.N.C. members, notably, our own President of the House of Chiefs, Chief the hon. Nyong

Essien, pleaded in vain for the establishment of the House of Chiefs in the East as was the case in the West and North.

Subsequently, there was mounting desire particularly from the Chiefs themselves to correct this omission and the Eastern Government in 1956 obtained the services of a sole Commissioner, Professor Jones, an anthropologist of Cambridge University, to study the whole problem of chieftaincies in the Eastern Region. His report is a valuable document still referred to till today. Even so it was not unequivocal on the establishment of the House of Chiefs.

But by this time the Government had made up its mind to have a House of Chiefs provided all the obstacles could be overcome. At the Constitutional Conference of 1957, under the auspices of the N.C.N.C. delegation, I prepared a memorandum for the establishment of a House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region; this memorandum was broadly accepted by the Conference and formed the basis of the present structure and functions of this Upper Chamber today.

Back from the Conference of 1957, we ran into difficulties with the Opposition in the formulation of the classification of First-class Chiefs, the classification of Second-class Chiefs having been agreed completely. But these difficulties were overcome at the Constitutional Conference of 1958, the former Governor, Sir Robert de Stapledon, having taken an active part in the negotiations that led to the final agreement. It now remained for us to conduct the selections of the Chiefs for the electoral college to select members of the House of Chiefs. Many had feared that this could not be done, for no one knew for certain who the clan heads to go to the electoral college of Second-class Chiefs were. In many communities, however, the selection of clan heads was easier than had been anticipated, thanks largely to the good sense of the people, the short period of campaigning by prospective "Chiefs" and the efficient work of the Administrative Officers.

Electoral colleges met and selected their Chiefs for the Eastern House of Chiefs which met first on 8th January, 1960, barely two weeks after the green signal for selections had been given. I must confess here that I was quite astonished at the success of the selections,

[THE PREMIER]

beyond my most optimistic hopes. We can all congratulate ourselves on this performance.

Many experts on constitutions have argued that in a unitary constitution, such as our Regional constitution, an Upper Chamber is unnecessary. They maintain that if an Upper House is opposed to the Lower House then it must be working against the wishes of the accredited representatives of the people and should therefore be scrapped; if it echoes what that House says or does, then it must be superfluous. They argue further that in a world of mass communications—press, radio and television the need for the Upper House to review the work of the Lower House is unnecessary as this is quite easily and normally covered by these media of publicity.

But in spite of these arguments, there is advantage in having an Upper Chamber where Bills and measures from the Lower House could be more thoroughly scrutinised with the wealth of experience of the more elderly members. Members could also initiate non-money Bills, and surely no one will aver that it is only the Lower House that has members capable of these exercises. But above all, Chiefs are an integral part of our society, and to move forward, we must move with them. Were they to compete for places in the Lower House of Parliament, many of them could probably not find their way in. And thus we would lose their mature experience and local knowledge of the rural areas that form the bulk of this Region.

By establishing this Chamber, the institution of chieftaincy has been given an honoured place in our society. No one will argue that Chiefs could exert a tremendous influence for good in their respective areas. All important Chiefs naturally could not be accommodated here. The House of Chiefs is merely a symbol of the Institution of Chieftaincy and therefore represents all Chiefs. By your behaviours inside and outside this Chamber will the institution be judged.

It is therefore my earnest hope that this Mace which is your symbol of authority in this House will remind you of your responsibility for restrained argument, mature and wise counsel in the highest Legislative Chamber in the Eastern Region.

Finally, may I express our appreciation through you, Mr President of the House of Chiefs, to the Governor-General designate for kindly accepting our invitation to present this Mace, which I hope will not only represent the authority of this Chamber but also its unity.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):

I rise to second the Motion so ably moved by the hon. the Premier of this Region. Under normal circumstances I will just get up and say: I second the Motion, and sit down; but I believe this is a unique occasion and I think I am correct if I assume that most Members, most hon. Chiefs in this House, would have preferred to have the opportunity of paying tribute to this unique son of Africa this morning. Therefore, on behalf of the hon. Chiefs and my colleagues of the Government Bench, I am rising to second this Motion and crave for your indulgence at the same time to allow me just a few minutes to dwell on one particular aspect of this great son of ours.

As you see him sitting before us, he looks like a piece of humility, and he always says it himself that he is puny, and he looks, to many people, puny, until you see him in action. That is the most astonishing part of his qualities that has impressed me as an individual. Dr Azikiwe, as you all know, and as has been said by the President of this House, is the originator of nationalism in this country, nay, in the whole of Africa, and I may go as far as saying in the whole of the Negro race of the world. Before his arrival from the United States we were all puny in spirit and in all aspects. As a race we felt that we were servants of other races of the world. We were so treated and we behaved like that, until he came and started preaching the gospel of human rights. It was then that everybody—Africans and all Negroes all over the world, started to realise their rights in the world and started to work with their heads and shoulders up, as we used to say it. And so no tribute can ever be great enough to be paid to this great son of ours, and no reward can ever be great enough to be given to this great son of ours. Therefore, it is with very great delight that we all assemble here, and we are all pleased that he has given us his consent to come and present the Mace to this hon. House of Chiefs of this Region. We are very grateful indeed that he has been able to spare the time, and I

think he ought not to feel so puny that we have done him an honour; rather he has done us a great honour for sparing his time to come here to perform this function. So on behalf of this hon. House I am supporting this Motion and at the same time confirming the expression of appreciation already given by the Premier in this hon. House to our great son of Africa.

Question put and agreed to.

Copy of Resolution signed and delivered by the Clerk of the Legislature to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe.

The Members rose while Dr Azikiwe left the House accompanied by the Premier and escorted by the Serjeant-at-Arms.

The Premier returned to the House through the Speaker's Entrance.

PRESENTATION OF STAFFS OF OFFICE, CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATES OF APPOINTMENT

The President: Chiefs and hon. Members, the Staffs of Office and Certificates of Recognition will be presented today to the First-class Chiefs and Certificates of Recognition to the Second-class Chiefs. The Certificates appointing the Special Members of the House will also be presented. I can think of no person who can more fittingly make these presentations than the hon. the Premier. As you all are aware, he played no small part in the struggle for the House of Chiefs, and as a worthy successor to the office of Premier of the Eastern Region, it is fitting that these emblems of office for the First and Second-class Chiefs should be presented by him to the recipients. Under his able leadership the appointment of First-class Chiefs and the selection of Second-class Chiefs were successfully carried out—an achievement which surprised not only the Chiefs themselves but also the people of the Eastern Region.

I now call on the Premier to consummate this achievement by presenting to the Chiefs here this morning their Staffs of Office and Certificates of Recognition.

The Premier: The ceremony we are about to perform now is of some significance as the Staffs and Certificates of Recognition to be presented to the First-class Chiefs, Certificates of Recognition to the Second-class Chiefs and Certificates of Appointment to the Special Members represent the highest forms of recognition by the Government of

Eastern Nigeria of any citizen in our land. It is a symbol of your recognised authority in your area of jurisdiction and a symbol of your membership of this hon. Chamber of the Eastern Legislature.

All honours not only recognise useful service done to the people but usually demand new responsibilities. It will naturally be your duty as Chiefs, to assist Government in your area in maintaining Law and Order and in interpreting Government policies and decisions to your people. Government will, of course, expect you to bring to her notice the legitimate and reasonable aspirations of your area.

I hope that Chiefs will discharge these rather onerous responsibilities so creditably that it will never be necessary to withdraw recognition from any Chief. I am confident that you all will live up to expectation. I hope you will cherish these Staffs of Office and Certificates by word and deed.

On behalf of my Government, it is with pleasure that I present these Staffs and Certificates formally to all who are entitled to receive them.

The presentation of the Certificates of Recognition to First and Second-class Chiefs and the Certificates of Appointment to Special Members followed immediately the First-class Chiefs had received their Staffs of Office. The Clerk also called the Chiefs, one by one in alphabetical order of their names. Each Chief bowed to the President and the Premier, received his Certificate, bowed again to the Premier and the President and returned to his seat.

MOTION OF THANKS

Chief the hon. Francis O. Joseph Allagoa (the Amanyambo of Nembe): I rise to move:

That the Members of the Eastern House of Chiefs in Parliament assembled, express their humble thanks to Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, Premier of the Eastern Region, for his services to the House and the Region and in particular for the formal presentations which he has made today of the Staffs of Office to the First-class Chiefs, the Certificates of Recognition to the First and Second-class Chiefs and the Certificates of Appointment to the Special Members of the House of Chiefs.

In moving this Motion I am sure I would be carrying the whole House with me when I say that there could be no more opportune occasion than this for the Members of this

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[CHIEF ALLAGOA]

House to express formally their deep sense of gratitude to the Government for the creation of the House of Chiefs. This is a proud day for us—the day on which the emblems of office are presented to us by the hon. the Premier must indeed be a proud day for us. The presentation of these emblems of office is the climax of the legitimate aspirations of the Chiefs of the Eastern Region to have a House of their own. This House will live for ever.

Of the Premier, Dr the hon. Okpara, it could be said that “Seest thou a man diligent in his work he will stand before Kings and not before mean men”. In Dr Okpara’s political career there had been occasions of stresses and strains that try men’s minds, but because he kept his head while others around him lost theirs, he emerged from them triumphant and fortified in strength.

Loyalty and devotion to one’s leader, yet in no sense being a ‘yes man’ is an admirable quality in any man. Dr Okpara’s devotion and loyalty to his leader, through thick and thin, had never been in doubt. These rare qualities of mind assuredly marked him out for the high office of Premier which he now occupies with such distinction in direct succession to his leader.

In conclusion, I would say without fear of contradiction that this House of Chiefs of the Eastern Region pledges its unstinted loyalty to the hon. the Premier and his Government.

Mrs Margaret Ekpo (Special Member): I beg to second the Motion ably proposed by Chief the hon. F. O. J. Allagoa. There is hardly anything to add to that good speech. All I wish to emphasise, however, is that this House has implicit confidence in the Premier of this Region and his Government. He is a Christian gentleman. And we pray that God may grant him and the members of his Government the wisdom and strength to face the tasks that lie ahead with courage and self-assurance, executing them without fear or favour.

Question put and agreed to.

Copy of Resolution signed and delivered by the Clerk of the Legislature to Dr M. I. Okpara.

PRESENTATION OF THE BOUND VOLUME OF “ERSKINE MAY”

The President: I wish to remind hon. Members that we have now come to the last

item on the programme. It is the presentation to the House of a Bound Volume of *Erskine May* by the delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, United Kingdom Branch.

ARRIVAL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE C.P.A. DELEGATION

The members of the delegation were conducted to the “Ayes” door from where they had been watching the earlier ceremonies. The Serjeant-at-Arms reported their arrival as follows:—

“Mr President, Sir, the members of the delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are at the door and wait to know the pleasure of this House.”

The President: Hon. Members, is it your wish that the members of the delegation be admitted?

Hon. Members: Aye.

The President: Please admit them.

The Serjeant-at-Arms, in obedience to the command, returned to the door to bring in the delegation comprising:—

Sir Godfrey Nicholson, B.T., M.P. (House of Commons).

The Noble Baroness Elliot of Harwood, D.B.E. (House of Lords).

Carol Johnson, Esq., C.B.E., M.P. (House of Commons).

Upon the delegation entering the House the Members rose. On reaching their seats in the centre of the floor of the House the members of the delegation and the Serjeant-at-Arms together bowed to the Chair and the latter retired to his seat.

The President: I welcome you, my Lady, and I welcome you, Gentlemen, to this House. Pray be seated.

My Lady and Gentlemen, hon. Members, it is a great pleasure to me to welcome the delegates of the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to the Eastern House of Chiefs today. As you are aware, this is a new institution of which we the Members are very proud, and the fact that you have visited it so early in its life has added to that sense of pride. Furthermore, your visit has coincided with a historic period in the House—the Independence Celebrations and the presentation to the House of its Mace by that worthy son of the Region, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe; and the presen-

tation to the First and Second-class Chiefs of their Staffs of Office and Certificates of Recognition by our beloved Premier—all of which you have witnessed a few moments ago.

I think I am right in saying that this is probably the first occasion on which a Baroness has visited a Commonwealth Parliament—the House of Chiefs, the humble equivalent of the House of Lords in Westminster. It is difficult to express fully how delighted the members of this House are today with this singular honour which the delegation has done them. This visit in my mind confirms the importance which is attached to this House not only by the Regional Government but also by the Mother of Parliaments in the United Kingdom. This House will live for ever.

I shall now call upon the Baroness Elliot of Harwood to address the House.

The Noble Baroness Elliot of Harwood, D.B.E.: Mr President and Members of the House of Chiefs, I would first like to thank you very much indeed for the most kind invitation which you have given to the members of the Parliament of the United Kingdom—of which I represent, as you do here, the Upper House—the House of Lords. It is the first time that one of the Life Peers—one of the Baronesses—has taken part in an occasion of this kind which marks it out a time specially.

We have been greatly privileged to come to Nigeria during these wonderful and unforgettable Independence Celebrations—These Celebrations have brought happiness and inspiration to all of us, you here in your Parliament in the Eastern Region and in the other Regions, and we back in Britain where celebrations have been going on, and good wishes pouring over to you from everybody during these days.

Here in Enugu the visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent begins today, and is a great occasion, and our ceremony this morning, and in another place this afternoon, provide a fitting start to the Royal Celebrations; because it is here in Parliament, in both Houses of Parliament, that the key to the celebrations lies.

Nigeria is a free and independent nation and through your Parliamentary Representations you have voted to join the Commonwealth of Nations, to be a partner with us in its deliberations and responsibilities, to enjoy

Parliamentary Government under a system which is practically the same here as in Westminster.

This is what you have decided, and we Members of both Houses of Parliament have come to congratulate you and bring you some gifts as tokens of our good wishes today, and to bring you greetings from the United Kingdom Parliament from all Political Parties and all good wishes for the success of your Parliament.

Your experience began in 1947 and the House of Chiefs in 1960 while ours began more than 700 years ago—way back about the year 1250—when the Barons and other nobles of the day joined together in Council with the King, to form the beginnings of the House of Lords, an older institution than the House of Commons. Ever since then, through many centuries we have been endeavouring to perfect our Parliamentary system.

It is only two years ago that women were admitted as Peers to the House of Lords, and I am the first to have the honour to represent the Upper House and take part in a ceremony of this kind, which makes today slightly different from other occasions in the past. You in the Eastern Region Parliament have done in one year what it took the House of Lords 700 years to do.

If I may be permitted another personal note, it is to recall to you, Mr President, and the Members of this House, that it was my husband Walter Elliot, Chairman of the Elliot Commission on Higher Education—Founder of University Education in Nigeria, a great supporter of Nigeria, who led the Parliamentary Delegation, and made a presentation to the Parliament in Lagos in 1954. This is a proud moment for me to be following in his footsteps on this occasion in Enugu.

A Scottish historian has described Parliamentary Government as an endless adventure. We in Britain have engaged in this adventure over many centuries.

It is not easy to steer a course in largely uncharted waters—we have been trying to chart a course which gives both Houses of Parliament some compass directions, and marks the shoals and rocks on which many a Parliamentary ship might be wrecked.

These Parliamentary directions have been written in a great book, sometimes called the

[BARONESS ELLIOT]

Parliamentary Bible—and which it is my privilege to present to the House today—*Parliamentary Practice* by Sir Erskine May.

Within these pages we hope you will find some of the answers to the many questions which will arise as you steer your way along this Parliamentary course.

Africa is much in the news today—all over the world. There is not a morning paper in Europe or the Americas, in Asia or in Australasia which does not carry instant news of what is happening in this great continent.

Whereas in Europe, Parliamentary Government has been evolving for hundreds of years, here in Africa Parliamentary Government is evolving in as many months, sometimes weeks. This makes things more difficult for you.

Governments of the 20th Century bring news of everything that happens all over the world in a split second—from Enugu to New York or London, or where you will. Your Parliament is beginning with the distances between continents reduced to a few hours, and the differences in civilisation and ways of life telescoped so that many a young African will fly long before he sees a train or a ship.

The demands made on your political leaders will be far greater in the first years of their power than was ever made on any British Parliamentary leader when we were evolving our Parliamentary system.

Yesterday a delegation from the Federal Parliament in Nigeria flew to New York to take its place in the United Nations General Assembly along with almost hundred other nations of very different experience in what is virtually a Parliament of the world.

I have been there myself—three times—as a delegate from the United Kingdom, and I know how responsible and difficult is the job of a Parliamentary Representative in the new World Assembly. We wish your Prime Minister all good fortune when he addresses that great Assembly.

Time, then, is not on your side—you have to short circuit much of our evolution and come straight to the new world ready to meet its demands—ready to use its methods. It is a great challenge.

But we in the Commonwealth have enormous faith in your ability and in your wisdom. You

are a very ancient land—far older than we are—and you have the traditions of centuries of responsibility behind you—albeit of a different kind, and we believe that you will make a great contribution to our Commonwealth deliberations, and will also be a leading power in the world discussions—helping to bridge the gulf between the African Continent and the rest of the world.

We hope that what we have achieved together during the years that have led up to 1st October, and 6th October (today) in promoting a legal system, an educational system, Technical Advisers, a University—Health and Hospital Services, transport developments—industrial and agricultural developments will all prove a sound foundation in which the progress of the Federal and the Regional Parliaments will flourish and bring to the people increased prosperity and happiness.

We can assure you that in Westminster we shall watch with interest and affection the growing power and influence of Nigeria in the world. We are proud to be a part of a Commonwealth in which you also are a part.

Your people will always be warmly welcomed in the United Kingdom and we shall look forward to reading the names of African Statesmen whose speeches in this and other Parliamentary assemblies and in the United Nations will help the world in its attempt to find peace.

Mr President, it is with the greatest pleasure that I present you with this book, signed by the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, in token of our friendship from one Parliament to another.

The Noble Baroness Elliot made a formal presentation of the gift copy of "Erskine May" by handing it to the Clerk of the Legislature. The latter proceeded to the Table, placed the book on it, bowed to the Chair and returned to his seat.

MOTION OF THANKS

The Premier: I beg to move:

That we the Members of the Eastern House of Chiefs in Parliament assembled, express our thanks to the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for the gift of a specially-bound

and inscribed copy of *Erskine May* which that Branch has today presented to this House through its worthy Delegation in commemoration of the Nigerian Independence on 1st October, 1960. The House welcomes this gift as a gesture of friendship and goodwill of the Association towards this House and the Chiefs of the Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Mr President, both in my present office and formerly as Minister of Production and Minister of Agriculture, I have had occasion to thank the United Kingdom for financial assistance freely given to this Region, amounting over the years to some millions of pounds. But valuable though those gifts have been there can, I suggest, be no doubt that the greatest gift which we have received from our friends in the United Kingdom has been the modern democratic way of life now given formal expression in the Federal and Regional Constitutions.

This is not to say that public affairs in this Region were conducted in bygone days in an undemocratic way. Long before the destinies of Eastern Nigeria became linked with those of the United Kingdom our people knew and valued the essence of the democratic process; government was traditionally government by consent. The contribution which the United Kingdom has made has been to preside over the change from the old, simple and traditional type of democracy at the local level to the modern democratic process, based on the elective principle and operating through a parliamentary constitution.

Thus in Eastern Nigeria the new has been a logical development of the old and indeed, it was in part to recognise this continuity of tradition that this hon. House was established. As a Life Peer and member of the House of Lords, the Noble Baroness who has today so graciously presented the gift on behalf of the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, will readily appreciate the value both of tradition and of change.

Mr President, the hon. Members of this House are well aware of the provision in our Standing Orders, that in cases of doubt those Orders shall be interpreted in like manner as any equivalent Standing Orders of the United Kingdom Legislature. The gift of *Erskine*

May's authoritative commentary on the practice and procedure of the Mother of Parliaments over the centuries is thus not only symbolic of our link with that parent institution of parliamentary government but also a practical contribution to the orderly transaction of the day-to-day business of this House.

Only the foolish will refuse to learn from the past and I trust that all who are called to positions of responsibility within these precincts will not hesitate to learn from this book. By so doing they will, I know, be fulfilling the intentions of its donors and, at the same time, they will ensure that the House of Chiefs of the Eastern Region will secure and maintain an honoured place among the Legislative Houses of the free Parliaments of the Commonwealth.

Chief J. N. Wachuku (Umuahia Province): I beg to second the Motion moved by the hon. the Premier. One is hardly left with anything to say in a motion so ably moved. I would, however, add that this House deeply appreciates the friendship which this visit of the Delegates of the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and their gift of a copy of *Erskine May* symbolise.

The visit, coming as it does, at this momentous time when we are celebrating the Independence of our country is more than welcome. The British Parliament has given inspiration to many a country, not excluding our own country, and we look up to it as a model and have, as far as possible, been fashioning our parliamentary practice after its own.

May I express the hope that visits of this kind from both sides will be more frequent in the future as they go a long way in strengthening the bond of friendship between our two countries.

Question put and agreed to.

Copy of Resolution signed and delivered by the Clerk of the Legislature to Members of the Delegation.

The Noble Baroness Elliot of Harwood: On behalf of my colleagues and myself, I thank the President and Members of the House of Chiefs for this very generous Resolution.

The Serjeant-at-Arms then advanced behind the Members of the Delegation and as he stopped and bowed to the Chair all present stood. The

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Members of the Delegation also rose and with the Serjeant-at-Arms bowed to the Chair. The Serjeant-at-Arms turned right about quickly and led the Members of the Delegation to the Ministers' Retiring Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 9 a.m. on Saturday, the 8th of October, 1960.

I have a few announcements to make following this Motion. First of all, I wish to read to the House a telegram from the hon. Premier of the Northern Region:

“Heartfelt congratulations to the House on the occasion of attainment of Independence for Nigeria x May the deliberations of House always remain for the good of the people of your Region and Nigeria
Sardauna Premier”

Members are of course aware that immediately after the Adjournment, the temporary statue of Dr Azikiwe will be unveiled in front of the court of this House. Members will also remember that Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra will lay the foundation stone of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka

tomorrow. The Nsukka Federal Union proposes to treat the invitees to a light refreshment immediately after the departure of the Princess and I am therefore requested to ask all hon. Chiefs who feel like remaining behind for the light refreshments to do so after the departure of the Princess.

Two sets of labels for cars—one for tomorrow the 7th of October for the opening ceremony of the University of Nigeria and the other on Saturday the 8th for the Joint Sitting of both Houses of the Legislature to receive Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra—are available for distribution to Members. The labels for the 8th will be issued to Members by the Clerk of the Legislature acting in consultation with the Police. The number of labels for the 7th is limited. Members are therefore advised to travel two or three, or even more in a car for the journey to Nsukka so that the labels will be sufficient for the number of cars to be used for that occasion.

The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga): I beg to second.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at 11.45 a.m.

JOINT SITTING OF THE
EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS
AND THE EASTERN HOUSE
OF ASSEMBLY

Saturday, 8th October, 1960

The Houses met at 9 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
PRINCESS ALEXANDRA OF KENT

The President: Chiefs and hon. Members, as you are aware, the object of today's meeting is to receive an august visitor, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent. Pending her arrival, sitting is suspended.

Sitting resumed.

Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent entered the Chamber in procession.

Her Royal Highness being seated on the Throne, the hon. the Premier (**Dr M. I. Okpara**) read and presented a Loyal Address as follows:—

Your Royal Highness,

It is with the deepest sense of pride that we the Members of this Legislature welcome you on behalf of our eight million people of Eastern Nigeria.

Your visit spotlights, in the Eastern Region, the climax of the series of celebrations marking our emergence into full nationhood.

To us in the Eastern Region these celebrations are of double significance: the celebrations of Regional Self-Government and National Independence. On 8th August, 1957, this Region became completely self-governing in those matters which were assigned to her under our Constitution. Although this Self-Government was not our goal, nevertheless, it was a major milestone in this fascinating dash to freedom. We, however, preferred not to celebrate Regional Self-Government, not because it was unimportant, nor because we were too stoical to enjoy grand festivities and

revelry, but because we believed that the only appropriate time to justify celebrations of this nature was the period of coming of age of the Nigerian Nation, when our immediate goal, National Freedom, had been attained. We are grateful to God that we have made it.

October the 1st, 1960, the date of our National Freedom, a memorable day, marks the end of an old era of Colonial tutelage and the beginning of a new era of National Sovereignty.

Freedom has been won without strings and conditions. How true to say, as the greatest nationalist of our time, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, President of the Senate, once did, that Independence has been offered on a platter of gold. How equally true to say that the gold platter has been received with honour and grace. Thanks largely to the very careful preparation, Nigerian Independence has been ushered in smoothly.

But Independence has not come without a struggle. Although the dash to freedom has been relatively free from bloodshed and has on the whole been peaceful (thanks to the good sense of Nigerian and British Statesmen) yet it has been a struggle nevertheless. Today we wish to hand out the bouquets to those who made the realisation of this dream possible. Firstly, we hand them to the ordinary citizens of this country whose commonsense and loyalty to their leaders have provided the main springs of political action. We remember with pride the leadership of our political leaders. It is impossible to think of Nigeria in the pre-independence period without congratulating Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, now President of the Senate, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Premier of the Northern Region and Chief the hon. Obafemi Awolowo, Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House of Representatives. We must also congratulate their lieutenants and other party leaders who have made significant contributions to the march. Other leaders, like the late Herbert Macaulay, the late Mazi Mbonu Ojike, the late Alhaji Adegoke Adelabu and the late Chief Bode Thomas, have not been as fortunate as we are in seeing the "promised land". But their record of service to the Nation remains an eloquent monument of the period of nationalist agitation. We shall always remember them.

We do not forget those mercantile firms, who not only laid the basis for modern trade in this country, but also have sufficient faith and confidence in this country to invest in its future.

No tribute would be complete if the Voluntary Agencies, that is the Christian Missions, were omitted. By their educational and medical work they laid the foundations for social services and subsequently forced the Nigerian Governments to enter these fields. Indeed many of the present leaders and statesmen owe them a heavy debt of gratitude as most of us are what we are because of them.

But Independence would probably have led to chaos if the basis of a sound administration had not been laid. The credit for this must go to the British. Can we forget the expatriate civil servants, administrators, engineers, doctors, educationists, who worked ceaselessly for the day when they would hand over power completely to Nigerians? Their contribution is a credit to the high sense of duty of the Public Service.

When one looks at this record dispassionately, especially in the context of the present revolution going on all over Africa, one appreciates the effortless and spontaneous option of Nigeria to remain within the British Commonwealth of Nations. We met as friends; we now separate as sisters of one family.

Now that Independence has been won we shall adhere rigidly to the rules of a liberal Parliamentary Democracy; we shall uphold Nigerian Unity, we shall guard most jealously our hard-won freedom and pursue policies that will lead to rapid economic advance. These are no mere lofty aims to be pursued when convenient and abandoned when expedient. Rather, they are solemn principles to be adhered to inflexibly and continuously. We as a people have not found modern democratic ideas alien in any way, for we are a democratic people by nature. "One Nigeria", even in the face of obvious provocations, has been our belief and slogan for many years now. I am also sure that we would rather lay down our lives than lose our freedom again.

It is, however, in the field of economic progress that we shall look for outside assistance and co-operation for a long time to come. It is

our earnest hope that Britain and other Commonwealth Countries will always remember that we and they are now sisters of an intimate family—The Commonwealth. We hope that the people of Britain by their sympathetic understanding of our problems will help in the coming economic development of this country and thus strengthen the hands of those liberal Nigerian democrats who genuinely believe in the Commonwealth relationship and friendship with Britain. Ours is therefore an invitation to the Commonwealth Nations, especially Britain, to come and work with us in raising the standard of living of this part of the great human family.

Outside our own borders it is our aim to pursue policies that will aid those striving for World Peace, for we believe that it is only in a settled and peaceful atmosphere that we can catch up with the more advanced nations in economic development.

We are committed to the Union of African States. For we believe that only thus can Africa emerge as a third world force for peace, thereby checking the recklessness and excesses of the more advanced and unfortunately irrevocably opposed nations, and ushering in peace in a troubled world. Above all, we hope that co-operation between Nigeria and Britain in the years that lie ahead will strengthen those bonds of friendship that now link the two countries.

I can hardly end without recalling that, in February 1956, Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, visited this Region and were received in this young but Historic Chamber where our own democratic aspirations have found full expression. We recall that my eminent predecessor, as Premier of this Region, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, in welcoming His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, said of us, "Here in this Region our people yield to none in their loyalty and devotion to the Person and Throne of Her Majesty. We believe in the concept of the Commonwealth as an Association of free and independent Nations with the Crown as its Head".

When these words were spoken Nigeria was still a dependency of Her Majesty's Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, but they were none the less expressed freely and

with all sincerity. Since then there have been many changes: general development goes on at a rapid pace; many more hospitals have been opened and public health has received new impetus; universal primary education has begun; the first University in Nigeria conceived by Africans and managed by them and their friends in Britain and America has been opened by your Royal Highness; and petroleum has been found in commercial quantities in the Eastern Region; our coal now can coke at least; the Regional Government has become self-governing; and the whole Federation is now Independent. And it can be generally said that the period of growing pains is over.

One thing has not changed, and that is our loyalty to Her Majesty. Now that Nigeria is a fully independent nation and a full member of the Commonwealth, and we in this Region have realised the greatest of our political ambitions, I can state emphatically on behalf of its people that never has our loyalty to Her Majesty and to Her Throne been more sincerely felt than it is today, nor our desire for continued friendship with the British people been greater than it is now.

Today, we welcome Your Royal Highness, as the personal representative not of the Queen of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her Other Realms and Territories, but as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen of Nigeria, Head of the Commonwealth. We ask that you convey to our Queen, the Queen of Nigeria, these expressions of our loyalty. We ask that you tell Her how proud we are at this time in our freedom as a nation and in our full Membership of the Commonwealth. We ask that you tell Her how we here in the Eastern Region of Nigeria have dedicated ourselves to the task of so conducting our affairs that the Nigerian jewel She has now added as a new and distinct emblem in Her Crown shall ever shine more brightly and progressively become Her ever greater pride. We hope that Your Royal Highness will convey to Her and Her husband our appreciation of their continued interest in our progress and tell them that we are eagerly looking forward to Their first visit to an Independent Nigeria.

We hope that Your Royal Highness' visit to Eastern Nigeria will be interesting and that

you will carry away with you not only our greetings to the people of Britain but also pleasant memories of a Region full of life, colour, laughter and friendship, of a Region that is a bastion of democracy whose citizens are modern crusaders for world peace and are completely loyal to the Crown of their own adoption. (Applause).

Her Royal Highness was graciously pleased to reply as follows:—

Mr President, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the Legislature: I have it in command from Her Majesty The Queen to deliver to you the following message, and I have very great pleasure in doing so.

"My husband and I remember vividly the visit which we paid to the Eastern Region of Nigeria four years ago. Since then I have watched with great interest the remarkable progress which you have achieved as a self-governing Region, and I now send you my best wishes as you prepare to participate in the full sovereignty of the great Federation of which you form a part. I am confident that you will continue to devote all your energies to the social and economic development of your country and I pray that your efforts may be rewarded and that you may achieve happiness and prosperity. May God bless you all."

For myself I thank you most sincerely for the welcome you have accorded to me this morning and for the address so expressively read by your Premier.

I have been deeply impressed by the many signs of progress which I have seen on every side. Observing the energy and enthusiasm with which you are all throwing yourselves into the varied tasks which you have undertaken in order to develop your country, I cannot but be hopeful for the future of this part of the world.

I shall be especially happy to tell Her Majesty The Queen of the moving expressions of loyalty and affection which you have asked me to convey to Her.

I now have great pleasure in handing to the Premier, as the representative of the people of the Eastern Region, a copy of the Instruments

embodying the Independence Constitutions of the Federation and of the three Regions of Nigeria. (Applause).

Her Royal Highness then presented the copy of the Instruments to the Premier.

Thereafter, Her Royal Highness left the Chamber in procession accompanied by the President and the Speaker.

Sitting resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): I beg to move that this House do now adjourn *sine die*.

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): I beg to second.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Lift of Ban on French Goods

The Premier: Mr President, on the motion for adjournment, I wish to make a brief statement. On our attainment of National Independence, the Government of Eastern Nigeria, in consultation with the Opposition, has decided that as an earnest of our goodwill towards all Nations, the ban on French goods and services shall be lifted as from today. It is our hope that the leaders of the French people will work for friendship between Nigeria and France, and will take no course that might strain Nigeria-French relations.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at thirty minutes past 9 o'clock a.m.

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SECOND SESSION, SECOND MEETING

6th and 8th October, 1960

ABBREVIATIONS

Adj. Deb. = Adjournment Debate

E.N. = Eastern Nigeria

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